



# Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment

Interpreting Your Score

# Congratulations on taking the TSI Assessment!

The TSI Assessment measures your strengths and weaknesses in mathematics and statistics, reading and writing, and is an indicator of how ready you are to handle college-level courses. The results of the assessment, in conjunction with your academic background, goals and interests, are used by academic advisers and counselors to place you in the appropriate course that matches your skill level. The goal is to help you become ready for college-level course work.

## TSI Assessment

Once you complete the TSI Assessment, you have immediate access to your individual score report, which give you details on your test results. Use the score report to understand your academic strengths and areas for improvement. Your advisor, counselor or faculty member will also use this score report to help make the best recommendations for the courses or interventions that meet your individual needs.

### How Is My Test Scored?

The individual score report indicates your score in the mathematics, reading and writing portions of the TSI Assessment and the appropriate course level in which you will be placed.

Your scores on the TSI Assessment determine if you are ready to take college-level courses. If you are college ready, you may enroll in any related entry-level college course without having to take developmental courses or interventions. You are considered college ready if **at the very least** you receive the following scores:

#### College-Readiness Cut-Scores

**Mathematics:** a score ranging from 350 to 390 in the multiple-choice section

**Reading:** a score ranging from 351 to 390 in the multiple-choice section

**Writing:** a score of 5 in the essay section. You can also place in a college course if you receive a 4 on the essay and a score ranging from 363 to 390 on the multiple-choice section.

For more information on assessment topics and scores refer to:

Page 5 for Mathematics and Statistics

Page 4 for Reading

Page 6 for Writing

### What if I Don't Meet the College-Readiness Cut-Score?

If your TSI mathematics, reading or writing test score is lower than the college-readiness cut-score for that subject, you may be placed in either a developmental course or an intervention to improve your skills and prepare for success in college-level courses. In addition to other factors, your placement is determined through the results you get in the TSI Diagnostic Test, which measures how well you know the subjects. Your institution may use additional factors such as your high school grade point average/ class ranking, other test scores and courses from your high school or college transcripts.

### Can I Retake the Test?

If you are not satisfied with your score, 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. It is very unlikely that your score will improve greatly without additional review and study. Check with the testing center at your college or university for information concerning retesting.

## TSI Diagnostic Test

If your score in the TSI Assessment is lower than the college-readiness cut-score, you will be asked to take the TSI Diagnostic Test, which determines your areas of strengths and areas that need improvement in mathematics, reading and/or writing. Many students who are not college ready may be provided the TSI Diagnostic Test as described below, while others may be given a different version of a diagnostic test to ensure accurate information related to their skill set. The results in the diagnostic test help the adviser place you in the appropriate level of a developmental course.

### TSI Diagnostic Score Report

Once you complete the TSI Diagnostic Test, you will receive a diagnostic score report. This report outlines the topics on which you were tested, along with the score and the criteria used to determine that score.

<b>Proficiency Level and Score</b>	<b>What this means to you</b>
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	Indicates that your performance needs to improve significantly in this area.
<b>Limited Proficiency</b>	Indicates that while you have some skill in this area there is room for improvement.
<b>Proficient</b>	Indicates that you have well-developed skills in this area.

## Sample of TSI Reading Diagnostic Test

TSI Reading Diagnostic Test				
Domain	Needs Improvement	Limited Proficiency	Proficient	Score
<b>Main Idea and Supporting Detail</b>				<b>2</b>
<p>Demonstrate an understanding of informational texts by selecting the main idea and identifying supporting details when the answer choices are restated from the passage.</p>				
<b>Author's Use of Language</b>				<b>4</b>
<p>Identify the author's purpose, tone, organization, rhetorical strategies; determine the meaning of words using context; and analyze the use of evidence in the passage when the information is stated in the passage or presented as a straightforward answer choice.</p>				
<b>Inferences in a Text or Texts</b>				<b>5</b>
<p>Make basic inferences about informational texts, supporting the inferences with relevant textual evidence; demonstrate limited understanding by making few generalizations about paired texts.</p>				
<b>Literary Analysis</b>				<b>11</b>
<p>Analyze literary texts by applying knowledge of universal themes and the ways in which literary devices contribute to the development of plots and characters; analyze consistently how the author's use of diction and figurative language supports meaning in fiction or literary nonfiction.</p>				

