

COMPASS PLACEMENT TESTING

WHAT IS COMPASS?

Developed by American College Testing (ACT), COMPASS stands for COMPUTER-adapted Placement Assessment and Support Services

The state-of-the art COMPASS Placement Test given via computer will focus on math, reading, and writing skills.

ADAPTIVE TESTING

Each test is adaptive. Adaptive means that the questions are chosen for you on the basis of your answers to previous questions. If you answer easy questions correctly, the test will give you more difficult questions.

Each test is untimed so that you can give each question as much thought as you wish.

Because COMPASS is adaptive, you must answer every question when it is first given. You can change your answer to a particular question before moving on to the next question, but you cannot leave a question out or come back to it later to change your answer. Once you go on to the next question, you cannot return to the question.

If you do not know the answer to a question, try to eliminate one or more of the choices. Then pick from the remaining choices. Your test will be different from everyone else's.

What does the COMPASS Placement Test do for me?

COMPASS is simply designed to help you and the College determine whether you are ready to immediately start the program of study you have chosen or need some additional preparation first. Should you require assistance, Terra offers courses in math, reading, study skills and English as well as tutoring for those who qualify. An assessment of your mathematics, reading and writing skills is important for proper placement into your starting courses and part of Terra Community College's advising process.

Who Needs to Complete the COMPASS Assessment?

All students need to take the COMPASS reading, writing and mathematics tests before enrolling in any math or English class as well as courses that have English/Math placement prerequisites.

Students with Disabilities

Students whose disabilities may require special accommodations when taking COMPASS should contact the Learning Support Services Office two weeks prior to the test to make special arrangements.

Students May Be Exempt from the COMPASS Placement Test if:

The student has submitted a copy of ACT test scores to the Admissions and Enrollment Services Office and, based on specific scores, has received approval to waive the placement assessment requirement in one or more areas.

The student submitted placement scores from another college or university to the Admissions and Enrollment Services Office and, based on specific scores, has received approval to waive the placement assessment requirement in one or more areas.

Transfer Students:

If you have completed a college-level English composition requirement with a C or better grade, you may not need to take the Reading and Writing COMPASS placement tests.

If you have completed a college-level Math requirement with a C or better grade, you may not need to take the Math COMPASS placement test.

For further information, please read in the current catalog the section titled Transfer Credit Evaluation. The catalog is available online at www.terra.edu.

Do I Need Computer Skills?

COMPASS is "user-friendly" and designed for individuals with little or no computer experience! With the COMPASS Internet Version, you will need to use a computer mouse. COMPASS is self-directed. You will use a few keyboard "keys" to select or highlight your responses as you move through the different tests. COMPASS is untimed, so you can relax!

Should I Review for the Test?

YES! Reviewing is an excellent way to refresh basic math, reading and writing skills. Sample questions are available online at www.act.org/compass.

WHEN & WHERE CAN I SIGN UP FOR COMPASS?

For any questions, or to schedule an appointment, call 419-559-2349, or 1-866-288-3772, Extension 2349. If you prefer, drop by Admissions and Enrollment Services, located in Roy Klay Hall (Building A) between 8:00am and 7:00pm Monday through Thursday or 8:00am through 4:00pm Friday.

Walk-ins are accepted on a space available basis. Please indicate at that time if you feel you need any special accommodations for placement testing.

Students must complete placement testing before meeting with their academic advisor and prior to registering for classes.

Do I Need To Bring Anything With Me To The Test?

A Valid Photo Identification is required for placement testing.

Students are permitted to use approved calculators when completing the COMPASS Mathematics placement test. An online calculator is available for those students who wish to access it via the COMPASS Internet Version; students may use their own calculators as long as they meet the calculator-use guidelines specified by ACT.

How Long Does the Assessment Take?

The COMPASS Assessment is not a timed test, so you can take as much time as you need. The average testing time for most students is approximately 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours to complete all three sections of the assessment.

Do I Pass or Fail the COMPASS Placement Test?

No. COMPASS is not a pass-fail test.

COMPASS is a college placement test. You cannot fail.

Whatever your results are, there is a starting point for you!

When Will I Get My Results?

At the end of the test, you will see a page indicating that you have completed all the testing or indicating the section that you have just completed followed by the next section you will take.

Test results will be provided for you as soon as you are finished with your assessment test along with information about the next steps required in order to register for classes. Students will be asked to keep their placement test results for the meeting with their academic advisor. The academic advisor will explain the test results and make recommendations based on the test scores and selected major.

FEES

Currently there is no fee for the initial COMPASS placement test.

The only cost is your time.

WHAT IS THE PLACEMENT RETEST POLICY?

If a COMPASS test is retaken, the student will be charged a \$25 fee for each retake. Retesting is appropriate when there is reason to believe that a score obtained from previous testing does not accurately reflect the examinee's true level of knowledge or skill. Students who wish to retest must wait a full 30 days between the original and the retest. Students are encouraged to take additional time to prepare or review materials prior to repeating the COMPASS placement test.

How Long Are Placement Scores Valid?

Placement Test Scores are valid for three (3) years only

THE PLACEMENT TEST

What Materials Are Provided?

Paper, Pencils and Calculators are provided by Terra Community College

Before The Test

Before taking the placement test you will be asked to confirm that you have read the testing regulations and that you agree to comply with them.

Confidentiality

Your test scores and the information you provide when taking the tests will only be provided to American College Testing and to the College.

During The Test

1. Concentrate On The Test

Focus on test questions and tune out any external and internal distractions. If there is noise or movement in the room that is bothering you, discuss it with the test coordinator. If you find that your mind is starting to wander, take a few deep breaths to relax.

