

ALEKS Math Placement Assessment – FAQ Guide for SU Faculty and Staff

This Guide outlines answers to common questions regarding the ALEKS Math Placement Assessment for new students. Please direct all questions to Nick Cubita, Director of Orientation Programs, at cubitan@seattleu.edu.

What is the ALEKS Math Placement Assessment? How is it formatted?

ALEKS (Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces) is an online, adaptive system from the McGraw Hill company that covers a broad spectrum of math topics within the following format:

- ALEKS is a “Placement Assessment,” not a pass/fail test.
- The length of ALEKS varies and can be up to 25 questions.
- ALEKS is not multiple-choice; it is open-response and requires students to solve problems and equations.
- ALEKS is timed; students have 2.5 hours to complete the assessment. Most students take 60–90 minutes.
- If a student needs to stop/pause mid-assessment, their work is saved and they can return to where they left off.

Who takes the ALEKS Math Placement Assessment? Is there a cost to complete ALEKS?

Before registering for classes, **all first-year students starting in 23RQ and 23FQ** are required to take ALEKS as part of Orientation. *As of May 17, 2023, this includes 1,138 students.* ALEKS will be required for all future first-year students before they register for courses for their first term at SU. ALEKS costs \$20 per student (included in matriculation fees).

What is the deadline to complete ALEKS?

Students must complete their first attempt at ALEKS by **Friday, June 16, 2023**. This deadline allows for the following:

- SU has their ALEKS score before they participate in Academic Advising and Course Registration.
- Students have time for additional attempts at completing ALEKS to possibly raise their score.
- Orientation can send reminder/follow-up messaging for a 100% completion rate before Course Registration.

How many times can students take ALEKS?

Students have **a total of 3 attempts** to complete ALEKS throughout the summer. Students who are not satisfied with their score/course placement can retake ALEKS up to 2 more times, within the following parameters:

- After attempt #1, students must spend at least 5 hours in Prep and Learning modules before retaking ALEKS.
- Prep and Learning modules are individualized and adaptive, based on how a student performed in ALEKS.
- Students must complete their second and/or third attempt by Friday, September 15, 2023.
- During Fall Quarter 2023, students may complete a fourth attempt to apply to future course registration.
- During Winter Quarter 2023, students may complete a fifth attempt to apply to future course registration.

Are any students exempt from completing ALEKS?

Students may be exempt from completing ALEKS if they have:

1. Taken ALEKS at another institution within the last year, or
2. Successfully completed a college course in mathematics.

How are exemptions to completing ALEKS granted?

As degree requirements vary greatly across programs, exemptions are approved on a case-by-case basis. **Only Academic Advisors can approve a student's exemption from completing ALEKS.** In addition to any possible Running Start or other incoming college-level credits, students with math scores from SAT, ACT, AP, or IB exams will have those scores evaluated **after** completing ALEKS. The score/credits that place students into the highest-level math course will be used.

What about students other than first-year students?

- Incoming Transfer Students: Very few incoming Transfer students will not bring sufficient math credits that count toward their degree. Those students will be required to complete ALEKS.
- Continuing Students: Any student who started before 23RQ will complete SU's Math Placement Exam in Canvas. The Math Department can add students to this Canvas group.
- Graduate Students: Any graduate student who needs a math placement score will complete SU's Math Placement Exam in Canvas. The Math Department can add students to this Canvas group.

I am an Academic Advisor. How do I confirm a student's exemption from completing ALEKS?

If you have reviewed all math scores and college-level credits a student is bringing to SU and believe a student should be exempt from completing ALEKS, follow these steps and refer to the image below for guidance. This marks their checklist item as complete and prevents them from receiving additional reminders to complete ALEKS.

1. Log into Slate and locate the student's New Student Checklist items.
2. Select "Waived" in the drop-down menu next to "Complete ALEKS Math Placement Assessment".



3. Email the student with the following message:

I am writing to notify you that based on your [insert justifying score/credits], you have been approved for an exemption from completing the ALEKS Math Placement Assessment. I have adjusted your New Student Checklist in your Admissions Portal to reflect that this item is now complete. This change may take 24-48 hours to update in your Portal. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let me know!

What communication have new students and supporters received about ALEKS?

On Monday, May 15, 2023, first-year students were sent a message from their program's academic advising center with step-by-step instructions and explanations to complete all Advising and Registration tasks over the summer. This message explained the purpose of ALEKS, how to complete their assessment, and shared a link to visit the [Math Placement webpage](#) for additional information. Students will receive regular reminders until they complete ALEKS.

- Any parent or family emails provided for a student were copied on this email.
- Students are also provided information about ALEKS in their [Academic Advising 101](#) Online Orientation Module.

How do students access ALEKS?

Students have been given the following instructions to access ALEKS via Single-Sign On and complete their assessment:

1. Log into your [Admissions Portal](#) and go to your New Student Checklist.
2. Click on the "ALEKS Math Placement Assessment" checklist item.
3. Follow the instructions on this page to log into the ALEKS website.
4. Use password [students see password in Admissions Portal] to begin your Math Placement Assessment.

