

## What is ALEKS?

If you are looking to enroll in MATH 107 (PreCalculus), MATH 109 (Business Calculus), MATH 115 (Calculus I), or a course with a math component like CHEM 121 (General Chemistry I), then you may need ACT, SAT, or ALEKS scores, or an appropriate prerequisite class. If you do not have test scores or any prerequisite classes, then you may not be able to enroll in such courses during advising.

ALEKS Placement, Preparation and Learning (ALEKS PPL) Assessment is used to determine readiness for mathematics courses. The Placement Assessment is up to 30 questions and generally takes 60-90 minutes to complete. After the Placement Assessment, an individualized Prep and Learning Module is available for students to refresh their knowledge on forgotten topics. Students then have the opportunity to reassess and improve their placement.

ALEKS consists of three parts:

- **An Initial Placement Assessment** to be taken on your own prior to SOAR.
- **The Prep and Learning Module**, an individualized, self-paced online review.
- Access to four additional Placement Assessments to improve your score.

You are encouraged to spend time in the Prep and Learning Module, even if your desired score is achieved, because time spent in ALEKS will ultimately lead to better preparation and improved grades.

**What is the purpose of placement testing?** The Placement Assessment results will be used to determine the most appropriate courses for you as you move forward with college coursework. After taking a Placement Assessment, you should meet with your advisor to review your results and enroll in the best classes based on your scores.

This is a "Placement Assessment," not a test. The difference is that a Placement Assessment is designed to determine what you know and what you need to work on. At the end of the ALEKS PPL Assessment, you will have a much better sense of your strengths and weaknesses in math. You will then have a chance to brush on topics that may have been forgotten or that you have not practiced for some time.

**Be honest.** It is important you give honest effort so that the Placement Assessment truly reflects your current level of knowledge and math preparedness. **There is no benefit to cheating on the Placement Assessment** – the only result will be that you may be enrolled in classes that are too difficult, or not challenging enough, potentially costing you time and money. Therefore, while taking the Placement Assessment, you should not consult any outside sources for help (friends/family, internet searches, textbooks, notes etc...).

**Honor Code:** <https://www.centenary.edu/student-life/support-services/student-success/honor-code/>

## How to get started

If you do not have current ACT or SAT scores needed for academic advising, then you can use ALEKS Placement scores instead. **You are not required to use ALEKS Placement if you already have ACT or SAT scores**, though you may choose to do so. **You are not required to use ALEKS Placement if you do not plan to enroll in a course that requires math placement scores.**

If you already have college credit for Calculus (MATH 115), e.g. from an AP class, then you do not need to take the placement exam.

- Follows the steps below about five weeks before arriving at SOAR:
- **Step 1.** Go to [www.aleks.com/sign\\_up](http://www.aleks.com/sign_up)
- **Step 2.** Enter the class code: **GYJVJ-YYHUD**
  - **Note:** The above class code is for the Fall 2023 – Spring 2024 school year.
  - After clicking continue, you should see a screen that includes “Centenary College of Louisiana” as the institution. If not, you may have entered the wrong class code.
- **Step 3.** Follow the instructions to create an account. You will be required to purchase access for about \$25 (updated 04-28-22). You should purchase access and take the ALEKS placement exam prior to coming to SOAR.
  - Be sure to use your name as it appears on your Centenary application.
- **Step 4.** Follow the tutorial and then take the Initial Placement Assessment on your own time prior to coming to SOAR. This assessment is used to generate Prep and Learning Modules to help you improve.
- **Step 5.** Spend time in the Prep and Learning Module to practice and improve. You can take up to four more placement exams after spending enough time in the Prep and Learning Modules.
- **Remember, you should not use outside resources to work on ALEKS. Using the internet or computer algebra systems to help you get a better score may cause you to be enrolled in a class that is too difficult for you. There is no advantage in being dishonest. ALEKS does not award college credit! It is meant to help you prepare and be successful in your first college math class.**

## FAQs

### Preparation

**Why must I take the ALEKS PPL Assessment?** The Placement Assessment is used to determine the mathematics course in which you will have the greatest success. Upon completion of the Placement Assessments, your scores are sent to your academic advisor. Your advisor will review your scores and help make appropriate recommendations for course registration.

