Locating, registering for, and completing the Caltech Writing Placement Test

We anticipate that many of the steps contained in these instructions will be intuitive for most students, but these guidelines are meant to anticipate and respond to any questions you might have related to the technical aspects of accessing and submitting this test.

Questions? Email writing.placement@hss.caltech.edu
Here is what you should see at placement.caltech.edu:

Log in

Username [ ]
Password [ ]

Remember username
Log in

Forgotten your username or password?

Cookies must be enabled in your browser

Is this your first time here?

Hi! For full access to the math, physics, and writing placement tests for freshmen and transfer students, you'll need to take a minute to create an account for yourself. Here are the steps:

1. Fill out the New Account form with your details. Be sure to use an email account that you will continue to check between now and September.
2. An email will be immediately sent to your email address. If you do not see the email, check your spam folder.
3. Read the email, and click on the web link it contains.
4. Your account will now be confirmed and you will be logged in.
5. You can now access the materials for the Writing Placement Test. From now on you will only need to enter your personal username and password (in the form on this page) to log in and access this site.

Having trouble? Email the Site Administrator with your questions.

Create new account
Fill in all required fields and click “Create my new account.” Check your inbox for a link to follow to complete your registration. If you do not see an email, check your spam folder. Make sure to register using an email address you check regularly.
Clicking the link in the registration email will likely log you in automatically (skip to next page to see where this will take you), but any time you need to log in to the site in the future, you can return to placement.caltech.edu to log in on the left side of the screen.
You should see a screen similar to this after logging in with your verified credentials for the first time. Click the correct link to access the test materials you need.
You’re almost there. Just click “enroll me.” You should only have to do this the first time you access the materials.
Click the link to access the test. One note: if you end up on this page but are looking for the physics or math placement test (or the reverse), simply click “All courses” to navigate to the other tests.
Once the test begins, PDFs of the reading and the prompt will be posted here for download.

When you complete your essay, upload it here.

After you upload your essay, take this brief survey.

All test materials are located on this page. Think of this as the “home page” for the writing placement test. See above for a guide to the page. (Dates change each year.)
Ready to submit your essay? When you click “submit final draft of essay” on the previous page, you should see a screen that looks like this. Click “add submission” to proceed.
Once you click “Save changes” your essay will be submitted. You can remove and resubmit your essay until the deadline.

You must affirm you created your essay in accordance with the instructions before submission. The actual text of this affirmation may differ from the example here, so please review it carefully.

Either use the “add” button to select a file to upload or drag and drop a file into this rectangle.

The Caltech honor code states that “No member of the Caltech community shall take unfair advantage of any other member of the Caltech community.” In submitting this placement test, I affirm that I have upheld the honor code. This means that I read and followed all test guidelines and rules, including those about what kinds of resources or outside help I could or could not make use of to support my work on this test. If I know or suspect I have violated the test rules or guidelines, I will contact the test organizers to discuss the situation.
This screen verifies you have submitted your essay.

If you the “submitted for grading,” your essay has been successfully submitted. You can remove and resubmit your essay until the deadline using the “edit submission” button.
Don’t forget to complete the survey after submitting your essay!
The post-test survey contains 8 questions and should take fewer than 5 minutes to complete. Once you submit it, your work is complete.