CITY COLLEGE PLACEMENT TESTS

CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO

A Tool for Community College Success
Congratulations!

You are enrolling at City College of San Francisco.

Funding for the production of this booklet was paid for by Bay Area Career Pathways Alliance.
Photos © Eurydice Galka at eurydicegalka.com
The next step in the enrollment process is taking the math and English placement tests.

These are not pass/fail tests—they are just one way of helping you and your counselor determine the program of courses that best suits your educational goals and skill levels. They will be administered at your school and will be about 3½ hours.

Here is some information to help you to do your best on the test.
FAQs:

**How can I prepare?**
Don’t stress out and take your time! Get plenty of sleep the night before the test. Make sure to rest and eat a good meal before the test.

**What should I bring to the test?**
Bring a picture ID. Eat a snack prior to taking the test. You don’t want to get hungry!

**What should I leave at home?**
Leave calculators, books, notebooks at home.

**What’s on the test?**
There are sample questions of the math, English, and ESL (English as a Second Language) tests located at: [www.ccsf.edu/Matric/sample-test-questions.pdf](http://www.ccsf.edu/Matric/sample-test-questions.pdf)

If you feel stuck answering any of the practice questions, talk to your teacher or tutoring center before taking the CCSF placement test.

**For the math test:** spend a couple hours reviewing basic arithmetic and algebra. Try the sample questions. Practice! Practice! Practice!

**For the English test,** just review the sample questions. This test measures your abilities as they are now. No study is necessary.

The proctors will maintain quiet in the room during the test. Computerized tests are offered at the college by appointment. Call the testing office at 415-239-3124.
About the Test

But I passed the CAHSEE Exam! Isn’t this the same thing?
The California High School Exit Exam (or CAHSEE) is a requirement for high school graduation in the state of California. Public school students must pass the exam before they can receive a high school diploma, regardless of any other graduation requirements. The CCSF Placement Test determines your level of preparedness for college level work. Passing the CAHSEE doesn’t waive the Placement Test requirement.

Should I skip a question if I don’t know the answer?
Make an educated guess if you don’t know. Your test result is the number of questions that you answer correctly; no points are subtracted for wrong answers.

What’s on the English placement test?
The English test measures your English vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing.

What’s on the ESL (English as a Second Language) placement test?
The ESL test measures your English listening skills, grammar and writing abilities.

What’s on the math placement test?
There are three levels of math tests you can take: arithmetic, elementary algebra and college level math. All high school students should take both the arithmetic and algebra sections. The College Level Math test is for students who wish to enroll directly into Calculus.

How long is the test?
Testing takes about 3 1/2 hours. English or ESL: 90 minutes; Math: 90 minutes (The Arithmetic and Algebra tests are each 45 minutes for 35 questions).
What is the difference between the English Placement Test and the ESL Placement test?

The ESL placement test includes a writing sample and a listening component. It should be taken by students whose primary language is not English. In contrast the English placement test— which does not include a writing sample or listening subtest—is for students whose native language is English.
**IMPORTANCE OF THE TEST**

**Why is the CCSF placement test important?**

The CCSF placement test is the start of your college career. Even if you don’t think you will attend CCSF, take it seriously. The scores you get on the test and the grades you get in your college classes while enrolled in high school are on your college transcript.

You never know the direction your life will take. You may think you don’t plan on attending CCSF, but you may find yourself taking a required course to complete your major at another college or university. You don’t want to be delayed from taking that class by placement tests that don’t reflect your true abilities.

**How can my CCSF placement test save me time and money?**

Do your best on the CCSF placement test because a higher course placement may save you one or two semester of English and math course work.
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Who should take the ESL placement test?
Students for whom English is a second language and aren’t designated as Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) by SFUSD.

Why should I take the ESL test?
If you’re not a native speaker, and if you don’t have near native fluency, ESL Instruction can help you improve your language skills, including grammar, vocabulary, listening and pronunciation as well as reading and writing.

I’ve heard taking the ESL test can result in taking many more English classes than the English test. Why should I take the ESL test then?
In fact this route can save you time and money. The CCSF courses will get you the help you need with grammar and writing. If you don’t get the support you need with English first, you could fail other courses in your major.

