

# Guide to the Virginia Placement Test (VPT)



VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
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# PLACEMENT TESTING

## Common Questions Students Ask About Placement Testing

### ❖ What is Placement Testing?

Placement testing determines if a student has competency in reading, writing and mathematical skills appropriate with their college goals. Placement in developmental courses is designed to assure that students are academically prepared for college level work, regardless of prior grades, work experience, or academic history. The VPT Placement can be completed on the VHCC campus, free of charge.

### ❖ Do any other tests take the place of the placement test?

Yes, an official copy of SAT or ACT scores, no more than two years old, are accepted as follows:

#### ENGLISH COMPOSITION:

- Any student with either SAT minimum score of 500 on both the critical reading and writing sections, or ACT minimum combined score of 21 on both English and Writing tests taken within the last two years is exempt from taking the VPT-English test. (Section 6.4.0.2.2 – English Placement)

#### MATHEMATICS:

- SAT math score of 520 or ACT math score of 22 exempts a student from all developmental courses in Mathematics and allows enrollment into MTH 241 and all other math courses with numbers below MTH 163. Enrollment into courses higher than MTH 163 requires completion of testing to determine proper placement. (Section 6.4.0.2.1 – Math Placement) – Students who have taken the SAT or ACT and met the above requirements within the last two years will be exempt from VPT-Math test.

**\*Students must submit official copies of their ACT or SAT scores to Admissions to be posted prior to enrollment.**

### ❖ What if I have completed college level English and/or Math at another college or university?

Students who provide transcripts indicating completion of college-level Math and/or English at another college or university may be exempt from placement testing. Inquire with the Student Success Center.

### ❖ What can I expect?

- Placement testing is completed on the computer
- Placement tests are not timed. Allow yourself approximately 4-5 hours to complete all parts of the tests.
- You can take the entire test at one time or you can take English one day and math another (recommended).
- You will receive your results immediately. Contact the Student Success Center (739-2438) to schedule a meeting with a counselor to interpret the results.

### ❖ How long does the test take?

The test is a self-directed and untimed test! Students may take as long as they need to complete the test comfortably.

Because the placement test is untimed, you can relax and spend as much time as you need on each question.

### ❖ What if I am not very familiar with computers?

The majority of the placement test is multiple choice and no computer knowledge is required. You will be required to type your essay; however, the assessment is not timed, so you do not have to be a fast typist. Appropriate instructions are given for those unfamiliar with a computer, and a proctor will be available to help you at all times during testing in case you need assistance.

## ❖ What will the placement test cover?

Placement tests help place students into appropriate English, Math, and Science courses.

- **The Math Placement Test** is a diagnostic assessment of nine (9) content areas; see Math Modules section for information on the diagnostic areas. The system draws on a pool of test questions, and then adjusts the level of the test to the skills and expertise of each individual test taker. Based on your performance on this assessment, you may be required to complete developmental mathematics modules prior to enrolling in a college-level Mathematics, Chemistry, or Physics courses.
- **The English Placement Test** is a two-part test designed to assess students' reading comprehension and writing skills. The assessment is made up of a written essay followed by a series of reading selections with multiple-choice questions. The writing portion of the assessment is scored based on a combination of criteria; the essay's paragraph structure, sentence organization and structure, quality of content, overall unity, coherence of ideas, thesis statement, topic sentences, spelling, and grammar. Students may be required to complete developmental English courses prior to enrolling in college-level Composition, Biology, or Chemistry courses; see Development English Placement section for information on the development English courses.

## ❖ Should I review for the test?

Yes! Reviewing is an excellent way to refresh basic reading, writing, and math skills. Reviewing for the test will also allow you to see the types of questions you will be asked when you complete the assessment. Sample questions are available for your review online at <http://www.vhcc.edu/placement>

**Other sites that might be beneficial in brushing up on math and English skills are:**

### Helpful Math Websites

- **Khan Academy:** Video tutorials on various Math and other topics

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

This site provides access to thousands of video tutorials on many course topics including Math, Biology, SAT prep, Physics, Chemistry, History, and many others. Use the search feature to find the topic you would like to review. Most videos are under ten minutes in length.

- **That Quiz:** Math practice quizzes

<http://www.thatquiz.org/>

This site provides many practice problems for a variety of math topics from Arithmetic to Geometry and Calculus. Quiz results only demonstrate which problems were answered correctly or incorrectly; they do not provide the solutions.

- **PurpleMath:** Tutorials on many math topics

<http://www.purplemath.com/modules/index.htm>

This site provides detailed explanations on how to solve many different kinds of math problems. Sections include: Preliminary topics; Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Algebra; and Solving Word Problems.

## Helpful English Websites

- **Guide to Grammar and Writing:** Index of various grammar and writing topics

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/index2.htm>

This site provides a searchable database of various grammar and writing topics with examples that illustrate the concept. Within the index list is a link to “Quizzes,” and a link to “FAQs.”

