



# Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment

Student Informative Brochure



## What Is the TSI Assessment?

The TSI Assessment is a program designed to help your institution determine if you are ready for college-level course work in the general areas of reading, writing and mathematics. This program also will help determine what type of course or intervention will best meet your needs to help you become better prepared for college-level course work if you are not ready.

If you are an incoming college student in Texas, you are required to take the TSI Assessment — unless you are already exempt (read below) — to determine your readiness for college-level work. Based on how you perform, you may either be enrolled in a college-level course that matches your skill level or be placed in the appropriate developmental course or intervention to improve your skills and prepare you for success in college-level courses.

## Do I Have to Take the TSI Assessment?

Not all incoming students need to take the TSI Assessment. There are many ways you can be exempt. Qualifying for a TSI Assessment exemption means that you can enroll in any entry-level college course without restrictions. In other words, there are no prerequisites for enrollment in college-level courses. You may be exempt if you:

- ▶ Have met the minimum college readiness standard on SAT®, ACT, or a statewide high school test;
- ▶ Have successfully completed college-level English and math courses;
- ▶ Have enrolled in a Level-One certificate program (fewer than 43 semester credit hours);
- ▶ Are not seeking a degree; or
- ▶ Have been, or currently are, in the military.

If you think you may be exempt, please contact an advisor at your institution. For more information visit our website at [www.theccb.state.tx.us/DE/TSI](http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/DE/TSI) (See #1 and click on TSI/Exemptions)

## How Does the TSI Assessment Work?

If you are not exempt from taking the TSI Assessment, you will be asked by your college or university to take three tests: one in mathematics, one in reading and one in writing. Where necessary, you may be given an additional diagnostic test in a particular subject. This test is designed to provide more detailed information regarding your academic strengths and weaknesses.

These assessments include multiple-choice questions that are aligned to the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards. For the writing assessment it's likely that you will be asked to write an essay.

The assessments are computer adaptive, which means that questions increase or decrease in difficulty level depending on how you respond. The assessments are untimed; however, it is important to allow yourself enough time to complete each test because the results are a key factor in determining the course or courses in which you can enroll. When you complete the assessment, you immediately receive information on your score and your skill or proficiency levels.

## Mandatory Pre-Assessment Activity

Before you take the TSI Assessment, you must participate in a Pre-Assessment Activity. The college or university at which you take your test is required to provide the Pre-Assessment Activity as well as document your participation, so it is very important that you complete this activity before you take the test. Also, you will not be allowed to take the TSI Assessment until you have completed this activity. The activity includes the following:

- ▶ An explanation of the importance of the TSI Assessment;
- ▶ Practice test questions and feedback;
- ▶ An explanation of all your developmental education options, if you don't meet the minimum passing standard; and
- ▶ Information on campus and community resources that will help you succeed as a college student.

Contact the college or university at which you plan to take the test for details on dates and times to complete this mandatory Pre-Assessment Activity.

## What Does the Assessment Cover?

The **TSI Assessment in Mathematics** is a multiple-choice assessment that covers the four content areas listed below. There are approximately 20 items on the TSI placement test and 10 items in each section of the DE Diagnostic Test.

- ▶ **Elementary Algebra and Functions** measures your knowledge of linear equations, inequalities and systems; algebraic expressions and equations; and word problems and applications.
- ▶ **Intermediate Algebra and Functions** measures your knowledge of quadratic and other polynomial expressions, equations and functions; expressions, equations and functions involving powers, roots and radicals; and rational and exponential expressions, equations and functions.
- ▶ **Geometry and Measurement** measures your knowledge of plane geometry; transformations and symmetry; and linear, area and three-dimensional measurements.
- ▶ **Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability** measures your knowledge of interpreting categorical and quantitative data, statistical measures and probabilistic reasoning.

The **TSI Assessment in Reading** is a multiple-choice assessment that covers the four content areas listed below. There are approximately 24 items on the TSI placement test and 10 to 12 items in each section of the DE Diagnostic Test.

- ▶ **Literary Analysis** measures your skill in identifying and analyzing ideas in and elements of literary texts.
- ▶ **Main Idea and Supporting Details** measures your skill in identifying the main idea of a passage and in comprehending explicit textual information in a passage.
- ▶ **Inferences in a Text or Texts** measures your skill in synthesizing ideas by making a connection or comparison between two passages and in making an appropriate inference about single passages.
- ▶ **Author's Use of Language** measures your skill in identifying an author's purpose, tone, organization, or rhetorical strategies and use of evidence and in determining the meaning of words in context.



