

# OVERVIEW: TEXAS SUCCESS INITIATIVE

OCTOBER 2017

## BACKGROUND

Students must be in compliance with the Texas Success Initiative (TSI), to enroll in coursework at Texas public institutions of higher education per Texas Education Code. The law requires all entering college students to be assessed for college readiness in reading, writing, and math unless the student qualifies for an exemption or demonstrates college readiness through successful completion of college-level coursework in the related content area. Each non-exempt student who does not meet the college-readiness benchmark of the TSI Assessment (TSIA) must be provided with a plan for academic success which may include corequisite or other developmental education courses/ interventions. Since fall 2013, the TSIA replaced the four assessments previously available.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Which students take the TSI Assessment?

Unless exempt, students entering a Texas public college or university must take the TSIA and meet or exceed the minimum college readiness benchmarks to enroll in entry-level college credit courses.

Students who qualify for a TSI exemption can enroll in entry-level college credit courses without restrictions (see list of exemptions on the right). Students may also demonstrate college readiness by transferring a successfully completed college-level course, including through dual credit programs or from another institution of higher education, based on the receiving institution's approval.

For a complete list of TSI exemptions and qualifications, see Texas Education Code, §51.338 (§51.3062 prior to changes made by the 85th Legislature) and Coordinating Board rules, §4.54.

## Texas Success Initiative Exemptions

ACT

Composite score of **23** or higher with at least a **19** on the English test and at least **19** on the math section

SAT

Combined critical reading and math score of **1070** with a minimum of **500** on the verbal test and a minimum of **500** on the math test for tests taken **prior to March 2016**

New SAT

Minimum score of **530** on the math section and a minimum score of **480** on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) for tests taken **March 2016 or later**

High School Options

- Successful completion of a College Preparatory Course  
- Score of at least **4000** on the English III and/or Algebra II STAAR End-of-Course exams

Military

Veterans, active duty personnel, and a student who is serving or, for at least **3 years** preceding enrollment, has served as a member of a reserve component of the U.S. armed services

Certificate

Enroll in a certificate program of one year or less (Level One Certificates, 42 or fewer credit hours or equivalent) at a public community or technical college

Transfer

Transfer from another institution having satisfactorily completed college-level coursework, including through dual credit programs, based on receiving institution's approval

## When do students take the TSI Assessment?

Students must complete the TSI Assessment (TSIA) and meet the college readiness benchmarks by subject area before they can enroll in entry-level college-level courses. Students may also have the option to enroll in college-level coursework with a co-enrollment in a related developmental education course/intervention (see *corequisite* below). TSIA results are available immediately after completion of the assessment and can be emailed to students. Students wishing to use their TSIA scores at an institution where they did not take the test can ask that their scores be pulled by a testing administrator at the institution where they plan to enroll.

A student must participate in a Pre-Assessment Activity (PAA) before taking the TSIA. The activity varies by institution but must include at minimum the following:

- An explanation of the importance of the TSI Assessment and its use by institutions;
- Practice test questions with feedback;
- An explanation of all options for students who do not meet the college readiness benchmarks; and
- Information on campus, academic, and community resources to help support student success.

## What happens if a student does not meet the benchmark on one or all parts of the TSIA?

Students who do not meet the benchmark on at least one subject area component (reading, writing and math) of the TSIA must work with an advisor to develop a plan for academic success that outlines the options for students to become college ready. Institutions may offer semester-long developmental education options but must also provide the following acceleration options:

- Corequisite/mainstreaming – a student enrolls within the same semester in the applicable entry-level college credit course and a developmental education course/intervention designed to support the student’s success in the college credit course.
- NCBO (non-course competency based options) – a student enrolls in an intervention that is flexible and individualized to address the student’s weak areas and is generally shorter than the traditional 16-week course.
- Modular/technology-based – a student enrolls in an intervention that offers flexible scheduling with strong technology-based options and individualized, just-in-time support. Modular options can be offered via NCBO and/or corequisite delivery.

## What are the minimum passing college readiness benchmarks on the TSIA?

### Minimum Passing College Readiness Benchmarks on the TSIA

- **Math**     **350**
- **Reading**   **351**
- **Writing**
  - Multiple choice score of 340 and essay score of 4, or
  - Multiple choice score below 340, Adult Basic Education Diagnostic score of level 4, and essay score of 5.

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Students entering public institutions of higher education must take the TSIA or be exempt, to enroll in credit-bearing college coursework. Students may also have the option to enroll in college-level coursework while co-enrolled in a related developmental education course or intervention.

Corequisite options allow a student who did not meet the college readiness benchmark to co-enroll in a college-level course and a developmental education course within the same semester. Students receive targeted support to improve student success.

A student may retake the TSIA at any time to determine the student’s readiness to enroll in entry-level college credit coursework. It is highly recommended that students engage in some sort of intervention (workshops, online resources such as Khan Academy, or tutoring) before retesting.

For more information:  
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