

ACCUPLACER Setting Cut Scores



Setting Cut Scores

- ▶ ACCUPLACER tests are designed to assist institutions in placing students into appropriate courses.
- ▶ Given that institutions differ greatly with respect to composition of the student body, faculty and course content, it is not possible to stipulate specific test cut scores that should be used for placement decisions.
- ▶ Instead, each institution should establish their own cut scores to facilitate placement decisions based on factors and data unique to their institution.



Setting Cut Scores

- ▶ ACCUPLACER does not recommend cut scores or in any way mandate the cut scores that institutions or state systems should use for college placement decisions.
- ▶ The College Board strongly recommends that multiple measures be used when placing students. For more information on multiple measures and how to implement within your system, please visit <http://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/professionals/accuplacer-resources>



Reliability & Validity



ACCUPLACER Test Reliability

Test	Test Reliability
Elementary Algebra	0.92
Arithmetic	0.93
College Level Math	0.90
Reading Comprehension	0.89
Sentence Skills	0.88
ESL Language Use	0.92
ESL Reading Skills	0.91
ESL Sentence Meaning	0.92
ESL Listening	0.84
WritePlacer	0.96*

* rater correlation (correlation between machine scores and human scores)



Reliability is not enough

- ▶ If test scores are used to make inferences about an examinee's ability, the test must be both reliable and valid.
 - ▶ Reliability is a prerequisite for validity and refers to the ability of a test to measure a particular trait consistently.
 - ▶ Tests can be highly reliable and still not be valid for a particular purpose.
 - ▶ Determining the reliability of a test is an important first step but not the defining step in determining the validity of a test.



What is test validity and test validation?

- ▶ A test that is perfectly appropriate and useful in one situation may be inappropriate or insufficient in another.
 - ▶ For example, a test valid for determining high school graduation may be inappropriate for use in college placement.
- ▶ Test validity, or the validation of a test, explicitly means validating the use of a test in a specific context, e.g., placement into a course.
 - ▶ Therefore, it is important to study the test results in the setting in which they are used.



Getting Started



Documentation

- ▶ Institutions must document their process in setting cut scores at every step.
- ▶ Campuses can be challenged to defend their cut scores by community, by students/parents, new faculty, and even state agencies.
- ▶ Historical knowledge is a tenuous and primarily anecdotal.



Roles & Responsibilities

- ▶ Faculty
 - ▶ Focused on curriculum and course competencies, minimum necessary skills from students.
- ▶ Testing Staff
 - ▶ Focused on student testing experience, implements branching profile and placement rule decisions in system.
- ▶ Administration
 - ▶ Focused on impact of cut score decisions, particularly as enrollment patterns may be affected.
- ▶ Institutional Research
 - ▶ Focused on validation of cut score decisions



Involve the faculty

- ▶ For each course have the faculty agree upon a list of skills necessary for success in the course.

- ▶ Familiarize faculty with the test content by providing:
 - ▶ the test description*
 - ▶ proficiency statements*

* Found in the ACCUPLACER Program Manual, under the Resources tab. (Pages 14 – 63)



Let the faculty take the tests

- ▶ A Demo Site has been established for faculty to use when reviewing tests.
- ▶ The Institution Administrator will need to create a Proctor Username and Password for faculty to use when reviewing the tests.
- ▶ 25 free test units have been added to the Demo Site.



Let the faculty take the tests

- ▶ It is recommended that faculty review the tests together so that they can discuss the various items in the tests.
- ▶ Before answering each question, they should decide if a student who will be successful in the course should be able to answer the question correctly. Answer accordingly.
- ▶ Do this multiple times to see what scores are generated.



Give the test to your students

- ▶ At the beginning of the semester, give the test to a group of enrolled students who you know have been placed correctly.
- ▶ Evaluate the scores they receive in order to determine a possible cut score for placement into the course.



Give the test to your students

- ▶ If you have a developmental course that prepares students for a college level course, give these students the test at the end of the semester.
- ▶ These are students that your faculty has prepared for the college level course. Test scores from these students will provide useful data when setting a cut score for the college level course.



Review scores used at other colleges

- ▶ It may be helpful to know what scores are used at other colleges for placement into various levels of courses.
- ▶ Review Survey of Cut Scores provided in Attachment E of the ACCUPLACER Program Manual.
- ▶ Contact other colleges in your area who are using ACCUPLACER tests.
- ▶ For more information concerning methods for setting cut scores see Setting Cut Scores For College Placement found under the Resources tab, Research Library.



Once the preliminary score is determined

- ▶ Once the tests have been reviewed by faculty and student data is available for an analysis, you should have a range of scores to consider as a cut score for a particular course.
- ▶ Use the scores for placement.
- ▶ After the third or fourth week of class, once the faculty has become familiar with the skills of their students, ask them to evaluate their students' placements.
- ▶ Students can be asked to evaluate their placement as well.



