

## LACCD WRITTEN EXPRESSION AND MATHEMATICS COMPETENCY-RELATED FAQ&A

### 1) Are “Placement” and “meeting competency” two different things?

- Yes.
- “Placement” refers the process by which a student is placed into the sequence of courses in English, ESL, and math according to criteria determined locally by each college (in compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and policies such as [AB 705](#), [AB 1805](#), [Title 5](#) as last revised 3/18/19, and CCC Chancellor’s Office memo [AA18-65](#)).
- “Meeting competency” refers to the process of determining whether or not a student possesses the knowledge, skills or competencies deemed to fulfill the criteria for awarding an associate of arts (AA)/science (AS) degree set forth in Board Rule 6200 (see below). Criteria for meeting competency are determined collectively among all District stakeholders, pursuant to relevant regulations described later in this document, and enforced District-wide in accordance with [Board Rule 6200](#). The introduction to that document provides the rationale for the competency requirement:
  - *The awarding of an Associate Degree symbolizes a successful attempt on the part of the college to lead students through patterns of learning experiences. Among these are the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing; to use mathematics; to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines; to be aware of other cultures and times; to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems; and to develop the capacity for self-understanding.*
- Thus, meeting competency in math signifies that a student possesses the knowledge, skills or competencies necessary “to use mathematics.”

### 2) Can placement into ENGLISH 101 be used to meet competency in written expression?

- No.
- Competency in written expression requires taking and passing ENGLISH 101, or placing into a course of a higher level.
- No student can be placed or place themselves above ENGLISH 101 via the automated “AB 705” placement process or via Guided Self-Placement. The only method by which a student can be placed above ENGLISH 101 is via a successful petition.
- In order to take a course with ENGLISH 101 as its prerequisite, or complete transfer requirements, or an ADT, AA, or AS degree, or any program specifically requiring ENGLISH 101, a student must take and pass ENGLISH 101 (and satisfy the other requirements for their degree per the college catalog).
- The only students who do not need to take ENGLISH 101 are those who do not intend to complete one of the above.

### 3) Can placement into transfer-level math courses be used to meet math competency?

- Yes.
- According to [Board Rule 6201.13](#):

*Effective for all students entering on or after the Fall 2009 semester, ...Competence in mathematics shall be demonstrated by obtaining a satisfactory grade in Mathematics 125 (Intermediate Algebra), or another mathematics course [\*] at the same level and rigor, or higher, and with elementary algebra or higher as a prerequisite, as recommended by the District Academic Senate and approved by the Chancellor.*

*The competency requirements in ... mathematics may also be met by completing an assessment, conducted pursuant to Title 5, CCR, section 55500[\*] and achieving a score determined to be comparable to satisfactory completion of ... Mathematics 125 respectively. That is, students may ...place into ... mathematics courses above [the] level ... Mathematics 125.*

*The competency requirements may also be met by obtaining a satisfactory grade in courses with ... mathematics content (but taught in subjects other than ... mathematics), which require entrance skills at a level equivalent to those necessary for ... Mathematics 125, respectively, and are taught at the same level and with the same rigor. The District Academic Senate shall recommend such courses to the Chancellor for approval. [Per the District Academic Senate, these are: MATH 120, 122, 123C, 124A & B, 125, 127 & 128, 134, 137, or any higher-level mathematics courses with a prerequisite of at least MATH 125 or its equivalent. (See LACCD Administrative Regulation [E-79](#).)]*
- \*On March 18, 2019, the California Board of Governors approved [changes to Title 5](#) specifying that for English and math, only assessments approved by that Board may be used. At this time, they have approved no assessments. Thus, the following phrases in Board Rule 6201.13 may not be enforced until or unless the California Board of Governors approves an assessment tool: “*mathematics may also be met by completing an assessment, conducted pursuant to Title 5, CCR, section 55500 and achieving a score determined to be comparable to satisfactory completion of ...*” However, all other terms of the Rule are supported by the Title 5 revisions and may be enforced. Per those revisions:

*...Effective for all students admitted to a community college for the Fall 2019 term or any term thereafter, competence in mathematics shall be demonstrated by obtaining a satisfactory grade in a mathematics course at or above the level of the course typically known as Intermediate Algebra (either Intermediate Algebra or another mathematics course at or above the same level, with the same rigor and with Elementary Algebra as a prerequisite, approved locally) or by demonstrating competency that is comparable to satisfactory completion of the specified a mathematics course at or above the level of the course typically known as Intermediate Algebra, determined locally...*

- This provision delegates the determination of how students may demonstrate competency to the colleges/Districts as approved by the District Board. Our current Board Rule continues to be the means by which this is defined. It states that placement may be used to demonstrate competency.

