



## Minimum Admissions and Academic Readiness: KAR 2:020 Implementation Guidance

KRS 164.020(8) requires that the Council on Postsecondary Education set minimum admission standards for prospective students enrolling at Kentucky public postsecondary institutions. 13 KAR 2:020 fulfills this obligation and guides prospective students, local school districts, and public postsecondary institutions on the minimum requirements for admission and course placement to facilitate transition into postsecondary education.

The regulation, amended in 2018, sustains KCTCS' open admissions mission while requiring traditional high school graduates and adult learners admitted to a public university to have an unweighted, cumulative high school GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. Students with an unweighted, cumulative GPA ranging from 2.0 to 2.49 may enroll after signing a learning contract that stipulates the following:

- Support services expectations (advising, mentoring, tutoring, etc.) for both the student and the institution;
- Student learning goals and expectations;
- Required student participation in a financial literacy program;
- How student progress is monitored, and
- The specified length of the learning contract.

The postsecondary GPA of transfer students is not included in determining learning contract requirements. The regulation focuses only on the high school GPA for the purpose of the learning contract.

The regulation also addresses course placement. It requires the use of corequisite education at all public universities for students not meeting academic readiness benchmarks. A corequisite course is a credit-bearing gateway course that includes enhanced academic supports, such as additional hours of instruction, tutoring, mentoring, or advising. Students enrolled at KCTCS institutions may enroll in one developmental education course per curriculum pathway and must have access to corequisite support within the first year.

### Admissions

#### College Admissions Exam

KRS 158.6453 requires high school students to take a college admissions exam. An institution may require standardized scores from ACT or SAT for admissions purposes, but those exams are not part of the minimum admissions requirements.

### **Rationale for Minimum High School GPA of 2.0/4.0**

CPE staff analyzed records of three cohorts totaling more than 50,000 freshman students entering Kentucky public universities and found that a high school GPA of 2.0 was the performance level at which the first- to second-year retention rate exceeded 50%. This conclusion remained the same for both low income and underrepresented minority students.

Data also showed that retention rates increased significantly for students with a 2.5 high school GPA and above, thus the rationale for learning contracts for students with a high school GPA between 2.0-2.49.

### **Readmission of Students**

Institutions are required to publish policies and procedures for the readmission of students who have not attended for three (3) or more semesters at the readmitting institution. Please note that summer terms count as a semester.

### **World Language Requirement**

Access to high school world languages could serve as an obstacle to college admission. Therefore, students may complete the world language requirement at the postsecondary level. Institutions are not required to admit students who have not met the world language requirement. If an institution does admit such students, the institution must provide those courses, regardless of the students' major, in order for students to graduate from the admitting institution.

This requirement is not a part of degree program requirements. Students, for example, could fulfill the world language requirement through general education requirements and/or free electives.

### **Transfer**

The minimum admission requirement for transfer applicants with 24 or more semester credit hours applicable to a baccalaureate degree is a GPA of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Applicants with fewer than 24 credit hours must meet the requirements of one of the other subsections of Section 3 of 13 KAR 2:020.

### **Dual Credit**

Students must have an unweighted, cumulative 2.5 high school GPA. Once admitted, they must meet the minimum GPA requirement and do not need to be re-assessed, but must meet any postsecondary course prerequisites.

Students enrolling in gateway courses in math, English, and reading must meet benchmarks established by the Council. The readiness indicators can be found [here](#).

## **Academic Readiness**

### **Academic Readiness Determination**

Academic readiness is defined as students' requisite ability to succeed in credit-bearing coursework by meeting or exceeding the college readiness benchmarks adopted by the Council. Curriculum pathways are specified series of courses or competencies needed to complete a

credential or degree. The curriculum pathways include: English (writing), reading, and mathematics (quantitative reasoning, college algebra, and calculus).

Students' readiness to enter gateway courses is determined by standardized scores and GPA benchmarks found [here](#). Students not meeting benchmark on one of the accepted academic readiness exams may, at an institution's discretion, be deemed academically ready if they have an unweighted, cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or higher.

When using exams to determine academic readiness, institutions may only use the exams approved by the Council. If students do not meet benchmark via CPE-approved exams or GPA, the institution may choose to administer placement tests to determine which corequisite option is most appropriate for students (see below for KCTCS developmental coursework guidance). The Council does not have a list of approved corequisite placement exams, so the institution may use exams not listed on the Academic Readiness Indicators list for the purpose of choosing the appropriate corequisite option.

Accurate placement is critical to student success. Several studies have shown that older test scores may be less valid predictors of college academic performance, especially for adult learners. Therefore, scores used to determine benchmark should not be older than four (4) years.

### **KCTCS Developmental Coursework**

Students enrolled at a KCTCS institution must meet the minimum academic readiness benchmarks listed [here](#).

For those not meeting any of the academic readiness benchmarks, students can enroll in no more than one developmental course in a curriculum pathway. Students should have access to a corequisite or traditional gateway course in the curriculum pathway within the first academic year of enrollment.

For students who change pathways (e.g. from quantitative reasoning to college algebra), the KCTCS institution would have the option of placing the student in another developmental course in the new pathway. However, given that the student has already shown the ability to succeed in credit-bearing coursework, it seems reasonable that the student could be placed in a corequisite course rather than a developmental course in the new pathway. If the student could meet the admission requirements to a public university at this point, then the student would automatically be afforded the opportunity of a corequisite course.

### **University Corequisite Education**

Students enrolled at a public university must meet the minimum academic readiness benchmarks listed [here](#). Students not meeting benchmark must enroll in corequisite support in that curriculum pathway.

### **International Students**

International students who do not meet academic readiness benchmarks should be placed in the appropriate corequisite gateway course. For international transfer students, there is an

expectation that the admitting institution will evaluate prior coursework and determine whether readiness needs to be assessed.