Faculty evaluation of placements

This can be done by asking faculty to make a copy of their roll sheet and to create three columns:

- ▶ Placed appropriately
- ▶ Needs higher level course
- ▶ Needs lower level course

Based on test scores, class participation, etc. faculty should rate the students' placements. These ratings can then be compared to the placement scores of the students and possible adjustments made if necessary.



Validity & ACES Study



Do a validity study

- ▶ ACCUPLACER recommends that cut scores be re-examined every three years or sooner if a significant change to the student body occurs or course placement patterns change significantly from what has been observed previously.
- ▶ This can be done in a variety of ways, but should always include faculty. The most common method of conducting a review is to do a validity study in which ACCUPLACER scores are compared to end-of-course grades, faculty evaluations, student evaluations, and/or the first test grade in a course.
- ▶ Results of a validity study will help to evaluate your existing placement policies and point out any need for possible revisions. They will also provide information concerning future placement decisions.



Admitted Class Evaluation Service (ACES)

- ▶ The College Board will help you conduct a campus validity study through ACES at no cost.
- ▶ ACES Placement Validity Studies give you the information you need to confirm or improve your current course placement policies.
- ▶ <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/higher-ed/validity/aces>



Admitted Class Evaluation Service (ACES)

<http://research.collegeboard.org/services/aces>

Home > Services > Admitted Class Evaluation Service (ACES)

Admitted Class Evaluation Service (ACES)

VALIDATE YOUR ADMISSION AND PLACEMENT POLICIES

Despite all the measures you use to make admission and placement decisions, you may not know which combinations are the best indicators of successful performance at your college. Do the criteria you use for admitting students accurately predict first-year grade point average? Can scores on a test predict course grades in English 101?

Admitted Class Evaluation Service™ (ACES) is a free online service that predicts how admitted students will perform at your institution generally and how successful they can be in specific classes. ACES helps you answer important questions about the assessments you use to admit and place students at your institution.

ACES Offers You Free, Easy-To-Read Validity Studies
ACES offers two types of validity studies—admission and placement.

Search Publications

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Contact Us


The College Board
250 Vesey Street
New York, NY 10281

Email Research

Services

- Admission Validity Study
- Placement Validity Study
- Validity Handbook
- Recruiting for the National SAT


User Resources



Resources Inside ACCUPLACER

- ▶ Getting Started with ACCUPLACER
- ▶ ACCUPLACER User's Guide
- ▶ ACCUPLACER Program Manual

Resources	
Resources	
Resource Name	
Knowledge Base	
<u>ACCUPLACER User's Guide</u>	
COMPANION Administrator's Manual	
Join ACCUPLACER Electronic Discussion Group	
Launch ACCUPLACER from Your Portal	
<u>Getting Started with ACCUPLACER</u>	
<u>ACCUPLACER Program Manual</u>	
Resources for Students	
Ability to Benefit (ATB) Testing	
ACCUPLACER Training Videos	
Research Library	
News and Information	



ACCUPLACER Implementation Resources Online

<http://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/professionals/accuplacer-resources>

- ▶ Multiple Weighted Measures
 - ▶ Introduction
 - ▶ White Paper
 - ▶ Setting MWM Up in ACCUPLACER
- ▶ Intervention Tools
 - ▶ Executive Summaries
 - ▶ Individual Case Studies
 - ▶ Software-based and non-software based intervention
 - ▶ Best Practices Guide
- ▶ Student Preparation Tools
 - ▶ iPhone Study App
 - ▶ Web Study App
- ▶ Validity Studies
 - ▶ Overview
 - ▶ Handbook
 - ▶ Sample Report



Professional Development Resources

<http://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/professionals/professional-development>

- ▶ Live webcasts held on a monthly schedule
- ▶ Recorded sessions on a variety of topics
- ▶ ACCUPLACER Account Setup presentation
 - ▶ Setup process overview
 - ▶ Step by step instructions
 - ▶ Links to video demonstrations



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ACCUPLACER Outreach and Support Teams

The Outreach Team

- ▶ Senior Assessment Managers
- ▶ Provide service to institutions at the campus, system, and state levels
- ▶ Consultation, training, professional development, and advocacy
- ▶ On campus, face-to-face service
- ▶ Virtual service via webcast and phone

ACCUPLACER Support

- ▶ Staff dedicated to troubleshooting, problem solving, Q/A
- ▶ Available 12 hours/day – 6 days/week
- ▶ Phone: 866-607-5223
- ▶ Email: info@accuplacer.org
- ▶ Live chat



Questions?

- ▶ If you have additional questions after reviewing this recording, please contact ACCUPLACER at accuplacer@collegeboard.org or call 866-607-5223.