**Who has to take the ALEKS PPL Assessment?** Any student who does not have current ACT or SAT scores and wishes to enroll courses such as MATH 107 (PreCalculus), MATH 109 (Business Calculus), MATH 115 (Calculus I), or a course with a math component like CHEM 121 (General Chemistry I). If you already have college credit for Calculus (MATH 115), e.g. from an AP class, then you do not need to take the placement exam.

**When do I take the ALEKS PPL Assessment?** You will need to register and take an initial placement assessment prior to coming to SOAR. You are strongly encouraged to spend time in the Prep and Learning Modules to practice and improve your ALEKS score.

**Is there a fee for using ALEKS PPL?** Yes. You will need to register for ALEKS PPL before coming to SOAR and pay with a credit card. The fee is about \$25 (updated 04-28-22).

**Do I need to install any software or plug-ins prior to taking the ALEKS Placement Assessment?** No. There are no required plug-ins or applets required with your use of ALEKS PPL. As long as you have access to the internet and are using an updated browser, you should not experience difficulties in taking your Placement Assessment. For a list of preferred browsers, please review the ALEKS system requirements on their support site: [http://www.aleks.com/support/system\\_requirements](http://www.aleks.com/support/system_requirements)

**What topics are covered during the ALEKS PPL Assessment?** ALEKS PPL is an online, adaptive system that covers a broad spectrum of mathematics topics. The length of the Placement Assessment will vary, but can be up to 30 questions. You will see some, but not all, of the math you have learned in high school. It is a Placement Assessment, not a preview of math courses at Centenary. It is designed to identify if you are prepared for a particular course. After you take your first Placement Assessment, you will have the opportunity to review and master additional topics to reassess and improve your placement.

Topics covered:

- Real numbers (including fractions, integers, and percentages)
- Equations and inequalities (including linear equations, linear inequalities, systems of linear equations, and quadratic equations),
- Linear and quadratic functions (including graphs and functions, linear functions, and parabolas), exponents and polynomials (including integer exponents, polynomial arithmetic, factoring, and polynomial equations), rational expressions (including rational equations and rational functions
- Radical expressions (including higher roots and rational exponents)

- Exponentials and logarithms (including function compositions and inverse functions, properties of logarithms, and logarithmic equations)
- Geometry and trigonometry (including perimeter, area, and volume, coordinate geometry, trigonometric functions, and identities and equations).

**Can I practice using the ALEKS input tools before I begin the Placement Assessment?** ALEKS will begin with a brief tutorial to make sure you are comfortable with the math palette tools before your Placement Assessment begins. The tutorial shows you how to enter different types of answers, how to use the ALEKS calculator, and how to graph. If you aren't sure how to input an answer, or need help while you are taking the ALEKS Placement Assessment, select the **Help** button below the answer pallet tools. Going to the tutorial during your Placement Assessment will NOT impact your Placement Assessment results.

## Taking the Placement Assessment

**What is the format of the questions on ALEKS?** ALEKS is not a multiple-choice Placement Assessment. It is open-response and requires you to work out solutions with a paper and pencil, then enter them into ALEKS. Be sure to have scratch paper with you.

**May I use a calculator while using ALEKS?** ALEKS will provide an on-screen calculator if you need one to complete a particular problem. Otherwise, you may not use a calculator.

**May I use any other resources during a Placement Assessment?** You may only use a pen or pencil, paper, and the resources provided within ALEKS. You should not receive assistance from friends, family, other websites, textbooks, or any other resource not provided by ALEKS. Using outside resources will lead to improper placement and potentially course failure.

**Can I review a question after I've answered it?** Because ALEKS is adaptive, once you submit an answer, you cannot change it. Be sure to carefully check your answer before submitting your response.

**What if I see questions I don't know?** It is likely that you will be asked questions on material you have not yet learned. On such questions it is appropriate to answer, **I don't know**. On any question that you have familiarity with, however, it is important to do your best. **I don't know** is interpreted by ALEKS to mean that you do not know how to solve the topic, and this will be reflected in the Placement Assessment results. There is no penalty for incorrectly answering a question on the Placement Assessment, it only helps ALEKS understand what you know and don't know.

