

Alphabet Soup: Glossary of Higher Education Terms

Accuplacer – A set of computer-adaptive placement tests commonly used in Colorado to evaluate a student’s readiness for college work. Scores on the Accuplacer are often used to determine whether a student needs remedial education.

Admissions Eligibility Index – Commonly known as the index or index score. This refers to the standards established by the CCHE in 1987 for freshmen entering four-year institutions. The index has two components – a student’s high school grade point average or class rank and performance on a college placement test such as the ACT or SAT. Index requirements vary by institution.

Admissions Standards Policy – Policy approved by the CCHE for admitting new and transfer students to the state’s public colleges and universities.

ACT/SAT – National college entrance exams. Colorado and other Western states typically use the ACT while Eastern states tend to use SAT. At least three states – Colorado, Illinois and Kentucky – require all high school juniors to take the ACT.

CCHE – Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the appointed governing body overseeing the state’s public colleges and universities.

Compass – A set of computer-adaptive college placement tests, similar to the Accuplacer, which is used to gauge student readiness for college work in various subjects.

HEAR – Higher Education Admissions Requirement, the series of academic courses that serve as entry requirements for students planning to attend any of Colorado’s public four-year colleges or universities. Students also must meet the Admission Eligibility Index, commonly known as the index.

PARCC – The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers is a consortium of more than 20 states, including Colorado, working together to develop a common set of K-12 assessments in English and math anchored in what it takes to be ready for college and careers. PARCC assessments will take the place of the annual CSAP/TCAP state exams in 2014-15.

Remedial education – Refers to the basic-skills courses given to first-year students who are deemed not ready for college-level work. Remedial classes help prepare students for credit-bearing courses.

Remedial Education Policy – Policy approved by the CCHE for placement of students in remedial education.

SBAC - The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is a state-led consortium, similar to PARCC, working to develop tests that measure student progress toward Postsecondary and Workplace Readiness.

Transfer Admissions Standards – Refers to admissions standards for students transferring from one Colorado public college or university to another.