Our Mission

Helping people achieve education and workplace success

ACT is an independent, nonprofit organization that provides assessment, research, information, and program management services in the broad areas of education and workforce development. Each year we serve millions of people in high schools, colleges, professional associations, businesses, and government agencies, nationally and internationally. Though designed to meet a wide array of needs, all ACT programs and services have one guiding purpose—helping people achieve education and workplace success.

Our Vision

ACT is committed to providing an array of quality solutions across a wide range of life decision points in an increasingly individualized manner so all can benefit.
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About ACT

ACT is driven by our mission—to advance lives by helping people achieve education and workplace success.

Founded in 1959, our nonprofit organization is well known for the ACT® college readiness assessment—the gold standard of college entrance exams. ACT solutions and services include research, information, and program management for teachers, counselors, schools, state and local administrators, postsecondary institutions, national government agencies, and businesses to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum, individuals’ knowledge and achievement, and behavioral factors that impact the ability to learn.

Informing Policymakers to Improve Lives

At the local, state, regional, national, and international levels, ACT data and research inform policy decisions and help develop the programs necessary to transform lifelong learning, both in our schools and places of employment. Across all of our programs, we provide information to more individuals and more institutions and in more places than at any point in our history.

Embracing the Future with Urgency

At ACT, we understand the urgency of helping people achieve education and workplace success. Our focus on continuous improvement and innovation directs a wide range of programs and services to help others advance their lives. We embrace the opportunity.
A Leader in US College and Career Readiness

ACT has evolved from helping students make better decisions about selecting a college, program of study, and career to providing insights to help people plan for learning and training throughout their lives.

ACT assessments help people demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have gained from learning and training, whether in school or the workplace.

During our history, we have increasingly played a trusted role in the nation’s educational enterprise, from contributing to the scope of the nation’s vision for education and delivering programs that support that vision, including providing the research to inform the development of the Common Core State Standards.

ACT continues its steadfast support of the purpose and intent of the Common Core State Standards, which focus on the key essential standards that can prepare students for college and career success. However, we also have a continued commitment to evidence and validity monitoring. The ACT National Curriculum Survey®, completed every three to five years, is used to build and update a valid suite of ACT assessments, empirically aligned to the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards. The survey informs the test blueprint for the assessments. Results from the assessments validate the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, as well as the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This evidence and the validity cycle drive the development and continuous improvement of ACT current and future solutions, as well as the associated research agenda.

We are the nation’s leader in college and career readiness, providing research-based solutions grounded in more than 50 years of experience.

Leadership in Career Solutions

ACT offers comprehensive solutions to help individuals advance their skills and prepare for workplace success. Our solutions help people build and certify their skills to enable them to access and progress through career pathways, from entry-level to highly specialized positions.

The ACT National Career Readiness Certificate™ (ACT NCRC®) is an industry-recognized, portable, evidence-based credential that certifies the foundational skills necessary to obtain employment, perform a job successfully, and advance within an occupation. It is the foundation of a layered credentialing system that aligns the skills of individuals with the requirements of employers.

ACT is partnering with associations and advocacy organizations representing the needs of the nation’s employers to develop national credentialing systems. The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD), and the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) are among those whose credentialing systems include the ACT NCRC.

ACT International Programs

ACT International Programs, headquartered in Iowa City, Iowa, offers education and workforce solutions in markets outside the United States. International offices are located in Australia, China, Indonesia, Mexico, Singapore, and South Korea.

Services offered internationally are:

The ACT—An assessment that helps international students gain admission to study in the United States by providing US postsecondary institutions a measurement of an international student’s academic skills in English, math, science, reading, and writing.

ACT WorkKeys®—Assessments that are research-based measures of foundational work skills required for success across industries and occupations. Test takers who meet specific scores receive an ACT Career Readiness Certificate.

ACT Career Curriculum—A comprehensive learning system focused on the knowledge and abilities important for success in the workplace. Includes ACT KeyTrain®, which helps users build applied workplace skills, and the ACT Soft Skills Suite, which focuses on improving workplace behaviors. ACT Career Ready 101™ combines ACT KeyTrain and the ACT Soft Skills Suite, also offering an integrated approach to career exploration and life-literacy lessons about financial awareness, job searching, and more.

Global Assessment Certificate—An internationally recognized university preparation program that provides students with the academic knowledge, independent learning skills, English language skills, and confidence to enter and successfully complete a bachelor's degree at an English-speaking university.

www.act.org/products
Research Drives the Development of ACT College and Career Readiness Solutions

ACT research confirms that a comparable level of academic achievement is needed for success in college or a career. It also establishes that students need to begin planning for college and career early, by taking rigorous courses and monitoring their progress toward college and career readiness. Research supports the use of curriculum-based longitudinal assessments and curriculum and educational practice improvements that meet rigorous course standards.

The research also shows which skills colleges expect incoming first-year students to possess and which skills employers want employees to have before they enter the workforce. While key foundational skills and content knowledge are the same, we begin to see differentiation when we go beyond foundational skills in specific content areas.

See the Research section of this catalog for more information.

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards are the backbone of ACT assessments.

The Standards are precise descriptions of the essential skills and knowledge students need to become ready for college and career. These empirically derived Standards give clear meaning to scores and serve as a link between what students have learned and what they are ready to learn next. Parents, teachers, counselors, and students have used the Standards to:

- communicate widely shared learning goals and expectations
- relate test scores to the skills needed in high school and beyond
- understand the increasing complexity of skills needed across the score ranges in English, mathematics, reading, science, and writing

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards have been updated as part of our commitment to continuous improvement and as a result of our ongoing content validity process and results of the 2012 ACT National Curriculum Survey. The updated Standards reflect more of the language of many sets of college and career standards, including the Common Core State Standards. The update also includes the addition of reporting categories that have the same language as college and career readiness categories being used by the Common Core, as well as by many states.

View the ACT College Readiness Standards for English, math, reading, and science at www.act.org/standards
ACT College Readiness Benchmarks

The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are the minimum English, reading, mathematics, and science assessment scores representing the level of achievement required for students to have a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing first-year college course. These college courses include English composition, college algebra, an introductory social science course, and biology.