## Sample of TSI Mathematics Diagnostic Test

<b>TSI Mathematics Diagnostic Test</b>				
Domain	<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>Limited Proficiency</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	Score
<b>Elementary Algebra</b>				<b>15</b>
<p>Perform operations with real numbers and algebraic expressions, employing correct order of operations; formulate and solve linear equations, inequalities, linear systems with 2 and 3 variables, and variation problems; graph and translate functions on a rectangular coordinate system; identify characteristics of linear functions; formulate and solve word problems and applications.</p>				
<b>Intermediate Algebra</b>				<b>12</b>
<p>Understand characteristics of functions; factor polynomial expressions by GCF, grouping, difference of squares, trinomials; solve quadratic equations by factoring, and by using the quadratic formula; solve equations using the square root property; simplify square roots with numerical values; solve simple radical and rational equations; apply unit conversions in word problems; formulate algebraic expressions and equations to solve word problems; apply rules of exponents.</p>				
<b>Measurement and Geometry</b>				<b>11</b>
<p>Analyze models involving 2-D and 3-D representations and apply ratios and proportions to solve geometric problems; apply the Pythagorean Theorem in concrete and abstract problems; employ algebra in geometric applications; use coordinate geometry to solve problems involving slopes, distances and equations of lines; use transformations, reflections and lines of symmetry; convert measures, including in the metric system; use rational and irrational values within a geometric context.</p>				
<b>Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability</b>				<b>13</b>
<p>Calculate and interpret measures of center (mean, median, mode) and variability (range); make predictions using statistics; calculate probabilities and use theoretical probabilities and experimental results to make predictions and decisions; use variability (range) and select the appropriate measure of central tendency to describe data; analyze trends in frequency distributions, dot plots, scatter plots, line plots, line graphs, circle graphs and bar graphs; apply counting principles.</p>				

## Sample of TSI Writing Diagnostic Test

TSI Writing Diagnostic Test				
	Needs Improvement	Limited Proficiency	Proficient	Score
<b>Sentence Structure</b>				<b>11</b>
<p>Recognize grammatically sound sentences, consistently avoiding sentence fragments and run-on sentences (including comma splices and fused sentences); use subordination and coordination strategies effectively, consistently using compound and complex sentences to show the relationship of ideas; employ parallelism effectively; and punctuate correctly, consistently placing commas and semicolons appropriately.</p>				
<b>Agreement</b>				<b>2</b>
<p>Struggle to employ subject-verb agreement strategies, misidentifying the subject or verb because of position in the sentence; struggle to employ pronoun agreement strategies, rarely identifying when antecedents should be changed for logic, clarity, conciseness or number; struggle to use logical progression of verb tenses in a single sentence or make parallel items agree in number, case and tense.</p>				
<b>Sentence Logic</b>				<b>2</b>
<p>May recognize basic sentence elements; combine sentence elements to preserve obvious coordinating and subordinating structures; place simple modifiers to preserve meaning; choose transitions to convey simple logical relationships (e.g., chronology, elaboration, proximity); and identify basic spelling or usage errors.</p>				
<b>Essay Revision</b>				<b>2</b>
<p>May revise an essay to address main idea; organization and basic transitions; evidence (e.g., development and relevance); and word choice and clarity, but will struggle to identify and make important revisions in many areas.</p>				

## Understanding Your Mathematics Score

The **TSI Assessment in Mathematics and Statistics** is a multiple-choice test that covers the four content areas listed below. There are approximately 20 items on the TSI Assessment Test and 10 to 12 items in each section of the TSI Diagnostic Test.

**Elementary Algebra and Functions** measures your knowledge in linear equations, inequalities and systems; algebraic expressions and equations; word problems and applications.

**Intermediate Algebra and Functions** measures your knowledge in quadratic and other polynomial expressions, equations and functions; expressions, equations, and functions involving powers, roots and radicals; rational and exponential expressions, equations and functions.

**Geometry and Measurement** measures your knowledge in plane geometry; transformations and symmetry; linear, area and three-dimensional measurements.

**Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability** measures your knowledge in interpreting categorical and quantitative data, statistical measures, probabilistic reasoning.

