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| **STATE OF CALIFORNIA** | **ERIK E. SKINNER, INTERIM CHANCELLOR** |
| **California Community Colleges**  **CHANCELLOR’S Office**  1102 Q Street, Suite 4550  Sacramento, CA 95811-6549  (916) 445-8752  <http://www.cccco.edu> | California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Logo |

August 2, 2016

#### TO: Assessment Directors

#### Chief Student Services Officers

Student Success and Support Coordinators (Credit and Noncredit)

**FROM:** Pamela D. Walker, Ed.D.

Vice Chancellor, Educational Services

**SUBJECT:** Clarification on Student Assessment for Placement

**Synopsis:** This memo is being provided to direct colleges regarding the application of assessment tests and multiple measures in the California Community College system.

As the launch date for the Common Assessment Initiative (CAI) draws near, the Chancellor’s Office has received numerous questions regarding CAI and the use of multiple measures. The Chancellor’s Office is producing CCCAssess, an assessment system for testing in English, ESL, reading and mathematics. CCCAssess will also contain information that may be used in conjunction with the tests (such as high school GPA, or non-cognitive information) to provide multiple measures of assessment that more accurately place students into courses.

To ensure compliance with title 5, section 55522(a), colleges are required to employ multiple measures “when using an English, Mathematics, or ESL assessment test for placement.” The definition of multiple measures can be found in Section 55502(i):

Multiple Measures are a required component of a district's assessment system and refer to the use of more than one assessment measure in order to assess the student. Other measures that may comprise multiple measures include, but are not limited to, interviews, holistic scoring processes, attitude surveys, vocational or career aptitude and interest inventories, high school or college transcripts, specialized certificates or licenses, education and employment histories, and military training and experience.

In a [memo](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/SSSP/Matriculation/Assessment/Clarification%20SAT%20ACT%207-1-2015.pdf), dated July 1, 2015, the Chancellor’s Office determined that test results from either the EAP, SAT or ACT may be used as a multiple measure. This determination is in accordance with title 5, section 55522, which grants the Chancellor’s Office authority to “identify other measures of a student’s college readiness that community college districts may use for student placement into the college’s curriculum.”

The use of multiple measures is supported by research, which shows that using more than one metric increases the accuracy of student placement in college courses by incorporating the many student attributes that relate to success (Bracco et al., 2014; Belfield and Crosta 2012; Hodara et al., 2012; Scott-Clayton 2012).

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Based on the regulations and related research, the Chancellor’s Office is providing the following clarification for identifying and using multiple measures:

1. Colleges must employ more than one evidence-based measure in addition to a placement test in assessing a student. At least two measures chosen must be of different formats to allow students multiple opportunities to illustrate their knowledge and readiness.
2. High school GPA alone does not constitute a “multiple measure” of assessment. An assessment test, with high school GPA, may be combined with the grades for specific coursework (e.g., grade 12 mathematics or English), or non-cognitive information, to constitute multiple measures of assessment, since this information would provide evidence-based measures of a student’s abilities.
3. An English essay, whether machine or human scored, is considered as assessment test, therefore it must be approved by the Chancellor’s Office in accordance with title 5, section 55522.
4. Colleges may place students with a disjunctive or conjunctive use of tests and other measures of assessment, as long as multiple measures are used. If the measures used generate different placements for a student, it is recommended that the college err on the side of placing the student at the higher level. Students who feel they are placed too high, however, should be given the opportunity to take a lower level course.

Please note that colleges must evaluate whether their placement systems--including multiple measures--are fair, valid and in compliance with title 5, Section 55522, and the Chancellor’s Office assessment standards to ensure best practices.

Please refer to the [Standards, Policies, and Procedures for the Evaluation of Assessment Instruments Used in California Community Colleges](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/SSSP/Matriculation/Assessment/ApprovedGuidelinesMarch2001.pdf) for clarification on any other assessment issues. In addition, colleges may want to review the [Multiple Measures Assessment Project](http://rpgroup.org/projects/multiple-measures-assessment-project) as well as a [white paper issued by the Academic Senate’s Multiple Measures task force](http://www.asccc.org/sites/default/files/Multiple%20Measures%20in%20Assessment_0.pdf) on the use of multiple measures.

As a reminder, most assessment-related activities may be funded by the Student Success and Support Program (SSSP). Please refer to the [SSSP funding guidelines](http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/SSSP/Matriculation/SSSP%20Handbook%202014/Chapter%204%20-%20SSSP%20Funding%20Guidelines.pdf) to ensure your college’s activities are eligible.

Please contact Chris Graillat, SSSP Specialist, at 916-322-7988 or [cgraillat@cccco.edu](mailto:cgraillat@cccco.edu) , if you have any questions or need assistance.