Based on a sample of 214 institutions and more than 230,000 students across the United States, the Benchmarks are median course placement values for these institutions and as such represent a typical set of expectations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Course</th>
<th>ACT Subject-Area Test</th>
<th>ACT Benchmark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Composition</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Algebra</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.act.org/education/benchmarks.html

The Condition of College & Career Readiness

This report provides data about annual academic performance of the nation's students in the context of college and career readiness. It focuses on the number and percentages of students meeting or exceeding the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks—and it provides meaningful and compelling information about their academic readiness. Visit www.act.org/readiness/2014 to see the report.
ACT College and Career Readiness Solutions

Aligned, Longitudinal Assessment Solutions and Instructional Support

ACT is committed to being a leader in education and career success by infusing innovation into our foundation of assessment excellence. We make changes only after a thorough analysis of user need, coupled with our commitment to the highest-quality test development and helping all students achieve college and career success.

A Holistic View of College and Career Readiness

ACT continues in its steadfast support to the purpose and intent of the Common Core State Standards, which focus on the key essential standards that can prepare students for college and career success. However, we also believe that academic readiness is just one of several factors that contribute to educational success. The academic behaviors of students and the interest levels in their specific major or career are other key factors. Together, these elements define a clear picture of student readiness for postsecondary education. To encourage progress, the educational system needs to monitor and sustain all key factors of success.

The Condition of College & Career Readiness is an annual report on the progress of the graduating class relative to college readiness. It is designed to help educators understand and answer the following questions:

- Are your students prepared for college and career, and are your younger students on target?
- Are enough of your students taking core courses, and are those courses rigorous enough?
- What are the most popular majors/occupations, and what does the pipeline for each look like?
- What other dimensions of college and career readiness, like academic behaviors, should educators track?
- How are educators tracking progress on STEM initiatives?

In response to the research findings, ACT developed a suite of integrated and curriculum-based assessments that respond to the need for better-prepared students and workers.

The ACT Definition of College and Career Readiness

ACT defines college and career readiness as “the acquisition of the knowledge and skills a student needs to enroll in and succeed in credit-bearing first-year courses at a postsecondary institution (such as a two- or four-year college, trade school, or technical school) without the need for remediation.”
The ACT Continuum

ACT offers a wide variety of educational, career planning, and workforce development products and services, united with the common mission of helping people and organizations unlock their potential by providing them with insights at critical life milestones.

ACT provides a longitudinal approach to educational and career planning through testing, curriculum support, and evaluation. Our research-based solutions are designed to help schools, districts, employers, and states prepare every student and worker for college or training and career by focusing on academic achievement, work skills, noncognitive measures, and instructional improvement.

Aligned with the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards and Benchmarks, ACT assessments encourage student academic and behavioral planning through early identification of educational and career goals. ACT college success solutions guide higher education leaders in making informed decisions to help students successfully enter and complete their college education. ACT workforce solutions help ensure that individuals are ready for work and help employers identify and invest in employees who can make real contributions to the bottom line.

Benefits of ACT College and Career Readiness Solutions

- Aligned with the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards and Benchmarks
- Ready for immediate implementation by any school, district, or state to better prepare their students for college or careers
- Reveal what students need to learn and strengthen curriculum
- Offer score reports to pinpoint the skills and knowledge that students possess, identify gaps in the students’ learning, adjust curriculum to close learning gaps, and plan a student’s education to prepare for college and career
- Provide the tools, data, and information educators need to make informed advising and curriculum decisions
- Help engage students in planning their own futures. When students know what colleges expect or what skills they will need to pursue a career, in terms they can understand, they can make adjustments to achieve a smooth transition to postsecondary education or career training

ACT Continuum
Research shows that the earlier we measure progress toward meeting educational standards, the more we can strengthen a student's chances to stay on target to succeed, and, ultimately, be ready for college and work after high school. That's why ACT Aspire™ assessments begin at grade 3 and are available through grade 10.

The ACT Aspire Assessment System® is a digitally based, longitudinal assessment system designed to connect a student's growth and progress from elementary grades through high school. This continuum approach allows educators to address the student's strengths, areas for improvement, and most importantly—potential.

The components of this assessment system include aligned Summative and Periodic Assessments designed to work together to provide relevant, timely, and actionable reporting.

ACT Aspire is linked to the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks and anchored by the capstone college readiness assessment, the ACT®, to help predict student success now and in the future. Assessing students' knowledge and skills relative to college and career readiness is essential to ensuring that all students receive the support and services necessary to succeed in school and life.

ACT Aspire Summative Assessments

ACT Aspire Summative Assessments are available for Grades 3 through Early High School (Grades 9/10) in English, reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The assessments are connected through the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks and predictive of performance on the ACT college readiness assessment (Grades 11/12).

ACT Aspire Periodic Assessments

ACT Aspire Periodic Assessments are designed for rapid, ongoing measurement of student progress in grades 3–10. They are available as a perfect complement to the ACT Aspire Summative Assessments or as an independent assessment program.
Features

**ACT Aspire Interim Assessments** are administered periodically throughout the course of an academic year and supply educators with timely and instructionally valuable data. They provide information about students’ progress toward learning goals and objectives that can be used for adapting instruction, as well as for evaluating and monitoring, which allows time for intervention with struggling students or for enrichment for students who are excelling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessments</th>
<th>3 Interim Assessments, per grade, and per content area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Format</td>
<td>Fixed-format, computer-based, multiple choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>3 through 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Areas</td>
<td>English, math, reading, and science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>45 minutes or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available Feedback</td>
<td>Immediate, computer-based analysis and reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>Student/Parent; Teacher/Group; School/District; Item Response/Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery mode</td>
<td>Online only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACT Aspire Classroom Assessments** are designed for implementation before an instructional unit to assess prior knowledge and skills, during an instructional unit to monitor student learning, or following an instructional unit to check student learning and assess reteaching needs. The flexible nature of these assessments allows teachers to interpret the best time for administration while providing short-term, guiding insights to student progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessments</th>
<th>5 Classroom Assessments, per grade, and per content area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Format</td>
<td>Fixed-format, computer-based, multiple choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>3 through 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Areas</td>
<td>English, math, reading, and science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>15 to 20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available Feedback</td>
<td>Immediate, computer-based analysis and reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Configuration</td>
<td>Each five-item Assessment is mapped to two Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td>Student/Parent; Teacher/Group; Item Response/Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery mode</td>
<td>Online only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Benefits