### What Score Gets Me to a College Course?

You are considered college ready if your score falls within the range of 350 to 390. If your score is 349 or lower, you will be placed in a developmental course or Adult Basic Education course. If you are near college ready, you may be placed in a college course, while taking a developmental education course/intervention.

Contact the adviser at your college or university for more information.

## Understanding Your Reading Score

The **TSI Assessment in Reading** is a multiple-choice test that covers the four content areas listed below. There are approximately 20 items on the TSI Assessment Test and 10 to 12 items in each section of the TSI 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; 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; making an appropriate inference about single passages.

**Author's Use of Language** measures your skill in identifying a author's purpose, tone, organization or rhetorical strategies and use of evidence; determining the meaning of words in context.

### What Score Gets Me to a College Course?

You are considered college ready if your score falls within the range of 351 to 390. If your score is 350 or lower, you will be placed in a developmental course or Adult Basic Education course. If you are near college ready you may be placed in a college course, while taking a developmental education course/intervention.

Contact the adviser at your college or university for more information.

# Understanding Your Writing Score

The **TSI Assessment in Writing** is a test 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 Assessment Test and 10 to 12 items in each section of the TSI Diagnostic Test.

**Essay Revision** measures your ability to provide coherence, organization and good word choice; to achieve rhetorical effectiveness and use evidence.

**Agreement** measures your ability to perform subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement and determination of verb tenses.

**Sentence Structure** measures your knowledge on topics like comma splices and run-on sentences; improper punctuation; fragments and parallelism; subordination and coordination.

**Sentence Logic** measures your ability to correctly place modifying phrases and clauses, and the ability to use logical transitions.

## Essay Section

The essay section of the TSI Assessment in Writing requires you to demonstrate clear focus, to logically develop ideas in well-organized paragraphs, and to use appropriate language that indicates your purpose. You will be asked to provide a writing sample of 300 to 600 words in response to one of the several prompts within the system.

You will be scored based on your performance in the following areas:

- **Purpose and Focus:** The extent to which you present information in a unified and coherent manner, clearly addressing the issue.
- **Organization and Structure:** The extent to which you order and connect ideas.
- **Development and Support:** The extent to which you develop and support ideas.
- **Sentence Variety and Style:** The extent to which you craft sentences and paragraphs demonstrating control of vocabulary, voice and structure.

- **Mechanical Conventions:** The extent to which you express ideas using Standard English.
- **Critical Thinking:** The extent to which you communicate a point of view and demonstrate reasoned relationships among ideas.

## How Is My Essay Scored?

The essays are electronically scored by a unique automated system that is specifically designed to score assessments. This system evaluates the meaning of text, not just grammatical correctness or spelling. Your essay is compared for similarities to a set of at least 500 other student essays that have been graded by two expert human readers. It is then placed in the same scoring category with the essays to which it is most similar.

Once you enter your essay into an onscreen textbox and submit it for scoring, the system automatically evaluates the essay and returns a score from 1 to 8 as well as a statement that indicates the criteria used to give you that score.

SCORE	HOLISTIC SCORE DESCRIPTION
8	The essay demonstrates clear and consistent mastery of on-demand essay writing.
7	The essay demonstrates consistent mastery of on-demand essay writing.
6	The essay demonstrates reasonably consistent mastery of on-demand essay writing.
5	The essay demonstrates adequate mastery of on-demand essay writing.
4	The essay demonstrates developing mastery of on-demand essay writing.
3	The essay demonstrates little mastery of on-demand essay writing.
2	The essay demonstrates very little mastery of on-demand essay writing.
1	The essay demonstrates no mastery of on-demand essay writing.

Essays not written in the essay section will receive a score of zero.

## What Score Gets Me to a College Course?

You are considered college ready if you score a 5 on the essay section. You can also place in a college course if you get a 4 in the essay section and a score ranging from 363 to 390 on the multiple-choice section. If your score does not meet these requirements, you will be placed in a developmental course or intervention. If you are near college ready you may be placed in a college course, while taking a developmental education course/intervention.

Contact the adviser at your college or university for more information.

