

Welcome to the Accuplacer Review for English!

Accuplacer (“accurate placement”) is a term for a standardized placement test used to evaluate students’ skills in reading, writing, and mathematics.

If you have been advised to take English 1101/ English 0999 co-requisite Learning Support English classes, we suggest that you take the Accuplacer to see if you can “test out” of Learning Support English requirements. Successfully placing out of Learning Support English will save you money in that you will not be required to take the co-requisite support class (English 0999). Also, you will be removed from Learning Support status, which will remove your Learning Support English advising hold (which prevents you from registering yourself for classes).

Accuplacer – General Information

Please see the following information about the test from the College Board’s Accuplacer information page: <https://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/>

- “All ACCUPLACER tests use a multiple-choice format (except for the written essay portion). There’s no time limit on the tests, so you can focus on doing your best to demonstrate your skills.”
- “ACCUPLACER uses the latest computer-adaptive technology and the questions you see are based on your skill level. Your response to each question drives the difficulty level of the next question so it’s important to give each question as much thought as you can before selecting your answer.”
- “The number of questions varies depending on which ACCUPLACER tests you take. There could be as few as 12 questions or as many as 40.”
- “No one passes or fails ACCUPLACER tests, but it’s important to complete the test using your best effort, so you and your college have an accurate measure of your academic skills.”

Accuplacer – English Portion of the Exam

The English portion of the exam consists of two areas: Reading and a Written Essay.

I. Reading

Test Taking Tip #1: You will read a number of passages and answer multiple choice questions about each passage. Read each passage slowly, looking for the main idea of the passage.

Answer yourself, “What is the purpose of this passage?” “What is the author trying to convey to the reader?” “Who is the intended audience?”

As you read the passages, focus on the following:

Information and Ideas: *What is the passage about? What is the main idea conveyed? What details or specifics support the main idea?*

Rhetoric: *What strategy is the author using to convey his/ her ideas? Is the passage arguing a point? Making a comparison? Who is the intended audience?*

Synthesis: *How do two passages or multiple ideas in a passage compare to one another?*

Vocabulary: *What do specific vocabulary words mean within the passage? Look at the context around the vocabulary word to determine meaning if you do not immediately understand the word.*

Please see the following information at the College Board’s Accuplacer Information page regarding sample reading passages and answers (with explanations):

<https://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/next-generation-sample-questions-reading.pdf>

II. WritePlacer® (Written Essay)

The essay portion of the exam is written in **WritePlacer®**

The essay is graded on the following: focus, organization, development and support, and sentence structure.

Test Taking Tip #2: When writing a timed essay, take some time at the beginning to formulate the main point you want to make (your thesis). Then develop three or four “reasons” why your thesis should be accepted by the reader or three or four “examples” which explain and illustrate your thesis more clearly. There are other ways to organize your paper, but these are fairly common organizational strategies. After you finish your paper, set aside some time to proofread. You will be reading silently, but try to read as slowly as you can, looking for issues of clarity, for punctuation and spelling errors, and for grammatical errors.

For the written essay portion of the exam, please see the link below from the College Board’s Accuplacer information page for information on how to construct your essay and how the essay

will be graded: <https://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/accuplacer-writeplacer-sample-essays.pdf>

WritePlacer® – Additional Information

The written portion of the exam requires you to write an essay of 300 to 600 words. The exam provides a prompt (which is a passage by professional author focusing on a contemporary issue). The prompt is then followed by an assignment, which essentially is a question that you will answer in the form of an essay.

The essay is graded on focus, organization, development and support, and sentence structure, within a range of 1 to 8 (with 8 being the highest). An essay that does not meet the minimum word requirement or that is written in a language other than English will receive a “0.”

Test Taking Tip #3: Address Accuplacer’s prompt and assignment carefully; make sure you meet the minimum requirements of the essay as outlined in Accuplacer.

After carefully reading the prompt and the assignment, first mentally establish the purpose of your essay (example: my purpose is to offer reasons why we are sometimes limited in the choices we can make in our lives). Based on the purpose of your essay, write a thesis statement that serves as the main point of your essay (example: Although we may believe that we have absolute freedom to determine the choices we make in life, there are times when those choices may be limited). Then you could develop reasons to support your thesis statement (examples: health crisis, unexpected accident or disaster, loss of loved one, relocation, military duty, life change, etc.).

In summary, strive for a strong thesis statement based on the purpose of your essay. Make reference to the prompt’s sample passage if possible. Strive for 4 to 5 paragraphs in your essay: introductory paragraph (with your thesis statement coming near the end), first body paragraph (with your first supporting reason or example), second body paragraph (with your second supporting reason or example), additional paragraph or paragraphs with supporting reasons or examples as necessary, ending with a concluding paragraph. Avoid making the essay over-complicated. Strive for clarity, and avoid punctuation, grammar, and spelling errors.