- **ACT Aspire scores reflect the knowledge and skills students develop over time—across grades—and link these results to readiness for college and career, providing an evolving picture of student growth.**
- Vertically articulated, standards-based system of summative, interim, and classroom-based assessments
- Linked to ACT College Readiness Benchmarks and aligned with the Common Core State Standards
- Provides the tools, data, and information educators need to make informed and timely changes to student learning strategies
- Identifies students in need of intervention and enrichment opportunities
- Provides additional measures of student readiness that are critical to 21st century success in and out of school
- Anchored by the capstone college readiness assessment, the ACT
- Subject areas: English, math, reading, science, and writing* for grades 3–8 and early high school (grades 9–10)
- Modular administration of subjects and grades available
- Online delivery of assessments with a paper-and-pencil option*

*Available in ACT Aspire Summative Assessments only
The ACT is a curriculum-based educational and career planning tool that assesses the mastery of state and college readiness standards.

The ACT is the capstone of ACT longitudinal assessment solutions. The test is aligned with ACT Aspire, making the system an effective tool to track academic progress and student growth.

Research Based

The ACT is the only college admissions test linked to the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards. These Standards are sets of statements intended to help students understand what their ACT scores mean. ACT developed the ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores to directly measure the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards that are based on actual college performance of students and reflected by specific test scores.

Find out more at www.act.org/standards

Key Facts about the ACT

- Accepted by all four-year colleges and universities in the United States.
- The ACT can be a great equalizer for opportunity.
- Approved for use in state models for No Child Left Behind and Annual Yearly Progress accountability.
- Enables school and district leaders to track student performance with aggregate and standards-based reporting for past high school classes.
- Used by many states as an instructional improvement program statewide to improve the college and career readiness of their students.
- Raises college awareness and exposure among all students, rather than just self-selected, college-bound students, when used statewide.
- Provides user-friendly information about how the ACT test aligns with state standards using the State Standards Match Reports.

Find out more at www.act.org/education/statematch/index.html
Features

The ACT is the curriculum-based college entrance exam that measures skills and knowledge in English, mathematics, reading, and science. The ACT is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and includes an optional Writing Test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content/Skills Area</th>
<th>Percent Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACT English Test (45 minutes)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Usage/Mechanics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>10–15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Usage</td>
<td>15–20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Structure</td>
<td>20–25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhetorical Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>15–20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>10–15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>15–20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACT Mathematics Test (60 minutes)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Algebra</td>
<td>20–25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Algebra</td>
<td>15–20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Algebra</td>
<td>15–20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate Geometry</td>
<td>15–20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plane Geometry</td>
<td>20–25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trigonometry</td>
<td>5–10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACT Reading Test (35 minutes)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary Narrative or Prose Fiction</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACT Science Test (35 minutes)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth/Space Sciences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Representation</td>
<td>30–40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Summaries</td>
<td>45–55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicting Viewpoints</td>
<td>15–20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACT Writing Test (Optional, 30 minutes)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Benefits

- Rewards students for what they know. The ACT is the only college admissions test based on the number of correct answers—with no penalty for guessing
- Results help educators monitor academic growth from grades 3 through 12 (when combined with ACT Aspire) and better identify when and where students need help
- Helps educators to improve curriculum and instructional tools with the alignment of the ACT subject test scores to ACT College and Career Readiness Standards
- Motivates students to perform to their best ability and often results in increased college enrollment, especially for underrepresented students
- Provides colleges and universities with detailed information for recruiting, advising, placement, and retention
- Helps students identify personally relevant career options with the ACT career exploration component
- Offers interventions to assist students in educational and career planning

Find out more about enhancements coming to the ACT at www.act.org/actnext.

www.act.org/products
ACT Engage measures behaviors and noncognitive attributes that relate to academic success and persistence. The low-stakes assessment is cost-effective and easy to administer.

What is Academic Behavior?

Success isn’t guaranteed by knowledge and skill alone. ACT research confirms that a combination of academic achievement and academic behavior is the best predictor of academic success.

ACT defines academic behavior as encompassing a broad range of noncognitive factors (attitudes, behaviors, feelings, etc.) that influence a student’s preparedness. Motivation, social engagement, and self-regulation are all factors that shape a student’s future aspirations and have an effect on high school and college success.

Research Based

ACT tested thousands of students using ACT Engage Grades 6–9 and tracked these students’ progress as they moved through middle school and into high school. Results show that administering ACT Engage during middle school is a valid predictor of high school grades. In addition, even after taking into account previous grades and academic readiness, ACT Engage provides additional information that helps accurately identify students who are at risk of poor grades and academic failure.

Find out more at www.act.org/engage/pdf/ENGAGE_Issue_Brief.pdf
Features

ACT Engage measures noncognitive attributes—motivation, self-regulation, and social engagement—that predict success for grades 6 through college.

ACT Engage Grades 6–9
Provides an early warning indicator of academic risk in high school and helps predict academic performance and timely graduation. It also provides a profile of students’ strengths and needs in ten areas, including family involvement, school safety climate, and optimism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Scale Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Academic Discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commitment to School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Optimism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Engagement</td>
<td>Family Attitude toward Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships with School Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Safety Climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Regulation</td>
<td>Managing Feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orderly Conduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thinking Before Acting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACT Engage Grades 10–12
Helps predict college academic performance and retention. Educators can use it to identify interventions to help students succeed in their transition to postsecondary studies. Students’ answers provide insight about their academic self-confidence, social connection, goal striving, and seven other behavioral scales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Scale Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Academic Discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commitment to College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Determination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal Striving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Engagement</td>
<td>Social Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Regulation</td>
<td>Academic Self-Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steadiness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACT Engage Teacher Edition
Allows teachers and counselors to provide their perspective for each student assessed by ACT Engage Grades 6–9 and ACT Engage Grades 10–12. When used in combination, ACT Engage and ACT Engage Teacher Edition cost-effectively provide a complete view of the academic behaviors that impact students. Each grade level of ACT Engage Teacher Edition includes the same domains measured by the student version of ACT Engage. This provides educators with an easy-to-follow and consistent method to clearly identify areas of intervention to support student success.