## Essay Scoring Guide

### Score of 8

An essay in this category demonstrates **clear and consistent mastery** of on-demand essay writing with a few minor errors. A typical essay:

- Effectively and insightfully develops a point of view on the issue;
- Addresses an appropriate audience and demonstrates a clear purpose for writing in the thesis statement;
- Demonstrates outstanding critical thinking, using effective examples, reasons and other evidence to support its position;
- Is well organized and clearly focused, demonstrating clear coherence and smooth progression of ideas;
- Exhibits skillful use of language, using a varied, accurate and apt vocabulary;
- Demonstrates varied and effective sentence structure; and
- Is free of major errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation.

### Score of 7

An essay in this category demonstrates **consistent mastery** of on-demand essay writing although it may have occasional minor errors. A typical essay:

- Effectively and insightfully develops a point of view on the issue;
- Addresses an appropriate audience and demonstrates a clear purpose for writing in the thesis statement;
- Demonstrates outstanding critical thinking, using appropriate examples, reasons and other evidence to support its position;

- Is well organized and focused, demonstrating clear coherence and smooth progression of ideas;
- Exhibits appropriate language, using a varied and accurate vocabulary;
- Demonstrates varied sentence structure; and
- Is practically free of errors in sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation.

### Score of 6

An essay in this category demonstrates **reasonably consistent mastery** of on-demand essay writing although it may have occasional lapses in quality. A typical essay:

- Effectively develops a point of view on the issue;
- Addresses an appropriate audience and demonstrates a clear purpose for writing;
- Demonstrates strong critical thinking, generally using appropriate examples, reasons and other evidence to support its position;
- Is well organized and focused, demonstrating coherence and a logical progression of ideas;
- Exhibits consistent control in the use of language;
- Demonstrates adequate variety in sentence structure; and
- Is generally free of errors in sentence structure, grammar, usage, spelling and punctuation.

### Score of 5

An essay in this category demonstrates **adequate mastery** of on-demand essay writing although it will have lapses in quality. A typical essay:

- Develops a viable point of view on the issue;
- May stray from the audience and purpose but is able to refocus;
- Demonstrates competent critical thinking, using adequate examples, reasons and other evidence to support its position;
- Is generally organized and focused but could lack coherence and logical progression of ideas;
- Exhibits adequate but inconsistent control of language;
- Demonstrates some variety in sentence structure; and
- Contains some minor errors in sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation.

## Score of 4

An essay in this category demonstrates **developing mastery** of on-demand essay writing. A typical essay:

- Develops a viable point of view on the issue;
- May stray from audience and purpose;
- Demonstrates some critical thinking but may do so inconsistently or use inadequate examples, reasons or other evidence to support its position;
- May lack control of organization or focus, demonstrating some lapses in coherence or progression of ideas; and
- Contains some errors in sentence structure and use of grammatical conventions such as word choice, usage, spelling and punctuation.

## Score of 3

A response in this category demonstrates **little mastery** of on-demand essay writing; the response is flawed by **one or more** of the following weaknesses:

- Presents a vague or limited point of view on the issue;
- Demonstrates little awareness of audience;
- Attempts to develop the main idea though that attempt is inadequate;
- Demonstrates weak critical thinking with little complexity of thought or with flawed reasoning ;
- Provides inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons or other evidence to support its position;
- Is poorly organized and/or focused or demonstrates serious problems with coherence or progression of ideas;
- Displays limited word choice and little sentence variety; and
- Contains many errors in mechanical conventions of usage, sentence structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation.

## Score of 2

A response in this category demonstrates **very little mastery** of on-demand essay writing; the response is flawed by **many or most** of the following weaknesses:

- Presents a vague or limited point of view on the issue;
- Demonstrates little awareness of audience;
- Presents an unclear main idea;
- Demonstrates weak critical thinking with little complexity of thought or with flawed reasoning;
- Organizes ideas ineffectively, demonstrating a problematic progression of ideas;
- Displays numerous errors in word choice, usage and sentence structure; and
- Contains significant spelling, grammar, punctuation and mechanical errors.

## Score of 1

A response in this category demonstrates **no mastery** of on-demand essay writing; the response is severely flawed by **many or most** of the following weaknesses:

- Lacks a viable point of view on the issue;
- Demonstrates no awareness of audience;
- Fails to present a main idea;
- Demonstrates flawed reasoning;
- Demonstrates no complexity of thought;
- Is disorganized and/or disjointed;
- Displays fundamental errors in word choice, usage and sentence structure; and
- Contains pervasive spelling, grammar, punctuation and mechanical errors.