2. Follow Directions

Take your time reading the directions on every section. If you are confused, ask the test coordinator. Be sure you understand how the test is set up before you begin. A few minutes previewing the section and doing some practice items can pay off in accuracy.

3. Think

Use knowledge, logic, and common sense, and have confidence in your ability to reason through the question. While you don't want to spend too much time on any one question, don't give up too easily either.

4. Don't Pay Attention to Other Students

Others may finish the test before you for a variety of reasons. Don't allow students' leaving to intimidate you and cause you to feel anxious about your test. They may have finished more quickly at the expense of accuracy or may only take one section of the COMPASS placement test.

After The Test

Results will be provided for you as soon as you are finished with your assessment test along with information about the next steps required in order to register for classes.

Students will be asked to keep their placement test results for the meeting with their academic advisor. The academic advisor will explain the test results and make recommendations based on the test scores and selected major.

What Types of Questions Will I Be Asked on COMPASS?

1st. Set of Questions

The first set of questions in COMPASS ask for information about your name, student identification number, desired program of study at Terra Community College, education, background and goals. You will be given the opportunity to indicate areas such as financial aid, child care, career counseling, or tutoring with which you may need help.

Writing

You will be given a passage to read and asked to find errors in the writing. These errors could be sentence structure, spelling, grammar, or punctuation. There will also be a few questions about the passage.

- The writing section requires you to edit an essay
- You have to highlight a portion of the text that needs changing
- There will be a list of five options for revising that area of text
- Choose the way you wish to change the passage
- When you finish editing the essay, you will be asked to press F.
- After doing so, you will not be allowed to make any changes.

Mathematics

You will begin the Mathematics portion of COMPASS at the Algebra level. As you answer the questions the test will automatically adjust the difficulty level. You may be seeing easier and/or harder questions as the test determines your knowledge level.

Multiple-choice items in each of the five mathematics placement areas test the following: 1) Basic Skills---performing a sequence of basic operations
2) Application---Applying sequences of basic operations to novel settings or in complex ways and 3) Analysis---demonstrating conceptual understanding of principles and relationships in mathematical operations.

Once you move to the next question, you may not go back to change any previous answers. You may not skip any problems and come back to them.

- You may use the paper provided by TCC for scratch work
- Calculators are provided by Terra Community College
- An online calculator is available
- Students also may use their own calculators as long as they meet the calculator-use guidelines specified by ACT

Reading

You will be given passages to read and asked to answer the questions that follow. This section measures your ability to understand what you read. Some questions will ask you to read the statement or passage and then choose the best answer to the question. Answer the question on the basis of what is stated or implied in the passage.

GUIDELINES for CALCULATOR USE AS SPECIFIED BY ACT

To ensure fairness for all students, to avoid disturbances in the testing room, and to protect the security of the testing materials and process:

THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF CALCULATORS ARE NOT PERMITTED:

- *Pocket Organizers*
- *Handheld or Laptop Computers*
- *Electronic Writing Pads or Pen-Input Devices*
- *Models with a QWERTY (typewriter) keypad (although calculators with letters on the keys are permitted as long as the keys are not arranged in QWERTY format)*
- *Models with built-in capability to simplify algebraic expressions, multiply polynomials, or factor polynomials (often called Computer Algebra Systems), for example, CFX-9970G, TI-89, and TI-92*

THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF CALCULATORS ARE PERMITTED ONLY IF THEY ARE USED AS NOTED:

- *Models with Paper Tapes: The paper must be removed*
- *Models that make noise: The sound feature must be turned off*
- *Models that can communicate (transfer data or information) wirelessly with other calculators: The wireless transfer capability must be disabled by placing opaque material (such as masking tape) over the infrared data port.*
- *Models that have a power cord. No power cords are permitted. The electrical cord must be removed.*

Students may use any four-function, scientific, or graphing calculator on any COMPASS mathematics test, except as specified above.

If students plan to use a calculator of their own, they are responsible for bringing an acceptable one to the testing session.

Students are responsible for ensuring that their calculator works properly. If their calculator uses batteries, students must make certain that the batteries are strong enough to last throughout the testing session. Students may bring a spare calculator and extra batteries with them.

If students bring a calculator, the test proctor is to make sure that they (1) are using an acceptable type of calculator (2) use their backup calculator only if their primary calculator fails, (3) do not share their calculator with any other test taker, and (4) do not use the calculator's memory to store any test questions or responses.

COMPASS PLACEMENT TESTING POLICIES

To ensure fair & secure testing conditions, students must adhere to the following:

Students are to report to the Admissions and Enrollment Services Office at least 5 minutes prior to the testing time. Anyone arriving late must return at a later date.

A VALID PHOTO IDENTIFICATION IS REQUIRED when reporting to Admissions and Enrollment Services. Bring a driver's license, student ID, or other photo ID with you for verification. If an individual does not have identification, an exam will not be administered.

Children are not allowed in the testing room. If you have children, please make arrangements for their care while you take your exam.

No food or beverages are permitted inside the testing room.

Cell phones and pagers are not permitted when taking an exam. Test administration will be discontinued if your device rings.

Sharing calculators during the test is not permitted.

Going in and out of the testing room is not allowed. If you leave the room you will have completed your test. Please use the restroom before you enter the testing room.

Terminals, Settings, Accessories & Connections are not to be tampered with.

Use of dictionaries, notes, textbooks, or any other reference/resource materials is not permitted.

Students requiring special accommodations must contact the Learning Support Services Office two weeks prior to the test.