**4) If a student places into transfer-level math, does that student have to take and pass the transfer-level math course in order to meet math competency?**

- No.
- Placement into any transfer-level math course meets competency (see above) even if the student does not enroll in or pass that course.

**5) What are all the ways a student can meet math competency?**

- The student can pass a math course approved as meeting competency.
- The student can pass a math course at another U.S. Regionally accredited institution that is deemed equivalent to one that is approved as meeting competency.
- The student can pass a math course of a level higher than that meeting competency.
- The student can pass a math course at another U.S. Regionally accredited institution that is deemed to be of a level higher than that meeting math competency.
- The student can place into (but not necessarily take or pass) a transfer-level math course by completing the placement process in one of the following ways:
  - Via the automated “AB 705” placement process according to the college-specified placement criteria (for students who can provide the following information):
    - They report that within the past ten years they completed eleventh grade at or graduated from a US high school, or passed a GED or CA High School Proficiency exam.
    - They report their cumulative high school grade point average.
    - And in order to place into some math courses at some colleges: they report their highest high school math taken and highest passed and the grades they received in those.
  - Via the Guided Self-Placement process (for students who cannot provide the above information).
  - Via successful petition.

**6) Can meeting math competency by placing into transfer-level math be used to satisfy LACCD GE Area D2?**

- No.
- To satisfy any GE area, the student must take and pass the number of courses and units listed in the college catalog as satisfying that area. LACCD GE Area D2 at each college includes both math courses and non-math courses.
- And/or they may apply the following:
  - Coursework deemed equivalent from U.S. regionally accredited institutions per LACCD Administrative Regulation [E-93](#).
  - Coursework deemed equivalent from International Baccalaureate programs per Regulation [E-122](#).
  - Upper division coursework deemed equivalent from baccalaureate-granting institutions per Regulation [E-119](#).
  - Coursework deemed equivalent from institutions outside the United States per Regulation [E-101](#).
  - Scores earned on the CLEP exam per Regulation [E-123](#).
  - Scores earned on Advanced Placement exams per Regulation [E-110](#).

**7) After completing the placement process, if a student does not place higher than the math courses listed as meeting math competency, does that student have to take and pass any of them?**

- That depends on that student’s educational goal:
  - If such a student plans to enroll in a math course that lists one of them as a prerequisite, yes.
  - If such a student plans to earn an award listing one of them as required, yes.
  - If such a student plans to earn an associate of arts/science degree, yes. That student would have to pass one of them in order to meet math competency.
  - If such a student plans to satisfy the requirements for transfer or an associate degree for transfer, probably. That student would have to pass any relevant prerequisite (in most cases these are the courses that meet competency) for the transfer-level math course(s) required by that program, and then take and pass the required transfer-level math course(s).
  - If the student is able to apply any of the equivalences described in the previous question to meet the same requirement as the competency course, no.
  - If a student does not plan to complete any of the above, no.

**8) Are there associate of arts/science degrees that do not require math?**

- Yes.
- Most associate of arts/science degrees do not require math as a major requirement (and students may fulfill Area D2 of the LACCD GE Plan using any course listed in that area, including, but not limited to math courses).
- The only associate degrees that do require math are those that list math courses or other courses with math pre- or corequisites in their major requirements. And students may apply coursework/scores deemed equivalent as described earlier in this document to meet these, if applicable.
- However, all associate degrees require meeting math competency, which may be achieved (as described above) by placement into transfer-level math or by taking and passing a math course that meets competency, or by applying the equivalencies described above.
- Students whose major does not require math and who have met math competency by placement into transfer-level math or by applying any relevant non-math equivalency described above will be able to graduate without taking a math course at the degree-conferring college.