- **English Reading and Writing Exercises:** A computer applet with different exercises

[http://www.qedoc.org/en/index.php?title=English\\_Reading\\_and\\_Writing\\_Exercises](http://www.qedoc.org/en/index.php?title=English_Reading_and_Writing_Exercises)

This site provides a link to run a Java-based program containing different reading and writing exercises. Activities range from Hangman to fill-in-the-blank questions. At the beginning of the program, you may choose the difficulty level.

- **Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab:** Guides students on the writing process, mechanics, grammar, development of thesis statements, and much more.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/>

This site provides many useful articles on the writing process including: academic writing, common writing assignments, mechanics, grammar, punctuation, and other topics listed under the “General Writing” subheading within the menu on the left-hand side.

### ❖ **What do I do after I complete the placement test?**

You should contact the Student Success Center (SSC) 276-739-2438 to schedule an appointment to meet with a counselor for a transition session. During this meeting placement scores will be interpreted and you will be advised about appropriate course selections. Students should bring their printed test scores to the transition session. Students cannot enroll in Mathematics, English and Science courses until the placement requirements are met.

### ❖ **Who should I contact if I have a disability or need accommodations for the test?**

Students whose disabilities may require special accommodations when taking the test should contact Project EXCEL at 739-2404 or by email at [kcopenhaver@vhcc.edu](mailto:kcopenhaver@vhcc.edu). Students should make contact with this office at least three weeks prior to taking the test.

### ❖ **If I don’t do well, can I take the test over?**

Students are eligible for retest; however, there are strict rules governing this. You will need to meet with a counselor and show proof that you have studied, polished your skills, and are prepared to take the test again.

### ❖ **When should I test?**

The test is available all the time and students can test up to the last day to register. We do not encourage students to wait until the last minute for such an important activity. Make an appointment to test at (276) 739-2476. Testing is completed in the VHCC Testing Center located in the Library (LRC Building).

## PLACEMENT TESTING HOURS

You may begin testing any time during these hours when the college is open:

Monday	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (Lab closes at 9:00 p.m.)
Tuesday	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (Lab closes at 9:00 p.m.)
Wednesday	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (Lab closes at 9:00 p.m.)
Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (Lab closes at 9:00 p.m.)
Friday	8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (Lab closes at 5:00 p.m.)

These are self paced tests. Allow yourself 4-5 hours to complete the reading, writing and math test. You may take the English portion of the test one day and the math portion another day (recommended).

### ❖ **Is this test going to keep me from coming to college?**

The tests are not designed to be entrance exams; however, students will be expected to meet eligibility requirement specified in the VCCS and VHCC Policy Manuals. Virginia Highlands Community College is an open door institution. This means that all eligible students have an opportunity to enter educational college programs; however, to enroll in college English, Mathematics, and Science courses, you must place into these courses or remediate your deficiencies.

Individuals are eligible for admission to the community college if they are high school graduates or the equivalent, or if they are eighteen years of age or older and able to benefit academically from study at the community college as demonstrated by assessment in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Students who have not received a high school diploma or equivalent must meet the minimum placement scores noted in the chart below:

	<u>VPT</u>	<u>Compass</u>	<u>Asset</u>
<b>Reading</b>	<b>ENF 1</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Writing</b>	<b>ENF 1</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Math</b>	<b>MTE 1</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>33</b>

Exceptions to this policy may be made by the college president only for documented reasons.

## **Practice Tests for Math VPT**

Individuals may take a practice test in order to determine their readiness for the VPT. To take the practice test a student must:

1. Go to <https://college.measuredsuccess.com>.
  2. Select “student registration”.
  3. When you arrive at the site, select “VCCS Practice Test Institution” from the drop down box.
  4. Select “VCCS Practice Test”.
  5. Enter **Virginiapt** as the password.
  6. Complete all of the required fields. Note: if you do not have a student ID, entering any five-digit number will suffice. You will be sent an email confirming your username and password to the email address that you list in the student registration form.
  7. Click “submit” once you have completed the form. You will then enter the practice test.
- Registrants may take one or both practice tests which contain the following:

### Practice Test 1

- Whole Numbers
- Operations with Positive Fractions
- Operations with Positive Decimals and Percents
- Algebra Basics
- First Degree Equations and Inequalities in One Variable
- Linear Equations, Inequalities, and Systems of Linear Equations in Two Variables

### Practice Test 2

- Exponents, Factoring, and Polynomial Equations
- Rational Expressions and Equations
- Rational Exponents and Radicals
- Functions, Quadratic Equations, and Parabolas

## **Practice Tests for English VPT**

1. Login to <https://college.measuredsuccess.com>
2. Click on Student Registration
3. Select VCCS Practice Test institution from the institution drop down box
4. Site: VCCS Practice Test
5. Password: Virginiapt
6. Fill in all required fields on the registration screen
7. Note: when it asks for Student ID, use VHCC plus your ID Number (i.e., VHCC1234567)
8. In the email box, put an email address other than your school email address, such as Hotmail or Yahoo.
9. Click SUBMIT when all boxes are filled in; this will take you to the testing dashboard.

