

March 3, 1998

MEMORANDUM

TO: Basic Skills Directors

FROM: Bill Cole, Director of Program Audits
Randy Whitfield, Associate Director of Basic Skills

SUBJECT: Basic Skills Enrollment Guidelines

To meet the demands of a highly complex society and a rapidly changing workplace, the field of adult education has redefined its role from a narrow view of teaching only reading, writing, and mathematical skills to an expanded view which also includes teaching problem-solving and critical thinking. Although a major program component will always be to help those who need a high school equivalency achieve one, the main emphasis is helping all individuals -- with or without a high school credential -- to gain the competencies and skills they need to function effectively in today's world. As a result, there has been a shift in focus from measuring adults' skills solely in grade levels to measuring the competencies adults need. All current draft legislation at the federal level supports this expanded view of basic skills education.

For North Carolina's community colleges to continue to meet the needs adults have as citizens, family members, and workers, the attached policy change will take effect immediately for Adult Basic Education, GED, and the Adult High School diploma programs. There is no policy change for English as a Second Language (ESL) or Compensatory Education. This major change in basic skills enrollment allows students -- with or without a high school diploma or its equivalent -- to enroll on a self-referral basis regardless of their assessment scores. It also allows students with a high school diploma or its equivalent to enroll in GED or Adult High School programs even if they score above 9.0 on a standardized basic skills assessment.

When implementing this policy, please keep in mind the following two points:

- 1) The Adult Education Act was implemented to provide education for adults who are the most disadvantaged educationally, those who qualify for Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and those without a high school diploma or its equivalent. Please continue to provide services for and recruit this group primarily.
- 2) Although the Adult Education Act does not restrict serving any individuals described in the new policy, local community college administrators may prefer to set guidelines so that programs do not duplicate efforts (i.e., Basic Skills and Developmental Studies).

Attachment

CC-98-052

c: Presidents
Senior Continuing Education Administrators

Basic Skills Enrollment Guidelines

Adult Basic Education:

Adults, *18 years of age or older, with or without a high school diploma or its equivalent, may be enrolled in Adult Basic Education if they:

- a) score 235 or lower on CASAS or 8.9 or below on any standardized assessment (such as TABE, AMES, etc.)
or
- b) demonstrate competencies needed on this level through an informal assessment
or
- c) self-report competencies needed on this level.

GED and AHS:

-- Adults, *18 years of age or older may be enrolled in GED or Adult High School if they:

- a) do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent (regardless of test scores) and score 236 or above on CASAS or 9.0 or above on any standardized assessment (such as TABE, AMES, etc.)
or
- b) have or do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent and demonstrate competencies needed on this level through an informal assessment
or
- c) have or do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent and self-report competencies needed on this level.

(Note: Students enrolled who have a high school diploma are not eligible to earn a GED or adult high school diploma, but they may earn individual units. Students who have a GED, but need an adult high school diploma, may be enrolled and are eligible to earn an adult high school diploma. Programs will earn FTE for these students, but will not earn bonus dollars for high school diplomas awarded in the basic skills funding formula.)

* Refer to Administrative Code for policies regarding minors.