

July 27, 2016

TO: Local Plumbing Apprenticeship Committees
Associated Builders & Contractors of WI

FROM: Owen Smith, Program and Policy Analyst
Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
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RE: Request for Input on Including ACT as an Applicant Assessment

At the request of the State Plumbing Apprenticeship Advisory Committee, I am writing to ask your input on whether to accept the ACT as an applicant assessment and, relatedly, determine statewide cut-scores.

Please share this letter with your local committee, and reply to me no later than **Friday, September 30.**

Background

Arithmetic, elementary algebra and reading are foundational subjects for the plumbing trade. The state standards require applicants to be assessed in these subjects via the Accuplacer or TABE.

These subjects are assessed by the ACT, too. Unlike the Accuplacer, the ACT assesses arithmetic and elementary algebra together, with geometry and trigonometry, in a single test called "Math."

As of 2016, the ACT is required of all high school juniors by the Department of Public Instruction. The ACT is also used by many two and four year colleges for admission.

By accepting ACT scores, local committees could assess recent high school graduates and align the plumbing apprenticeship with requirements for high school graduation and higher education admission.

Recommendations of the Bureau

Therefore, the Bureau recommended three policies to the state committee:

1. Continue using the Accuplacer and TABE.
2. Accept the ACT. Applicants without scores or with low scores would take the Accuplacer or TABE.
3. Determine ACT subjects and cut-scores, and a maximum timeframe for all assessment scores.

The state committee did not reach consensus and advised the Bureau to survey the local committees.

Recommendations of Training Coordinators

Prior to surveying the local committees, the Bureau convened the plumbing training coordinators to make an independent recommendation for local committees to consider.

Current State Standards				Recommended Addition	
ACCUPLACER		TABE <i>All scores at approx. 11th grade level.</i>		ACT	
Arithmetic	66	Applied Math	14	Math	14 or 15?
Elementary Algebra	33	Math Comprehension	19		
Reading	66	Reading	21	Reading	15 or 16?

1. Continue using the Accuplacer and TABE.
2. Accept the ACT.
- 3a. Recommend an ACT Math cut-score of 14 or 15.
The Accuplacer cut-scores for Arithmetic and Elementary Algebra are comparable to ACT scores of 16 and 14, respectively. The group thought 16 may be too high, so they recommend 14 or the average, 15. Both 14 and 15 are comparable to the TABE eleventh-grade level.
- 3b. Recommend an ACT Reading cut-score of 15 or 16.
The Accuplacer cut-score for Reading is comparable to an ACT score of 15 and the TABE tenth-grade level. The group also proposed 16 to be comparable with the TABE eleventh-grade level. However, 16 would be comparable to an Accuplacer score of 70, which is slightly higher than the cut-score.

Requested Response from Local Committees

The state committee and the Bureau request that your local committee answer the following:

1. Do you agree with the training coordinators' first recommendation? Why?
2. Do you agree with the training coordinators' second recommendation? Why?
3. Which ACT cut-scores do you recommend? Why?

Please reply in writing or email **by Friday, September 30**. If you have any questions concerning these changes, please feel free to contact me.

Cc: BAS Apprenticeship Training Representatives