For questions about the password and access to ALEKS, please direct students to contact orientation@seattleu.edu.

How do ALEKS scores work?

ALEKS is **not** a pass/fail test. After completing ALEKS, students receive a score between 0-100 and this message:

- "Congratulations on completing your Math Placement Assessment! Your Academic Advisor can view your score within 24-48 hours. Please review the SU Math Placement website for next steps."

The [Math Placement webpage](#) includes a table that connects a student's ALEKS score to a course placement.

What if a student needs/requests an accommodation for completing their ALEKS?

If a student requires an accommodation, they must contact Disability Services (206-296-5740) before taking ALEKS. A conversation with Disability Services will guide students to partner in best meeting their individualized needs. Students approved for extended time or screen reader accommodations will be provided a separate link to complete ALEKS.

What if a student completed ALEKS at another institution?

This score will only be considered if the student completed ALEKS within the past calendar year. Otherwise, a student must take ALEKS again with SU for a new score to be considered for course placement.

What if a student asks whether their ALEKS or other math score is “good enough” for their intended major

Your response will depend on a student’s program requirements and any scores/credits they have besides ALEKS. Generally, you can share a response such as:

- “Great question! Placing into a math course is about making sure you are set up for success to complete all program requirements and graduate on time. Your [score(s)/credits] are about making sure you’re not in a course that is too easy or too hard. We want to place you in a course that matches your current skill level.”

Note: Follow this with an individualized explanation of the student’s math course(s) path for their degree requirements.

Who do I contact for questions?

Students, supporters, staff, and faculty should contact the following areas for the following support:

Point of Contact	Email	Reason to Contact
Orientation	orientation@seattleu.edu	General questions, access to ALEKS, troubleshooting ALEKS, checklist updates, Canvas modules
Advisors/Advising	Click here for Advising Center contacts	Exemption requests, Advising & Registration guidance
Admissions	Students’ Admissions Counselor noted in their Admissions Portal	High school transcripts, SAT/ACT/AP/IB scores, Running Start, other college-level credits
Disability Services	ds@seattleu.edu	Accommodation inquiries and requests
Math Dept.	John Teegarden: teegardj@seattleu.edu	Continuing and graduate students taking SU’s Math Placement Exam

How is information displayed to students in the Admissions Portal?

This is how ALEKS is displayed as a task on the New Student Checklist:

New Student Checklist

Orientation Essentials | Financial Aid | Admissions

Orientation Essentials Checklist

(Please toggle between the buttons above to view your various checklist items)

As a new student, you will need to ensure that we have received each of these required items below. Please note that tasks completed within the last 24-48 hours may not be reflected here.

Immunization records may take up to two weeks to be processed and approved. Thank you for your patience during this time.

For more information about these checklist items, please visit our [Orientation website](#).
If you have questions or concerns, please contact the [Admissions Office](#).

Status	Details	Date
✓ Received	Complete Your Housing Plan (Due June 1)	05/05/2023
✗ Awaiting	Submit Meningitis Agreement (Due June 1)	
✗ Awaiting	Submit Final High School Transcripts Showing Graduation Date (Due July 16)	
✗ Awaiting	Anticipated College Credit Earned Form (Due July 16)	
✗ Awaiting	Submit Your Immunization Records (Due August 1)	
✗ Awaiting	Upload Your Campus Card Photo (Due August 1)	
✗ Awaiting	Complete ALEKS Math Placement Assessment (Due June 16)	
✗ Awaiting	Register for Courses	

After a clicking “Complete ALEKS Math Placement Assessment”, students see the following screen and instructions:

Complete ALEKS Math Placement Assessment

Complete ALEKS Math Placement Assessment

Prior to registering for classes, all first-year students are required to complete the ALEKS Math Placement Assessment. Students with math scores from SAT, ACT, AP, or IB exams will have their scores evaluated by an Academic Advisor after completing the ALEKS Assessment. When you participate in course registration in July, the score that places you into the highest math course will be used.

You may be exempt from completing the ALEKS Assessment if you have:

1. Taken ALEKS at another college or university within the last year, or
2. Successfully completed college-level coursework in mathematics.

Visit [Seattle U's Math Placement webpage](#) to learn more. If you would like to discuss specific questions about possible exemptions, please visit www.seattleu.edu/advising/ to locate your Academic Advising Center's webpage and contact information.

The deadline to complete your ALEKS Math Placement Assessment is Friday, June 16, 2023.

To access and complete your Math Placement Assessment:

1. Using your Seattle University email account [redacted] and password, log into **ALEKS Math Placement Assessment**.
2. Review and follow the instructions to begin your Math Placement Assessment.
3. Use password [redacted] prior to starting exam.

If you have questions about completing your Math Placement Assessment, please contact orientation@seattleu.edu.

You may return to this page at any time by accessing it through your Application Portal.