

BASIC SKILLS ASSESSMENT FOR COLLEGE PLACEMENT

Title: Basic Skills Assessment for College Placement	Number: 4.28.0311.2
Approved by the Board of Governors Date: June 20, 2017	Implementation Date: August 1, 2017
History: New Revised Approved by the Board of Governors: Scheduled Review Date:	Origin: Registry and Office of Enrolment Management

RATIONALE

H. Lavity Stoutt Community College (HLSCC) is committed to helping students succeed in their coursework. The purpose of the placement process is to match the academic readiness of the incoming student with the requirements of the curriculum and to ensure that students enroll in courses and programmes that accurately reflect their current skills and abilities including but not limited to English usage, reading and mathematics.

DEFINITIONS

Matriculated Student – A student who has been accepted for admission to the College, has declared a major of study, and is pursuing courses toward a degree or certificate.

Non-Matriculated Student – A student who has not declared a major or their intent to earn a degree or certificate.

Personal Interest/Enrichment Courses - Courses which provide skills used for academic achievement, personal growth, career advancement or college entry, independent of the pursuit of a degree or certificate (including pre-college courses). They can be taken for credit or non-credit. For this policy enrichment refers to credit and pre-college courses.

Dual Enrolment – Students who are in the last two years of high school and attend the College concurrent with their high school attendance.

POLICY

This placement policy applies only to matriculated students. To ensure that the criteria remain relevant to the placement of students an annual review of students' progress must be undertaken to assist in the review of the policy, placement criteria and placement tests.

ELEMENTS OF THE PLACEMENT PROCESS

The placement process is comprised primarily of but not limited to course placement in Mathematics and English based on established criteria, and on the placement test. Student scores on the General Education Development (GED) test, SAT, ACT and the West African Council Examination may also be used.

REQUIREMENTS OF AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENT PLACEMENT

1. Every applicant who declares a programme of study (degree or certificate) is subject to the Placement Process. Applicants for dual enrolment are exempt from the placement process. Their placement is judged by a separate process and criteria. If they continue at the College and declare a programme of study, they then may become subject to the placement process.
2. All matriculated students, full- or part-time must furnish the Registry and Office of Enrolment Management with one or more of the following in order to ascertain their placement:
 - (a) an official transcript of previous college courses or
 - (b) a high school certificate with transcript or
 - (c) CXC transcript or
 - (d) GED or high school equivalent report or
 - (e) ACT or SAT scores less than 2 years old.
3. It is the responsibility of the Registry and Office of Enrolment Management to oversee the placement process, with input from relevant instructional departments.
4. Decisions concerning minimum scores for course level placement are made by the Humanities and/or Mathematics and Natural Science Department.
5. Course placement decisions may only be overruled by the Head of relevant Department in consultation with the Dean.
6. Reasonable accommodation must be made for placement testing of individuals who have declared a disability in the process of their admission.

TIMING OF THE PLACEMENT PROCESS AND DECISIONS

Placement tests should be completed before a student can register for classes.

PROCEDURES

SCREENING APPLICANTS FOR PLACEMENT TESTING

All applications will first be screened according to the *HLSCC Course Placement Criteria for Mathematics and English (2012)* (see attached) to determine the immediate placement or need for placement testing. Academic documents are assessed according to the Criteria.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR PLACEMENT TESTING

Every effort will be made to prepare applicants for placement testing. To accomplish this, students are:

- Advised of the need to take the examination with at least two weeks' notice of the examination date;
- Provided with written and oral information about placement testing;
- Provided with access to test practice or review material.

ADMINISTRATION OF TESTS

Placement tests are mainly administered electronically via MOODLE. They are also available in hard copy and are administered in this manner at the request of students who require such accommodation.

RETESTS

Retests will be guided by the following conditions:

- Students must wait 2 days before making a second attempt.
- The retest for Mathematics should be completed prior to the start of the semester but within one (1) month from the date of feedback concerning the first test. Course registration will not be changed for any placement test repeated after the start of the semester.
- Students are permitted four placement examination attempts per subject in a 12-month period.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

In processing the results for the Mathematics Placement, the scores generated in MOODLE are compared with the scores submitted from the Mathematics Department to determine the proper placement. The table entitled "Interpretation of Mathematics Results" is used in this process. The composition portion of the placement test is to be marked by the English faculty, and together with the results that are scored using MOODLE are used to determine the students' placement.

COMMUNICATING TEST RESULTS

Test results and their interpretation are communicated to applicants in writing and are retained for a period of five (5) years. Every effort is made to respond to applicants, students or the parents of applicants concerning the results of the placement test(s).

The interpretation of test results is also shared with advisors to assist students in the registration process. Placement results are also placed on the student's permanent record.

Test results are confidential and may only be communicated to individuals or institutions outside of the College with the written authorization of the applicant/student.

SHELF-LIFE, SECURITY AND STORAGE OF PLACEMENT TESTS

Mathematics placement scores will be considered valid for course placement for a period of two years, while English placement scores are valid for a period of five years for the purpose of course placement.

Hard copies of completed tests are stored for five (5) years and then shredded. Results are also stored electronically in the student online information system (SONIS) for an indefinite period.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

In those instances where a student is found to be cheating or to have cheated to gain an unfair advantage on the placement examinations the candidate will be requested to retake the examination, and to do so after passage of at least one semester.

CHALLENGES TO PLACEMENT EXAMINATION RESULTS

A candidate who has received a test result may challenge the placement decision by requesting to retake the examination. The student may also request a 'hearing' to seek an alternate placement. In such instance, the student may schedule a hearing with the Dean via the Head of Department. The decision of the Dean is final.

Table 1: Interpretation of Placement Results

MATHEMATICS	
Score	Recommended Course
25 or less	MAT050 Pre-College Algebra (Non-Credit)
26 – 59	MAT051 Beginning Algebra (Non-Credit)
60 - 75	MAT108 – College Algebra Part I (2 credits) Or MAT113 Introduction to Statistics (4 credits)
>75	MAT110 College Algebra (4 credits)

HLSCC COURSE PLACEMENT CRITERIA FOR MATHEMATICS AND ENGLISH (SPRING 2012)

Criteria for Placement in Mathematics

MAT050:

Level B Arithmetic Pass

MAT051:

Level B Pass **OR**

CXC General Grades 5 – 6 **OR** **CXC Basic Grades 1 – 3

MAT101,108,110,113

Level A Credit or Distinction **OR** CXC General Grades 1 – 3

HLSCC Mathematics Placement Test Administered

Level A Pass **OR**

CXC General Grade 4 **OR**

Students with entry qualifications other than those already noted.

***For some students who graduated secondary schools prior to 2008.*

Criteria for Placement in English

ENG051/052:

Level B Pass

ENG104:

Level A Pass, Credit or Distinction in English Language **OR**

CXC General Grades 1 – 4 in English Language

HLSCC English Placement Test Administered

Students with entry qualifications other than those already noted.