ACT Engage College
Identifies students who are most at risk of running into academic difficulty or even dropping out of school during their first year. Early interventions with these students may focus on study skills, social activity, academic self-confidence, or any combination of the ten scales this assessment measures. See page 19 in this catalog for more information.

Benefits

- Identify students with personal challenges that go unreported in standardized academic tests
- Improve graduation rates and directly reach students whose personal challenges may hinder academic success
- Evaluate a student’s self-reported psychosocial attributes
- Define a student’s levels of academic risk
- Use suggested individual interventions to help students improve academic achievement
- Use aggregate reports to identify what changes may be appropriate at a school or on a system-wide level
ACT QualityCore is the research-driven solution to raise the quality and intensity of high school core courses.

ACT research makes it clear—it's not just the number of classes a student takes, but what happens in those classes that matters most. For all students to be ready for college or career, they must prepare for and have access to high-quality, rigorous instruction in core subjects.

That's why the ACT research and development teams partnered with the nation's leading educators to develop ACT QualityCore. Course standards were validated by a group of teachers nationwide, forming the foundation for ACT QualityCore.

ACT QualityCore is the high school instructional improvement component of ACT College and Career Readiness solutions, a series of assessments and instructional improvement programs that prepare students for success in college and beyond.

What Can Schools and Districts Accomplish with ACT QualityCore?

Schools and districts across the country can use ACT QualityCore to increase the overall quality of high school core courses. ACT QualityCore provides teachers with the resources, tools, and training they need to successfully reach and teach all students in their classrooms. Principals will be assured that what's being taught in the classroom is effective, targeted, and customized to meet students' needs for college and career readiness. District leaders will be certain that the quality of instruction and the intensity of learning are consistent in each classroom and each school.

Research Based

ACT QualityCore is based, in part, on the 2005 report On Course for Success coauthored by ACT and The Education Trust. The study examined high-performing classrooms that were exceeding national averages in preparing students for college and career. While each school was unique, they had four characteristics in common:

• High-level, college-oriented content
• Qualified and experienced teachers
• Flexible and responsive teaching methods
• Extra student support and interventions when needed
ACT QualityCore Components

Rigorous Course Standards
Aligned to Common Core State Standards and drawn from years of empirical data and real-world classroom experience, ACT Course Standards define the essential knowledge and skills students need to be college and career ready.

Instructional Resources
Developed by teachers for teachers, ACT QualityCore educator resources enable teachers and coaches to customize instruction to meet individual student needs.

Formative Item Pool
Available through an online interactive test builder, ACT QualityCore provides educators with customizable quizzes and interim benchmark assessments that ensure teachers are identifying trouble spots in student learning.

End-of-Course Assessments
ACT QualityCore end-of-course assessments provide educators with constructed-response and multiple-choice options to evaluate student gains in achievement, course by course.

Progress Monitoring
Online reporting and longitudinal tracking enable educators to evaluate student progress.

Professional Development
A variety of professional development resources and workshops helps educators expand their teaching skills and learn about effective practices of other teachers.

ACT QualityCore Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English 9</td>
<td>Algebra I</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>US History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 10</td>
<td>Algebra II</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 11</td>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td>Physics</td>
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<tr>
<td>English 12</td>
<td>Precalculus</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Benefits

- Focus on fewer, clearer, and higher course standards
- Use formative assessments to guide instruction and make targeted interventions
- Employ the program’s flexible resources to improve and align instructional methods
- Measure student progress over time through benchmarks and end-of-course assessments, make adjustments as needed, and customize instruction
- Customize instruction to the needs of specific classrooms, schools, and districts
- Use research-based professional development resources and training opportunities to make better decisions based on data

www.act.org/products
ACT services for higher education include a range of enrollment, research, and assessment solutions.

Placement, Assessment, and Retention Services

ACT postsecondary clients use data from ACT Compass® to quickly and accurately place students in courses appropriate to their skill levels.

ACT Engage College evaluates the psychosocial characteristics of students to predict academic success and persistence and connect students with advising resources to ensure progress toward graduation.

ACT Enrollment Management Services uses data and research solutions to make important decisions about prospective and current students, specifically, to target the right prospective students for greater retention.

ACT Research and Survey Services provides a variety of free and fee-based research services for educators and education institutions at all levels in the areas of recruitment, admissions, placement, and enrollment.

Data to Support Recruitment Strategies

One of the best resources for gathering data about prospective students is the College Score Report from the ACT test. In addition to test scores, the report provides a rich variety of information that can enhance your recruitment strategy. Students report their majors, grades, career interests, financial needs, and extracurricular abilities and accomplishments. They also list four college preferences in rank order. Years of ACT research shows that students are more likely to follow through and enroll at one of their choices, making this data a strong predictor of enrollment decisions.
ACT Engage College identifies students who are most at risk of academic difficulty or dropping out during their first year.

Features

Postsecondary institutions may administer the 30-minute ACT Engage assessment of academic behaviors to first-year or transfer students.

ACT Engage measures noncognitive, psychosocial characteristics that predict a student’s academic success and persistence. ACT Engage focuses on the three key attributes of motivation, self-regulation, and social engagement. It identifies issues before they affect a student’s ability to learn and succeed on campus. Early interventions with these students may focus on study skills, social activity, academic self-confidence, or any combination of the scales this assessment measures.

ACT Engage measures students’ psychosocial attributes using these ten scales:

**Scales for College**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Scale Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Academic Discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commitment to College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Determination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal Striving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Engagement</td>
<td>Social Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Regulation</td>
<td>Academic Self-Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steadiness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Benefits**

- Improves first-year retention rates
- Predicts how likely incoming first-year students are to return for a second year, and whether they will earn at least a 2.0 GPA
- Reaches students whose personal challenges go unreported in standardized academic tests
- Measures students’ behaviors and psychosocial attributes, which are critical but often overlooked components of college success
- Requires minimal advance planning, easy to administer, and fits into any orientation program

The University of North Texas used ACT Engage College to improve retention. The institution had a 3% increase in retention, which represented about 105 students at $5,662.80 a year annual tuition. This resulted in retaining $594,594 in tuition.

www.act.org/products
AIM ACT Information Manager® is relationship-building software that provides access to detailed student information that can be used to:

- View all data for individual students
- View aggregate data by high school, district county, and state
- Prepare for high school visits
- Connect students to campus services
- Provide academic and career advising

There are more than 250 fields of data available from each ACT student record. All data can be imported, queried, and reported.

