



ACCUPLACER Next-Generation Preparation Guide

What is ACCUPLACER?

ACCUPLACER is a computerized assessment used by Lethbridge College to determine your placement into various courses and/or programs. It is made up of several tests that allow you to show your knowledge and skills in different areas. Depending on what program you have applied for and what your educational history is, you may be required to take all or some of the following ACCUPLACER tests:

- Math
 - Next-Generation Arithmetic
 - Next-Generation Quantitative Reasoning, Algebra, and Statistics (QAS)
- English
 - Next-Generation Reading
 - Next-Generation Writing
 - WritePlacer (essay writing)

With the exception of the WritePlacer, all questions are multiple choice in format. ACCUPLACER software selects questions that are appropriate for you based on your answers to previous questions. For example, if you respond correctly to the first question, the software will select a more difficult second question for you. If you respond incorrectly, the software will select a less difficult second question for you. This means that it is very unlikely that any two people will answer exactly the same series of questions.

Why do I need to take it?

ACCUPLACER is used to assess the English and/or math skills of:

- Mature students who do not meet program entrance requirements through prior studies, and
- Applicants to the Academic Upgrading program who have been out of high school for more than three years.

Your goal when taking these tests is to demonstrate your skills and knowledge, so you can be placed appropriately in college programs or Upgrading classes. If you do not meet the entrance requirements for a particular program, your test scores can be used by our staff to recommend an alternative course of study.

What do the scores mean? How are they used?

Because the test is completed on a computer, your test is scored immediately upon completion (except for WritePlacer, which requires a person to read your essay and confirm your score). The multiple-choice portions are scored on a scale from 200 to 300 points, with higher scores showing more advanced skills. The WritePlacer portion is scored on a scale from 1 to 8, with a score of 8 showing clear and consistent mastery of on-demand essay writing. ACCUPLACER is not an assessment that you can pass or fail, but since your results will help guide your placement in programs and courses at Lethbridge College, it's important that you do your best.

Different programs have different pre-requisite scores. To better understand the requirements for your prospective program, you can consult the latest academic calendar (available at <https://lethbridgecollege.ca/document-centre/publications/academic-calendar>) or contact our Admissions department (by email: admissions@lethbridgecollege.ca; or phone 403-320-3200, option 1).

What can I expect to see on the assessment?

Depending on what program you are applying for, you may be required to write the full ACCUPLACER, or you may only be asked to write specific tests. Here is a summary of the various ACCUPLACER tests:

- **Next-Generation Arithmetic**
 - Focuses on computation (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division), order of operations, estimation and rounding, comparing and ordering values in different formats, and recognizing equivalent values across formats
 - The knowledge and skill areas being assessed are:
 - Whole number operations
 - Fraction operations
 - Decimal operations
 - Percentage
 - Number comparisons and equivalents
 - Multiple choice questions; no time limit
- **Next-Generation QAS**
 - Assesses the following knowledge and skill areas:
 - Rational numbers
 - Ratio and proportional relationships
 - Exponents
 - Algebraic expressions
 - Linear equations
 - Linear applications and graphs
 - Probability and sets
 - Descriptive statistics
 - Geometry concepts
 - Multiple choice questions; no time limit

- **Next-Generation Reading**
 - Measures a student's ability to understand what he or she has read. The broad knowledge and skill areas being assessed are:
 - Information and ideas – focusing on the information content of text
 - Rhetoric – focusing on the craft and structure of writing
 - Synthesis – focusing on synthesizing multiple sources of information
 - Vocabulary – focusing on figuring out the meaning of words and phrases in the contexts in which they appear
 - Multiple choice questions; no time limit
- **Next-Generation Writing**
 - Measures a student's ability to revise and edit multi-paragraph text. The broad knowledge and skill areas being assessed include:
 - Expression of ideas (development, organization, effective language use)
 - Standard English conventions (sentence structure, usage, and punctuation)
 - Multiple choice questions; no time limit
- **WritePlacer (essay writing)**
 - Measures a student's ability to write an on-demand essay when given a randomly assigned topic
 - Essays are scored based on purpose and focus, organization and structure, development and support, sentence variety and style, mechanical conventions, and critical thinking.
 - 1 on-demand essay question; 1-hour time limit

For more detailed breakdown of what to expect in each test, as well as preparation materials and sample questions, visit <https://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/educator/next-generation>.