The **TSI Assessment in Writing** is an assessment that contains a multiple-choice section and an essay section.

## Multiple-Choice Section

The multiple-choice section of the **TSI Assessment in Writing** measures your skills in the four content areas listed below. There are approximately 20 items on the TSI placement test and 10 to 12 items in each section of the DE Diagnostic Test.

- ▶ **Essay Revision** measures your ability to provide coherence, organization and good word choice and your ability to achieve rhetorical effectiveness and use evidence.
- ▶ **Agreement** measures your ability to perform subject–verb agreement and pronoun agreement as well as your ability to determine verb tenses.
- ▶ **Sentence Structure** measures your knowledge of topics like comma splices and run-on sentences; improper punctuation; fragments and parallelism; and subordination and coordination.
- ▶ **Sentence Logic** measures your ability to correctly place modifying phrases and clauses and your ability to use logical transitions.

## Essay Section

You may be asked to write a five-paragraph persuasive essay (approximately 300–600 words) on a controversial issue or one of current interest. You will be expected to clearly state a main idea and provide specific examples and details to back up your main idea, as well as follow conventions of standard English. You will not be allowed to use a dictionary or other outside resources, but you may use plain scratch paper (provided at the testing center) to plan your essay and write your rough draft(s).



## How to Prepare

Take advantage of free sample questions to improve in areas where your academic performance is not the strongest. These sample questions help you familiarize yourself with the types of questions asked on the TSI Assessment. To access the full sample questions document, visit [www.collegeboard.org/texas-sample-questions](http://www.collegeboard.org/texas-sample-questions).

## Can I Retake the Test?



If you are not satisfied with your performance, you may retake the TSI Assessment at any time. However, before you attempt to retest, it is strongly recommended that you set aside time for additional study. Check with the testing center at the college or university at which you plan to retest for information concerning retesting and review workshops.

For additional information on the TSI Assessment, please contact an adviser/counselor at your institution.



## TSI ASSESSMENT (TSIA) College Readiness Standards

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### Approved phase-in College Readiness Standards

#### Phase 1 – Freshmen entering higher education **Fall 2013 (first class day)**

- ✓ Mathematics - 350
- ✓ Reading - 351
- ✓ Writing –
  - Placement score of at least 350 and an essay score of at least a 5; OR
  - Placement score of at least 363 and an essay score of 4; OR
  - Placement score of less than 350, and an ABE Diagnostic level of at least a 4, and an essay score of at least a 5

#### Phase 2 – Freshmen entering higher education **Fall 2017 (first class day)**

- ✓ Mathematics - 356
- ✓ Reading - 355
- ✓ Writing –
  - Placement score of at least 350 and an essay score of at least a 5; OR
  - Placement score of at least 363 and an essay score of 4; OR
  - Placement score of less than 350, and an ABE Diagnostic level of at least a 4, and an essay score of at least a 5

#### Final – Freshmen entering higher education **Fall 2019 (first class day)**

- ✓ Mathematics - 369
- ✓ Reading - 359
- ✓ Writing –
  - Placement score of at least 350 and an essay score of at least a 5; OR
  - Placement score of at least 363 and an essay score of 4; OR
  - Placement score of less than 350, and an ABE Diagnostic level of at least a 4, and an essay score of at least a 5

### Approved Developmental Education standards (no phase-in)

#### Freshmen entering higher education **Fall 2013 (first class day)**

*Note: **Diagnostic results** must be used in conjunction with **Placement score** when placing students who are not college-ready [Rule §4.55(c)]; these students should NOT be placed based solely on Placement scores.*

- ✓ Mathematics – TSIA Placement score 336 -349; OR TSIA Placement score 310-335 and ABE Diagnostic level of 5/6
- ✓ Reading – TSIA Placement score 342-350; OR TSIA Placement score 310-341 and ABE Diagnostic level of 5/6
- ✓ Writing –
  - TSIA Placement score of 350-362 and an essay score of less than 5; OR
  - TSIA Placement score of at least 363 and an essay score of less than 4; OR
  - TSIA Placement score of less than 350, and ABE Diagnostic level of at least a 4, and an essay score of less than 5