ACT Enrollment Information Service (ACT EIS) is strategic marketing software with research-based information that provides data on all ACT Plan- and ACT-tested students market share and enrollment.

- Manage existing markets
- Identify new markets
- Evaluate the competition
- Set realistic enrollment goals

ACT Class Profile Service helps colleges plan enrollment and analyze trends at all stages of enrollment. A summary of the college’s ACT-tested entering freshman class and parallel descriptions for students who sent scores, who enrolled, and who sent scores but did not enroll can help answer questions about trends in:

- popularity of selected academic majors
- average ACT scores
- enrollment of ACT-tested students who designated the college as their first choice

The summary also can show how successful the college has been in enrolling minority students.
ACT Educational Opportunity Service (ACT EOS) is a national database of high school students, sophomores through seniors, who are open to college opportunities.

ACT EOS contains both ACT Plan and ACT student contact information, an accurate measure of a student's academic abilities, and self-reported demographic information. If the ACT test is administered statewide, all in-state search names can be purchased from one source, eliminating duplicate names. ACT EOS also provides data to predict a student's most likely enrollment behaviors.

Tips for Enrollment and Retention Success

ACT recommends that institutions use the following strategies and tactics to boost enrollment yield and retention:

• Search for students after fall test dates to increase diversity. ACT research on "time of first testing" shows that many minority students take their first ACT test as seniors.

• Complete the Institutional Data Questionnaire at [www.act.org/idq](http://www.act.org/idq) to ensure that the information students see about your institution on the ACT Student Score Report is correct.

• Ask an ACT representative for advice on how to obtain the student data your institution needs. Some data fields, such as Race/Ethnicity are "sensitive fields" and must be requested to be included on the ACT Student Score Report. Contact information is on the back of this catalog.

ACT Enrollment Planners Conference

An annual summer conference for educators involved in planning, managing, and enhancing enrollment services.

Conference topics include the latest issues in enrollment management using social media, effective uses of technology in enrollment management, and innovative marketing, recruitment, and retention strategies.

[www.act.org/epc](http://www.act.org/epc)
**ACT Compass** is an untimed, computer-adaptive placement and diagnostic testing system that measures your students’ current skill set.

ACT Compass helps:
- Assess students’ skill levels in reading, writing, math, and English as a second language
- Place students in courses that match their educational needs
- Determine students’ advising needs
- Connect students to the resources they require to succeed academically
- Increase student success with improved retention and higher graduation rates

**Robust Reporting for Better Placement and Program Evaluation**

Student Advising Reports include customized course placement information and local campus referral messages and are available as soon as testing is finished, which allows immediate advising and registration. ACT Compass includes features to assist local staff in uploading results to campus computer systems.

ACT Compass includes the capability to generate reports such as Customized List Reports, mailing labels, and placement reports with recommendations for groups. In addition, ACT can provide Course Placement Services to assist institutions in evaluating outcomes of course placement practices and to provide information for setting and refining cut scores.

**Features**

**Student Profiles**

ACT Compass provides student contact information, detailed demographics, educational plans, and requests from students for specialized help. Up to 40 locally developed questions can also be included.
Features, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT Compass Areas of Assessment</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Placement Test</strong></td>
<td>• Determines students’ skill levels and places students in courses that match their educational needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A multiple-choice test to determine if students have the reading skills they need to succeed in entry-level college courses. Includes passages in practical reading, prose fiction, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Reading Diagnostics Tests evaluate students’ specific skills in reading comprehension and vocabulary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing Skills Placement Test and Diagnostics Tests</strong></td>
<td>• Test packages with cutoff scores and placement messages can be customized to ensure the results meet the specific needs of your institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A multiple-choice test that requires students to find and correct errors in essays in the areas of usage and mechanics, including basic grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure, and rhetorical skills including strategy, organization, and style. The Writing Skills Diagnostics Tests evaluate students’ skill levels in eight content domains: • Punctuation • Spelling • Capitalization • Usage • Verb Formation/Agreement • Relationships of Clauses • Shifts in Construction • Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing Essay Test (e-Write)</strong></td>
<td>• ACT Compass diagnostics and demographic data provide comprehensive student profiles that you can use to determine if your students have any special advising or support needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directly measures a student’s writing ability. Use alone or in conjunction with the Writing Skills test to place students. Uses a powerful Internet scoring engine to provide instant evaluation of skills using either a 2–8 or a 2–12 score scale. ACT Compass 5.0 only uses a 2–12 score scale.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematics Placement Test and Diagnostics Tests</strong></td>
<td>• ACT Compass tests are web-based, requiring near-zero install</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A multiple-choice test that evaluates ability levels in terms of basic skills such as performing a sequence of basic operations, application skills such as applying sequences of basic operations to novel settings or in complex ways, and analysis skills such as demonstrating conceptual understanding of principles and relationships for mathematical operations. The Mathematics Placement Test offers up to five content areas: • Pre-algebra • Algebra • College Algebra Mathematics Diagnostics Tests evaluate students’ skill levels in 15 sub-areas in Pre-algebra and Algebra: Pre-algebra: • Integers • Decimals • Exponents, Square Roots, and Scientific Notation • Ratios and Proportions • Fractions • Percentages • Averages (Means, Medians, and Modes) Algebra: • Substituting Values • Setting Up Equations • Factoring Polynomials • Exponents and Radicals • Basic Operations/Polynomials • Linear Equations/One Variable • Linear Equations/Two Variables • Rational Expressions Geometry • Relationships of Clauses Geometry • Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English as a Second Language (ESL) Tests</strong></td>
<td>• The computer-adaptive test engine reduces testing time, while maintaining the accuracy of your students’ placement results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test non-native English speakers’ abilities in four areas and place them in appropriate ESL courses. ESL Listening measures ability to understand standard spoken American English. ESL Reading measures abilities to comprehend and use standard American English in the areas of referring, such as comprehending explicitly stated material, and reasoning, such as inferential reading. ESL Grammar/Usage measures abilities to recognize and apply the mechanics of standard American English in the areas of sentence elements and sentence structure and syntax. ESL Essay (ESL e-Write) provides analytic scores in the areas of development, language use, organization, focus, and mechanics.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

www.act.org/products
ACT Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (ACT CAAP) is a standardized, nationally normed assessment program that enables postsecondary institutions to assess, evaluate, and enhance student learning and general education program outcomes.