**Are Placement Assessments timed?** No, you are free to complete the Placement Assessment at your own pace. The system will allow you to access your Placement Assessment for 48 hours. If you need to exit the Placement Assessment for any reason, you will be able to log back in and pick up where you left off.

**What happens if I do not complete a Placement Assessment in the allotted time?** If the Placement Assessment is unproctored, you will have to restart the Placement Assessment. If the incomplete Placement Assessment is proctored and timed, you will be given a placement result, but it will not be a true reflection of your abilities.

# Placement Result

**What is my placement result?** Your placement result (overall score) is a number between 0 and 100. It represents the percentage of topics ALEKS has identified you have mastered.

Course placement is determined as follows:

Course #	Course Name	ALEKS Score Range
	Talk with your advisor	0-45
<b>MATH 102</b>	Art of Mathematical Thinking	46-60
<b>MATH 104</b>	College Algebra	46-60
<b>MATH 107</b>	PreCalculus	61-75
<b>MATH 109</b>	Calculus for Business and Economics*	76-100*
<b>MATH 115</b>	Calculus I	76-100

\*Note: Many students take MATH 107 before taking MATH 109. However, a score in the range of 61-75 may be acceptable to take MATH 109. You should talk to your advisor about the best option for you. If you are strong in all areas other than trigonometry, you should be ready for MATH 109.

## Where can I see my score?

- You will receive your score immediately upon completion of your Placement Assessment.
- Your ALEKS score can be viewed by re-entering ALEKS using the same access link for which you took the Placement Assessment.

**What if I do not place into the course I wanted?** This is a perfect opportunity to take advantage of the Prep and Learning Modules offered within ALEKS PPL. An individualized study plan will be created based on your performance on the Initial Placement Assessment. ALEKS will identify what you know and what you are ready to learn next so you can brush up on lost knowledge.

**I did not place into the class I wanted. Can I take it anyway?** You should discuss your options with your advisor.

**What if I placed into the class I wanted?** Congratulations! Continue to use your Prep and Learning Module to improve your chances for success. The placement result required is the minimum preparation for your course. Take advantage of the individualized review and learning features in ALEKS to get a better grade in your class.

**Can I retake the ALEKS PPL Assessment?** Yes, you may take up to four additional unproctored Placement Assessments. However, to make each attempt worthwhile, it is important that you spend time working in your ALEKS Prep and Learning Module between Placement Assessments so that you can improve your skills.

### **Can I retake the ALEKS Placement Assessment immediately?**

You must wait between Placement Assessments and spend time on the Prep and Learning Modules. There is generally no benefit to re-taking the Placement Assessment immediately after completing a prior attempt. You cannot improve your results by simply re-taking the Placement Assessment without spending time in the Prep and Learning Module to refresh material that you may have forgotten.

## **Prep and Learning Modules**

**How long do I have access to my Prep and Learning Module?** You will have 12 months of access to your Prep and Learning module. Access to the prep course will not begin until you select **start** on the top of your screen. DO NOT select into the Prep and Learning Module until you are ready to start working.

**Is there an additional fee for my Prep and Learning Module?** Access to a Prep and Learning Module is included along with the additional Placement Assessments.

**What are ALEKS Knowledge Checks?** While working in a Prep and Learning Module, you will periodically complete a Knowledge Check to make sure you have mastered the topics you gained in Learning Mode. If you do not show mastery during the Knowledge Check, the topics will be added back into your Learning Pie so you can review them again.

**Does progress in an ALEKS Prep and Learning Module count toward placement?** No. You must complete a new Placement Assessment to change your placement result. Select the placement tab in the upper right corner of the ALEKS page to start a new Placement Assessment.

**Can I change to a different Prep and Learning Module later?** No. You may only use one Prep and Learning Module. If you are unsure which module to select, use the module recommended by ALEKS or consult with your advisor.

## **Technical Support**

**What do I do if my web browser gets stuck or my computer crashes while I'm taking the Placement Assessment?** Simply close the browser, or log out and log back in. ALEKS will resume the Placement Assessment exactly where you left off, with no loss of your previous answers.

**Where can I get help with ALEKS?**

<http://www.aleks.com/faqs/technical>

[http://support.aleks.com/assess\\_placement](http://support.aleks.com/assess_placement)