



September 2015

TO: State Apprenticeship Advisory Committees
FROM: Karen Morgan
RE: Apprentice Applicant Testing

Background

In 2016, all public high school juniors will be required to take the ACT test.

Currently, high school students typically take this standardized aptitude test during their senior year to gain admission to four-year colleges and universities. ACT tests assess how much a student has learned in high school English, math, science and reading. The student can also take ACT's writing test, which some students do to bolster their college applications. Competitive colleges use ACT scores to gauge whether a student qualifies for admission. If accepted, the student is permitted to register for freshman-level courses with no additional testing.

ACT, Inc. says that the ACT assessment measures high school students' general educational development and their capability to complete college-level work with the multiple choice tests covering four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. The optional Writing Test measures skill in planning and writing a short essay. Specifically, ACT states that its scores provide an indicator of "college readiness," and that scores in each of the subtests correspond to skills in entry-level college courses in English, algebra, social science, humanities, and biology. According to a research study conducted by ACT, Inc., in 2003, a relationship was found between a student's ACT composite score and the possibility of him or her earning a college degree.

To develop the test, ACT incorporates the objectives for instruction for middle and high schools throughout the United States, reviews approved textbooks for subjects taught in Grades 7-12, and surveys educators on which knowledge skills are relevant to success in postsecondary education. ACT publishes a technical manual that summarizes studies conducted of its validity in predicting freshman GPA, equating different high school GPAs, and measuring educational achievement.

In Wisconsin, most apprenticeship applicants in the construction trades are required to take the Accuplacer Test given in Wisconsin's technical college system. Typically, math, algebra and reading are the three sections that are provided.

ACCUPLACER is a computer-adaptive placement testing system used to assess students' knowledge and skills in a variety of subject areas, is one of the most commonly employed test batteries for placement purposes, in the technical college system. The ACCUPLACER is an untimed and multiple choice examinations. In 2008, more than 1,300 institutions used ACCUPLACER tests and nearly seven million exams were administered. ACCUPLACER tests, like COMPASS tests, are not pass or fail exams, but rather used to help students and their advisers plan appropriate course schedules. ACCUPLACER'S adaptive nature means that the program uses answers from previous questions to determine which questions will follow. This helps to ensure that the tests remain constant with the test taker's skill level. The tests include multiple choice sections in reading, math, language and writing. The tests are not timed, though some schools may elect to time the essay portion.

ACCUPLACER is comprised 5 multiple choice tests:

- Arithmetic;
- College level mathematics;
- Elementary algebra;
- Sentence building;
- Reading and comprehension

ACCUPLACER tests measure the following six dimensions: reading comprehension, sentence skills, arithmetic, elementary algebra, college-level mathematics, and writing. These tests are composed of multiple-choice items, except for the writing test, which requires students to compose a writing sample.

Recommendation

- Utilize the ACT as the test of choice for apprentice applicants.
 - How long of a gap between the applicant taking the test and applying for the apprenticeship program?
Colleges will utilize the ACT for up to 3-5 years before requiring a re-test.
- Continue to utilize the Accuplacer as a back-up until the majority of applicants have recent scores.
- The ██████████ industry will have a statewide testing standard.
 - Uniform sections of the test
 - Standard scores.

ACCUPLACER to ACT Score Conversion Chart

How to Use This Chart

Where appropriate, course descriptions include minimum scores or completed courses necessary for enrolling in that course. You will notice that General Studies courses within each program carry minimum score requirements. While COMPASS and ACT scores are listed within the description, you may have taken another assessment such as ACCUPLACER, Asset or TABE. The chart below will help you determine if your score meets the prerequisite for a given course. The following examples provide detail for potential score combinations.

- Suppose the program you are considering requires a Compass Pre-Algebra score of 17; if you have taken the Asset Numerical assessment and received a score of 33 or greater, you have met the prerequisite.
- Suppose the program you are considering requires an ACT Reading score of 15; if you have taken the Compass Reading assessment and received a score of 70 or greater, you have met the prerequisite.
- Suppose the program you are considering requires Compass Writing score of 60; if you have taken the TABE English assessment and received a score of 7.8 or greater, you have met the prerequisite.

Mathematics							
Compass Pre-Algebra	COMPASS Algebra or College Algebra	ACT Math	ACCUPLACER Arithmetic	ACCUPLACER Elementary Algebra or College Math	TABE Math	Asset Numerical	Asset Algebra
17	X	13	34	X	8.8	33	X
27	X	15	65	X	12.7	39	X
X	A-45	21	X	El Alg 61	X	X	34
X	CA-60	24	X	CM 63	X	X	54

Reading				
COMPASS Reading	ACT Reading	ACCUPLACER Reading	TABE Reading	Asset Reading
70	15	55	8.3	35
77	17	80	12.5	40

English/Writing				
COMPASS Writing	ACT English	ACCUPLACER Sentence Skills	TABE English	Asset Writing
60	16	60	7.8	38
74	18	75	9.9	35