Features

ACT CAAP offers six independent test modules, available in the subject areas most commonly covered in postsecondary general education programs:

- Reading
- Science
- Writing Skills
- Critical Thinking
- Mathematics
- Writing Essay

Select the test modules that most closely align with the goals and curricula of your general education program.

Convenient Administration—Determine the test administration dates and proctor the tests, and ACT does the rest. Each test takes about 50 minutes and is designed for convenient in-class administration.

National User Norms—More than 250 institutions use ACT CAAP each year, providing norms tables with national comparative data. ACT CAAP norms are updated every fall using test scores from the past three years and are categorized by type of institution (2-year or 4-year), year of students tested (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior), and institutional ownership (public, private).
ACT Career Solutions are widely trusted by employers, educators, and industry associations across the country. They have the potential to materially improve the lives of individuals in the labor force, the organizations that use them, and the strength of the US economy as a whole. The components of the ACT suite of career solutions include: ACT WorkKeys assessments, the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (ACT NCRC®), ACT Career Curriculum, ACT Job Profiling, and the ACT JobPro® database.

ACT WorkKeys assessments are research-based measures of foundational work skills required for success across industries and occupations.

The ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (ACT NCRC) is an assessment-based credential powered by ACT WorkKeys that certifies the foundational skills most essential to career success.

The ACT Career Curriculum includes instructional modules that help individuals develop their skills and improve assessment outcomes.

ACT Job Profiling is a service provided by ACT-authorized job profilers who work directly with businesses to identify and document the skill requirements for specific jobs.

The ACT JobPro database is a proprietary database that includes nearly 20,000 job skill profiles conducted by ACT-authorized job profilers.

ACT Career Solutions are the only career solutions available based on the depth of ACT knowledge about career readiness and backed by the expertise of a world-class leader in education and career solutions. The components of the ACT Career Solutions suite are valuable individually and when implemented as a complete system that helps employers improve employment decisions, helps job seekers and students improve their career outcomes, and helps educators prepare their students for success in a wide variety of career pathways.
ACT WorkKeys assessments are research-based measures of foundational work skills essential to career success. ACT WorkKeys assessments have been widely adopted by job seekers, educators, employers, and others across the country as reliable indicators of work readiness skills.

Research Based
ACT WorkKeys assessments are based on research on the skill requirements of jobs across industries and occupations. They are the only career solutions that are supported by a database of nearly 20,000 job skills profiles. Continuous item and form development, external item review for fairness and relevance, and expert psychometric research into workplace skill requirements ensure the continued relevance of ACT WorkKeys assessments.

Key Facts about ACT WorkKeys Assessments
• Designed to measure and document broadly relevant foundational work skills
• Developed to address the need for standardized measures of essential work skills
• Supported by data from nearly 20,000 job skills profiles
• Trusted by employers, educators, workforce developers, and industry developers
• Administered annually to millions of job seekers, employees, and students
• Administered statewide to high school juniors and seniors in seven states
• Relevant to multiple postsecondary education and career pathways

Job Skills Profiles
Job profiling and job profile data are critical components of the ACT suite of Career Solutions. ACT-authorized job profilers have profiled the skill requirements of nearly 20,000 jobs in terms of the skills measured by ACT WorkKeys assessments.

Data from these job skill profiles are found in the proprietary ACT JobPro database. Job seekers, students, employers, educators, and others use the ACT JobPro database to understand the skills needed for success in specific jobs.
ACT WorkKeys has the potential to help:

• Individuals improve career and economic outcomes
• Employers improve employment-related decisions
• Educators prepare students for success in a variety of career pathways
• Administrators demonstrate instructional impacts and satisfy federal or state accountability requirements
• Workforce developers remediate skills of displaced workers and document their readiness to reenter the job market
• Economic developers attract business and industry to local communities
• Industry associations build industry- and occupation-specific stackable credentials
• Policymakers and legislators develop research-based policies to inform solutions to the nation’s economic and educational challenges

Features

ACT WorkKeys assessments measure the cognitive (“hard”) and noncognitive (“soft”) skills fundamental to career success.

ACT WorkKeys “hard skill” assessments:

• Applied Mathematics measures the ability to apply mathematic principles to math-related problems encountered in the workplace
• Applied Technology measures the ability to apply principles of electricity, mechanics, fluid dynamics, and thermodynamics to workplace technical problems
• Business Writing measures the ability to apply conventions of standard business English to written communication required in the workplace
• Listening for Understanding measures the ability to understand and apply information acquired through oral communication typical of the workplace
• Locating Information measures the ability to find, analyze, and apply information presented in workplace graphics
• Reading for Information measures the ability to understand and apply written information presented in workplace documents
• Workplace Observation measures the ability to understand and apply information acquired through observation

ACT WorkKeys “soft skill” assessments:

• Fit measures interests and values associated with particular career pathways
• Performance measures tendencies toward unsafe or counterproductive work behaviors
• Talent measures attitudes and behaviors particularly relevant to success in the workplace
The **ACT National Career Readiness Certificate** (ACT NCRC) is an assessment-based credential powered by ACT WorkKeys. Issued at four levels, the ACT NCRC certifies the foundational work skills needed for success in jobs across industries and occupations. The ACT NCRC is widely used by employers, educators, workforce developers, and others with a stake in the success of individuals and businesses in the US economy.

**Research Based**

The ACT NCRC is based on ACT WorkKeys research-based foundational skills assessments. ACT WorkKeys assessments are criterion-referenced to workplace skill requirements and supported by a proprietary database of nearly 20,000 job skills profiles. Research shows that the skills measured by the ACT NCRC are the skills most relevant across industries and occupations.

