



CLA+

Assessment
Prep Materials:
For Administrators

▶ Helping Students Prepare for Their Future, Today

How the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA+) can help students graduate with the skills most in demand by employers.

Throughout the academic year, institutions regularly measure students' progress in meeting academic benchmarks for courses. While that content knowledge is very important, skills like problem solving, critical thinking, and written communication are just as important in preparing students for success following graduation. In fact, these are the skills employers consistently rank as the most important.

That is why your institution will be using the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA+).

What is CLA+?

CLA+ is a performance-based assessment that provide accurate, reliable data into students' mastery of critical thinking, problem solving, and effective written communication that can be used to guide instruction and inform programming to strengthen these skills.

The CLA+ online platform that students will use to take the assessments meets the highest standards of data security and is FERPA compliant.

What is the assessment like?

- Students will be asked to come up with a solution for a real-world problem.
- First, they will read several reference documents that provide background information about the problem.
- Using supplied reference materials, students must organize information, define the problem, address issues, consider and evaluate solutions, and then write an essay in which they recommend and defend a course of action.
- They will have 60 minutes for this performance task.
- After writing their essay, they will have 30 minutes to answer a series of selected response questions.

What data will be available from the CLA+?

Students will receive individual student reports that show their strengths and opportunities for growth in all three skill areas — critical thinking, problem solving, and written communication — as well as six subsets of those skills.

You will receive an institution report that identifies student performance and growth across student cohorts and shows how students compare to national averages.

- Your report will show the average score for the assessment as well as average mastery on a scale from Emerging to Advanced.
- The report will also show how your average overall score compares to the average overall score from similar students across the U.S.
- Average scores are also given for each specific skill that was evaluated. These skills include the ability to:
 - Analyze information and solve problems
 - Write clearly, accurately and concisely
 - Follow the rules of writing including grammar
 - Understand and interpret data including graphs and charts
 - Understand text and its meaning
 - Analyze an argument and understand the source and basis for the argument
- For each of these skills, the report will show a comparison of your average scores with the average scores for similar students across the U.S. who have taken the CLA+.

How can CLA+ data be used?

- As a valuable resource to help students better understand their career readiness and plan for how they will further develop these skills to achieve their future goals
- To develop curricula and programs that support future-ready skill building
- To elevate your institution's profile with prospective students and families
- To demonstrate student outcomes and success to hiring organizations

If you have questions about the CLA+ please visit www.cae.org/higher-ed, or reach out to info@cae.org.