In a global economy, companies need workers who can speak and write English and another language fluently. College level English is essential to your success as a student and for your future.

Can I skip levels once I start the CCSF ESL Program?
Some students are able to skip levels within the ESL sequence. For continuing students, the recommendation comes from the teacher, who shows a written sample to two instructors who are teaching the level above. If the instructors agree, and if the college approves, the student will be moved to the next level.
I have a disability and receive services through my high school. How does this impact taking the placement test?

Special accommodations are available for students with verified disabilities. To make arrangements for yourself, contact the Disabled Students Programs & Services (DSPS) at 415-561-5481. State that you are enrolling as a “concurrent student from (name of high school).” You can see a DSPS counselor prior to enrolling at CCSF. Bring your IEP and high school transcripts. DSPS counselors will determine the appropriate accommodations.
Do I have to take the English test?

All high school students must take the Placement Test. You may be excused from testing if you have met the following:

- UC Entry level Course/Subject A
- UC Analytical Writing Placement Exam
- International Baccalaureate

Any of the following SAT scores:

- SAT I Verbal: 590
- SAT II Writing Subject Test: 660
- SAT Reasoning Test, Writing Section: 680

Advanced Placement Test Exam in:

- English Literature and Composition: Score of 3, 4 or 5, or English Language and Composition: Score of 3, 4 or 5
- ACT Combined English/Writing Test with score of 30 or higher
Do I have to take the math test?
All high school students must take the Placement Test. You may be excused from testing if you submit proof of one of the following:

Any of the following SAT scores:
- SAT I Math: 600, Eligibility: Math 70, 75, 80, 90 or 95
- SAT II Math: 550, Eligibility: Math 70, 75, 80, 90 or 95
- SAT Reasoning Test, Math Section 600, Eligibility: Math 70, 75, 80, 90 or 95
- ACT Math Score of Level I or II or 28, Eligibility: Math 70, 75, 80, 90 or 95
- Advanced Placement Exam in Calculus AB or BC, Computer Science AB, or Statistics score of 3 or higher. Eligibility: Math 70, 75, 80, 90 or 95
- Completion (with a “C” or higher) of a college level math course equivalent to Math 840 (Elementary Algebra) or higher. Eligibility: Math 860 or 92, Math 70, 75, 80, 90 or 95.

How can I file a waiver if I don’t need to take this test?
You must file a Placement Testing Waiver Form and attach proof (e.g., transcripts, official test result reports). This form can be found at www.ccsf.edu/Matric/TestWaiver.pdf
What’s matriculation?
Matriculation is when you move from high school to college. The “matriculation process” is designed to help new students, including high school students, transition into college. The first step is taking a placement test. The next two steps include orientation to the college and counseling. When you arrive as an incoming freshman these are the steps you will go through.

Step One  **APPLY:** Online at http://cccapply.org/
Step Two  **ASSESSMENT:** Placement Testing of Math and English/ESL skills
Step Three  **ORIENTATION:** Information session about registering for classes at CCSF, instructional programs and support services available to new students; explanation of test results.
Step Four  **COUNSELING:** New student counseling is located in Conlan Hall room 205 for completion of initial Educational Plan
Step Five  **REGISTER:** The Office of Admissions and Records will register students into available courses.

**PLACEMENT TEST RESULTS**

How do I find out about my results?

- Your Placement Test results will be given to the counselor who is working with your school.  *OR*
- You can also pick them up at CCSF Testing Office:
  Conlan Hall Room 203, 50 Phelan Avenue, 415-239-3129
  Bring picture id.  *OR*
- Check online at www.ccsf.edu/w4

Can I take the test again if I don’t like my score?
You can take the test again after three months if you aren’t enrolled in a math or English class at CCSF. CCSF will use the best scores from each testing.
Take the test.

Useful Websites:

**Math**
- www.freemathhelp.com
- www.math.com
- www.purplemath.com
- www.khanacademy.org

**English**
- http://sat.collegeboard.com

**City College of San Francisco**
- www.ccsf.edu

**Sample test questions**
- www.ccsf.edu/Matric/sample-test-questions.pdf