How long does the assessment take?

With the exception of the WritePlacer section, there is no time limit for the tests. Typically, it takes approximately 2.5 to 3.5 hours to complete the full ACCUPLACER (roughly 30 minutes for each multiple choice section and one hour for the WritePlacer).

Can I review my answers at the end before submitting my finished test?

No, you can't. This is because each answer you submit affects what question you'll get next. ACCUPLACER asks you to confirm each answer before going on to the next question.

What resources do I need to bring to the assessment?

You will need to bring photo ID to write at Lethbridge College Testing Services. You will not be allowed to bring cell phones, watches or other electronic devices (e.g., calculators, fitness trackers, etc.), hooded clothing, jackets, purses, backpacks, hats, etc. into the testing room, but you can store them in our free lockers while you complete the assessment. For the assessment

itself, you will not be allowed any materials other than scrap paper and writing materials, which we will provide. For certain math questions, an on-screen calculator with basic functions will be available to you.

How often can I take the assessment?

ACCUPLACER provides an accurate assessment of foundational math and language arts skills, so repeated attempts likely will not result in significantly improved scores, unless considerable work is completed to improve these skills. For this reason, each individual is limited to three attempts within any twelve-month period. Your scores are valid for two years.

What happens if I don't get the scores I need?

If you don't get the scores you need, you will have the option of retesting after two weeks have passed. During this two week period, we strongly recommend that you take time to study and practice in order to prepare yourself for the retest. If you don't get the scores you need on your retest, you will need to wait a period of three months before being allowed a third attempt. You are allowed a maximum of three attempts within any twelve-month period.

Do I have to pay for the assessment?

Before you can write the ACCUPLACER, you must pay your application fee, which includes up to two attempts at the assessment. To see our current fees for additional attempts, visit <https://lethbridgecollege.ca/departments/testing-services/placement-assessment>.

Are there accommodations for students with disabilities?

If you have a documented disability, you may be eligible for testing accommodations through Accessibility Services. You can contact them at (403) 320-3202 ext. 5400.

What happens after I write the assessment? What do I need to do?

After you write the assessment, your scores will be forwarded to Admissions for review.

- If you have applied to a post-secondary program, Admissions will contact you by letter or email to explain the outcome of your assessment. This is usually sent within 48 hours of receiving your scores. If your scores don't meet the placement requirements, you'll be told which sections of the ACCUPLACER you need to rewrite if you want to try again. Otherwise, you can talk to an Admissions Specialist to discuss other options.
- If you have applied for Academic Upgrading, course placement recommendations will be made for you based on your results. Once those are complete (within 1-2 business days), you can meet with an Academic Advisor to review your course placement. You can call 403-320-3200 (Option 2) or stop by our Student Services desk to book an appointment with an advisor. If you believe your recommendations to be low, you have

the option of rewriting the ACCUPLACER and having your recommendations re-assessed.

If you choose to rewrite the ACCUPLACER, you are required to wait at least two weeks before trying again, and it is highly recommended that you use that time to prepare for the assessment.

- If you applied to a post-secondary program and your rewrite scores still don't meet the placement requirements, you may wish to speak with an Admissions Specialist or with an Academic Advisor to discuss other options.
- If you applied for Upgrading, you can meet with an Academic Advisor again to review any updated recommendations.

Do I need to prepare for the assessment?

Absolutely! Undoubtedly! No question about it!

ACCUPLACER is a unique assessment with unique questions covering a broad range of material. If you take the time to study the various question types found in the assessment, you'll be far more successful. If you take the time to study and refresh yourself on the subject being tested, you'll be even more successful. Remember, this assessment will play a role in what program or courses you're placed in at the college. It's far better to be prepared than to come to the assessment not knowing what to expect. Additionally, the importance of preparation increases the longer you've been out of school. If it has been a while since you were in a classroom, don't underestimate the value of preparation.

How can I prepare for it?

It is very important that you do some preparation before coming to write the ACCUPLACER, and it will be worth it to put in time and effort to get ready.