**Key Facts about the ACT NCRC**

- Certifies foundational work skills essential for success in jobs across the economy
- Issued at four levels—Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze
- Based on ACT WorkKeys research-based work skills assessments
- More than 2.3 million certificates issued to job seekers, incumbents, and students
- Recognized and recommended by thousands of employers across the country
- Forms the basis of state and county-level workforce and economic development initiatives
- Recommended for college credit by the American Council on Education (ACE)

**Features**

To earn an ACT NCRC, an examinee must successfully complete three ACT WorkKeys assessments: Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information.
These assessments measure a range of essential work skills, including the ability to:

- Perform basic mathematic operations relevant to the workplace
- Read and understand documents commonly found in the workplace
- Find information presented in common workplace graphics
- Set up and solve complex work-related math problems
- Determine the relevance of written information to work-related tasks
- Apply information derived from graphics to work-related problems

An examinee must earn a minimum level score of three on the three ACT NCRC assessments to earn an ACT NCRC. Based on the scores students earn on the assessments, the certificate is awarded at four levels—Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum.

- Platinum: Scores of Level 6 or higher on all three exams
- Gold: Scores of Level 5 or higher on all three exams
- Silver: Scores of Level 4 or higher on all three exams
- Bronze: Scores of Level 3 or higher on all three exams

ACT NCRC levels correspond to the skill requirements of jobs in the ACT JobPro database. At each ACT NCRC level, an examinee meets the minimum requirements of a specific percentage of the jobs profiled by ACT-authorized job profilers.

Every ACT NCRC issued includes a unique registration code that can be used by employers to verify its authenticity.

The ACT WorkKeys assessments that comprise the ACT NCRC are available in computer-based and paper-and-pencil formats. As with All ACT WorkKeys assessments, the Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information assessments must be administered by proctors in accordance with ACT test security standards. The assessments are time-bound: for each of the three ACT NCRC assessments, 55 minutes are allowed for computer-based delivery and 45 minutes are allowed for paper-and-pencil.

The items on the ACT WorkKeys assessments that comprise the ACT NCRC are five-foil, multiple-choice items based on real-world stimuli and scenarios. The ACT WorkKeys Applied Mathematics and Reading for Information forms each include 33 items. The ACT WorkKeys Locating Information forms include 38 items. A small number of items on each form are for developmental purposes.

Benefits

- Job seekers, employees, and students: A valuable work skills credential with the potential to improve career outcomes
- Employers: A trusted indicator that, in combination with other selection tools, can improve employment-related decisions
- Educators: A credential that helps students succeed in a variety of career pathways
- Workforce developers: A tool that helps displaced workers reenter the job market
- Economic developers: A credential that provides evidence of a skilled workforce that helps attract business and industry to states and local communities
- Industry associations: A foundation for industry- and occupation-specific stackable credentials
- Policymakers and legislators: A component of policy and legislative solutions to the nation's economic and educational challenges
The ACT Career Curriculum modular online training, delivered through ACT KeyTrain, the ACT Soft Skills Suite, and ACT Career Ready 101™, helps individuals build the essential, career-relevant skills needed for learning, personal development, and effective job performance.

ACT KeyTrain is the base curriculum designed to help people master the applied workplace skills measured by assessment systems such as ACT WorkKeys, including applied mathematics, reading for information, and writing skills. It also prepares learners to earn the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate. The core curriculum is complemented by time-saving diagnostic curriculum placement tools and powerful reporting capabilities. It can be used by instructors to supplement and enrich the classroom experience or as stand-alone, self-paced instruction.

The ACT Soft Skills Suite is a series of five online, self-paced training courses built to help individuals gain knowledge and skills important to their on-the-job success. The ACT Soft Skills Suite focuses on behaviors and attitudes that affect job performance. Courses reflect the skills gaps hiring managers most frequently report.

ACT Career Ready 101 expands on the ACT KeyTrain curriculum and the ACT Soft Skills Suite to offer additional modules and an integrated approach to exploring careers and their skill requirements. Through ACT Career Ready 101, learners will build workplace and life literacy skills such as financial awareness and career exploration.

Effective Tools to Prepare Your Learners

The Administrator’s Interface tool offers a built-in learning management system included with ACT KeyTrain, the ACT Soft Skills Suite, and ACT Career Ready 101 that:

- Gives administrators flexible control over course assignments; placement in the curriculum; and group-, class-, and individual-targeted assignments
- Provides opportunity for stand-alone performance
- Offers extensive reporting capability
- Facilitates creating and maintaining rosters of active learners
- Enables mass import of individuals in groups and easy, one-at-a-time account creation to accommodate walk-ins and other short-notice needs

ACT WorkKeys Occupational Profiles

Data that describe the foundational skills and skill levels needed for job success are published in ACT WorkKeys Occupational Profiles (www.act.org/workkeys/analysis/occup.html), a free, Internet-based reporting service that summarizes the findings from thousands of job studies. Each job title is linked by the Standard Occupation Code (SOC) classification system to extensive occupational information reported by the federal government.

Students can identify potential careers by entering ACT WorkKeys scores as well as gain a better understanding of the types of skills that a specific career requires. The Occupational Profiles portal links directly to the Occupational Information Online (O’Net) system developed by the US Department of Labor, enabling students to drill deeper by researching demand, salaries, working conditions, and educational requirements for hundreds of occupations.
ACT KeyTrain Features
Contains skill-building curricula for all ACT WorkKeys skills:
• Applied Mathematics
• Applied Technology
• Business Writing
• Listening
• Listening for Understanding
• Locating Information
• Reading for Information
• Teamwork
• Workplace Observation
• Writing

ACT Soft Skills Suite Features
Courses help students improve skills critical for on-the-job success, including:
• Interpersonal and Business Communication
• Problem Solving and Critical Thinking
• Working in Teams
• Customer Service
• Work Discipline

ACT Career Ready 101 Features
Includes all ACT KeyTrain modules and the Soft Skills Suite as well as covering these life and employability skills and tools:
• Creating Career Goals
• Financial Awareness
• Job Search
• Course Calendars
• Tools
  – Interest Inventories
  – Job Profiles
  – Resume Writing

Benefits
Just a few of the benefits include:

Efficient, Flexible, and Easy for Administrators to Implement
• Administrators have flexible control over course assignments; placement in the curriculum; and group, class, and/or individually targeted assignments; as well as administration of new, one-at-a-time accounts for walk-ins and mass import of individuals in a group

Leverages Instructors’ Impact and Time
• Instructors can use the curriculum as a supplement to classroom instruction or as stand-alone, self-paced instruction in the various courses offered

Convenient for Learners
• Learners can use the curriculum 24/7 via the Internet, when and where it makes sense for them. They can set their own pace to get the most personal benefit from their study time

Designed to Reduce the Risk of Learners Failing to Learn Due to Extraneous Factors
• Lessons use visual, reading, and auditory presentation of content, so reading skills dependency is compensated for and minimized
• A proven, competence-based approach that takes the learner through a series of topics that build level by level to assure skill development throughout the course

Provides a Focused, Efficient Way to Build Skills Tested by ACT WorkKeys
• Designed to take advantage of prior learning and identified job skills demand for specific occupations—directly linked to current occupational information and ACT WorkKeys skills areas
ACT is a national research leader in college and workforce training readiness.