**HAPPY PRACTICING!!!!**

## Math Modules

<b>Modules</b>	<b>Module Name</b>	<b>Module Description</b>
Module 1	Operations with Positive Fractions	The student will solve application problems using proper fractions, improper fractions, and mixed numbers. All student learning outcomes for this unit must be completed without the use of a calculator. Emphasis should be placed on applications throughout the unit. Applications will use U.S. customary units of measurement. All fractions in this unit should be expressed in simplest form, unless otherwise indicated.
Module 2	Operations with Positive Decimals and Percents	The student will solve problems using decimals and percents. Emphasis should be placed on applications throughout the unit. Applications will use U.S. customary and metric units of measurement.
Module 3	Algebra Basics	The student will perform basic operations with algebraic expressions and solve simple algebraic equations using signed numbers. Emphasis should be placed on applications throughout the unit.
Module 4	First Degree Equations and Inequalities in one variable	The student will solve first degree equations and inequalities containing one variable, and use them to solve application problems. Emphasis should be placed on learning the steps to solving the equations and inequalities, applications and problem solving.
Module 5	Linear Equations, Inequalities and Systems of Linear equations in Two Variables	The student will learn how to find the equation of a line, graph linear equations and inequalities in two variables and solve a system of two linear equations. Emphasis should be on writing and graphing equations using the slope of the line and points on the line, and applications.
Module 6	Exponents, Factoring and Polynomial Equations	The student will learn techniques to factor polynomials and use these techniques to solve polynomial equations. Emphasis should be on learning all the different factoring methods, and solving application problems using polynomial equations.
Module 7	Rational Expressions and Equations	The student will simplify rational algebraic expressions, solve rational algebraic equations and use them to solve application problems.
Module 8	Rational Exponents and Radicals	The student will simplify radical expressions, and use rational exponents. The student will solve radical equations and use them to solve application problems.
Module 9	Functions, Quadratic Equations and Parabolas	In this unit the student will have an introduction to functions in ordered pair, graph, and equation form. The student will engage in a thorough introduction to quadratic functions and their properties as they complete preparation for entering STEM or business-administration college-level mathematics courses.
*Module 0	Whole numbers	Referred to Mt. Rogers Regional Adult Education Program

## **DEVELOPMENT ENGLISH PLACEMENT**

### **ENF 1: PREPARING FOR COLLEGE ENGLISH I (8 CREDITS)**

Provides integrated reading and writing instruction for students who require extensive preparation to succeed in college-level English courses. Students will place into this course based on VPT-English (Virginia Placement Test-English). Upon successful completion and faculty recommendation, students will move into ENF 3 (if they require additional preparation) or into college-level English (if they require no additional preparation).

### **ENF 2: PREPARING FOR COLLEGE ENGLISH II (4 CREDITS)**

Provides integrated reading and writing instruction for students who require intermediate preparation to succeed in college-level English courses. Students will place into this course based on VPT-English (Virginia Placement Test-English). Upon successful completion and faculty recommendation, students will move into ENF 3 (if they require additional preparation) or into college-level English (if they require no additional preparation).

### **ENF 3: PREPARING FOR COLLEGE ENGLISH III (2 CREDITS)**

Provides integrated reading and writing instruction for students who require minimal preparation for college-level English but still need some preparation to succeed. Students in this course will be co-enrolled in college-level English. Students will place into this course based on VPT-English (Virginia Placement Test-English).

## Other Tips for Taking the Placement Tests

1. Relax! The tests are designed to help you succeed in college. Your score helps you, your division counselor, and your faculty advisor determine which courses are most appropriate for your current level of knowledge and skills. Once you identify your academic strengths and weaknesses, you can identify your eligibility for college level courses or work to improve underdeveloped skills so they will not interfere with your learning experience.
2. You will be able to concentrate better on the test if you get plenty of rest the night before and eat properly the morning of your test.
3. Arrive on time for testing. If you have plenty of time you will be less stressed in finding the Testing Center, satisfactory seating, sharpen pencils, and gather your thoughts before the test begins.
4. Be sure you understand the directions for each test before that test session begins. Ask questions if you need to and use the tutorials available before each test.
5. If you do not have much experience using the computer, ask the test administrator to show you how to use the mouse tutorial. There are practice segments on the placement test that can help you become familiar with using the mouse and answer keys.
6. Read each question carefully until you understand what the question is asking. Some items require several steps—consider all information.
7. Take time to check your answers before moving on to the next segment on a given test. Do not be afraid to change an answer if you believe that your first choice was wrong.
8. If you have a problem or question during the test, raise your hand and the test administrator will help you. Although they cannot answer test questions for you, they can help you with other types of problems such as a computer screen problem, etc.
9. You have plenty of time. The tests are not timed!