A good place to start is with the official ACCUPLACER web-based study app, available at <https://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/student/practice>.

Here are some basic tips for preparing:

- Focus your energy on the knowledge and skill areas mentioned above (pp. 2 and 3).
- Don't rely only on memorization to prepare for Next-Generation Arithmetic and QAS. It will be far more helpful to do practice problems and put your skills to work.
- The same advice is useful in preparing for Next-Generation Writing. Don't just memorize grammar and punctuation rules. Do practice problems to make sure you can use your knowledge correctly.
- Prepare for Next-Generation Reading by reading, even if you're reading newspapers, magazines, or online material. Whatever you read, ask yourself questions. What are the main and supporting ideas? What is the author's purpose for writing this text? How does the author develop his/her ideas? What is the tone of the text?

- To prepare for WritePlacer, review essay-writing formats and strategies to make sure you can organize and develop your ideas properly in an essay.
- Reviewing language arts and math terminology may also help.

There are a number of tools available both online and at Lethbridge College to help you to get ready for writing the ACCUPLACER. We've identified some of them below.

After you have gone through some practice materials and identified possible trouble spots, you can contact the Learning Café at Lethbridge College for help with these areas. Except for during the summer months, our staff is available for half hour appointments to help you with any questions you may have, or for ten-minute drop-in sessions. The Learning Café is found in the Buchanan Library at Lethbridge College. Please contact them at 403-382-6952 or learningcafe@lethbridgecollege.ca. For further information, visit <https://lethbridgecollege.ca/departments/learning-cafe>.

ACCUPLACER Preparation Suggestions

Official ACCUPLACER Preparation Materials

<https://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/student/practice>

- **FREE Web-based study app** that features practice questions (with explanations) for all test sections
- App can be accessed from your computer, tablet or smartphone

<https://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/educator/next-generation>

- General information on the test, along with a link to the practice app
- Also includes links to official sample questions in all of the test areas, along with answer keys for checking your work and the rationale for each correct answer. The free sample questions can be found at the bottom of the page. These are good examples of the types of questions you will see on the ACCUPLACER assessment.

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

- WritePlacer guide with sample essays (link opens a PDF file)

More Practice Questions

http://www.testprepreview.com/accuplacer_practice.htm

- Self-assessment modules for many ACCUPLACER-related content areas, found near the bottom of the webpage; includes rationale for correct answers

<http://demo-test.accuplacer-test.com/>

- A basic practice test that provides instant feedback on your responses

Generic English and Math Preparation Website

<https://ca.ixl.com/>

Math Websites

<https://www.khanacademy.org/math>

<http://www.purplemath.com/>

<http://www.math.com/>

<http://www.sosmath.com/algebra/algebra.html>

<https://www.mathgoodies.com/students>

<https://brilliant.org/courses/#math-foundational>

<https://www.mathplanet.com/>

<https://hippocampus.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIOF9vAXVjDI1jdL5oluu9zGkHvZhW55>

- Instructional video channel on various math topics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uh86nJdUvLg>

- Next-Generation ACCUPLACER math overview video

English Websites

<http://www.lethbridgecollege.net/elearningcafe/>

- Lethbridge College's eLearning Café provides information on writing an essay, as well as links to a number of other helpful English-related resources

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/>

- Refer to the General Writing resources in the left-hand menu (mechanics, grammar, and punctuation will be especially helpful)

<http://lklivingston.tripod.com/essay/index.html>

- Guide to writing a basic essay

<http://englishforeveryone.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yihx82qms34>

- Next-Generation ACCUPLACER writing overview video

<http://www.riosalado.edu/testing/placement/Documents/OER-list.pdf>

- PDF document with links to various reading and writing resources

Bookstores and Online Book Sellers

There are various study guides available for purchase. If searching for study guides, make sure to look for “Next-Generation ACCUPLACER” materials. Otherwise, you may find materials for the Classic ACCUPLACER assessments (Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra, Reading Comprehension and Sentence Skills), which are now outdated.

Please note: The above resources are provided to help students get started on their ACCUPLACER preparations. Lethbridge College and Testing Services are not responsible for the completeness, quality or maintenance of these resources.