Our groundbreaking research on a wide range of education and workforce issues, coupled with our collaboration with education, policy, and thought leaders, has led to the development of comprehensive and integrated programs aimed at providing educators with practical solutions that foster student success.

We've conducted technical and scholarly research on a variety of topics, including test and test-item fairness, test reliability and validity, the meaning of test-score differences, improving the achievement of at-risk populations, occupational fit, career interests, course placement, and the determinants of academic and career success.

An overview of our current research is on pages 34–35.

Additional research can be found at www.act.org/research
ACT National Curriculum Survey

Every three to five years, the ACT National Curriculum Survey asks educators about what they teach (or don’t teach) in their courses and how important they feel various topics in their discipline are for students to know to be successful in these courses and in future coursework. The survey also asks educators for their opinions on educational topics of current interest, such as the college readiness of their students or the implementation of improved standards, such as ACT College Readiness Standards or the Common Core State Standards.

Prior ACT National Curriculum Survey efforts included educators from middle school through the postsecondary level. For the first time, the ACT National Curriculum Survey 2012 also included elementary school teachers. ACT knows that early learning is important for later high school performance—not only do we have the assessment data to prove it, but we now also have survey data about its importance from the very people who teach it.

The Purpose of the Survey

The ACT National Curriculum Survey is a critical step in the process used to build and regularly update a valid suite of ACT assessments empirically aligned to college readiness standards. The survey helps to inform the test blueprint for the assessments. Results from the assessments validate ACT College Readiness Standards as well as the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks.

ACT is committed to validity research. The first type is research into content validity, designed to answer the critical question: Does the test measure what it purports to measure? Essentially, this involves the validation of ACT College Readiness Standards, which are built on a foundation of years of empirical data and continually validated through the ACT National Curriculum Survey, as well as frequent external standards reviews. The second type of research, predictive validity, uses actual course performance to answer a second critical question: Does the test correctly predict performance? Constant monitoring allows ACT to ensure that the answer to both of these questions is yes.

This science behind our assessments—the evidence base and ongoing research—is critical to answering the key question of what matters most in college and career readiness. The ACT National Curriculum Survey represents the commitment by ACT to:

- use evidence and research to develop and validate our standards, assessments, and benchmarks
- maintain a robust research agenda to report on key educational metrics (The Condition of College & Career Readiness, Enrollment Management Trends Report, and The Reality of College Readiness)
- develop assessments, reports, and interventions that will help individuals navigate their personal path to success along a kindergarten-through-career continuum

The ACT Foundation

The ACT Foundation is an Austin, Texas-based national operating foundation that reaches across organizational boundaries, sectors, and the nation, to fund and develop strategic approaches to working and learning that support working learners in their individual journeys to successful careers and lives. The ACT Foundation was endowed by ACT and supports the ACT mission of helping people achieve education and workplace success. As a private, independent foundation, the Foundation connects fifty years of data and insights to catalyze and build a National Learning Economy that will nurture the success of working learners and their families while fueling a stronger economy.

Learn more at www.actfdn.org
Overview of Topics

ACT Research topics include test reliability and validity, the meaning of test-score differences, racial/ethnic achievement differences, gender bias, occupations, interests, and related subjects. The following is a sampling of our research. To see more go to www.act.org/research-policy.

2014

• The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2014
  Using ACT test scores and the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks, The Condition of College & Career Readiness reports provide national and state snapshots of the college and career readiness of the graduating seniors of the class of 2014 who took the ACT in high school.

• Catching Up to College and Career Readiness: The Challenge is Greater for At-Risk Students
  How many “far-off-track” eighth graders from disadvantaged student demographic groups catch up to college and career readiness before they graduate? How many “far-off-track” disadvantaged fourth graders catch up by eighth grade?

• Building Momentum: The Condition of Progress Toward College Readiness
  This report provides a look at the progress toward college readiness made by middle school students and students at the midpoint of high school who took ACT Explore and ACT Plan during the 2011–12 school year.

• The Condition of STEM 2013
  (The Condition of STEM 2014 will be available in November 2014)
  The Condition of STEM 2013 reviews the ACT-tested 2013 graduating class in the context of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)-related fields. It also highlights four ACT-defined STEM categories related to highly skilled STEM careers and majors as well as areas where a two-year degree and/or certification are needed. The report provides data on the measured and expressed interest levels of students in STEM majors and occupations while aligning the data with student aptitudes in math and science. ACT uses the data to project actual student counts for each of the designated areas within each state and across the nation.
2013

• **College Choice Report: High School Class 2013**
  ACT created the College Choice Report to provide enrollment managers and other college administrators with information about students’ patterns during the college choice process of the 2013 high school graduates who took the ACT college readiness assessment. The focus of the 2013 report is students’ selection of a college major or program of study.

• **The Condition of Work Readiness in the United States**
  In this report, ACT highlights the levels of work readiness for various subgroups of ACT WorkKeys examinees in the United States and provides work readiness standards and benchmarks for selected groups of targeted high-demand and high-wage occupations.

• **Work Readiness Standards and Benchmarks**
  ACT defines “work readiness,” presents a framework for aligning education and training to current job skill requirements, and describes what individuals must achieve to secure in-demand jobs and to successfully navigate transitions throughout their careers.

• **2013 Reality of College Readiness Report**
  This national report and the series of state reports trace the enrollment, retention, and transfer patterns of 2011 ACT-tested high school graduates.

• **College and Career Readiness: The Importance of Early Learning**
  The report reaffirms the importance of early learning and addresses the growing need for a system to support early learning in schools, as well as the obligation of educators and policymakers to promote public awareness of the advantages of early learning.

• **Readiness Matters: The Impact of College Readiness on College Persistence and Degree Completion**
  What is the importance of college readiness for persisting in college to timely degree completion?