

AB 1805 Resource Guide

This resource guide serves as a complementary document to the *AB 1805 Submission Form* research brief which analyzed how colleges communicated their AB 705 policies to students across different materials - college website, catalog, orientation, and counseling resources.¹ This document identifies five ways colleges should improve their communication materials to be more holistic and equity-minded.

1. Inform students of their rights

Under AB 705, students now have the right to access transfer-level coursework. Communicating this right is essential for students to know that they can start in transfer-level math and English and begin making meaningful progress toward their educational goals. To achieve this, colleges should:

- Use direct language stating that students have the *right* to access transfer-level courses.
- Avoid passive or alternate terminology such as “students *can* access transfer-level courses” or “students have the *opportunity to enroll* in transfer-level courses”.
- Prominently feature students’ rights in communication materials by placing the phrase up top or in a highly visible place.

PROMISING EXAMPLE: Los Angeles Trade-Tech College’s [website](#) prominently features students’ rights on their main placement page and reiterates these rights throughout other webpages. For additional examples see Skyline College’s [website](#) and Allan Hancock College’s [website](#).

2. Explain all aspects of your college’s policy changes

Informing students of all aspects of the policy changes is important so that students can have agency over their placement process and understand how changes to placement policies will impact them.

To do this effectively, colleges should:

- Inform students that assessment tests have been replaced with multiple measures and guided self-placement, that there is a new assessment tool for ESL, and how students can challenge their placement.
- Explain to continuing students that they can obtain a new placement even if they previously placed below transfer-level and specify the steps they need to take for this new placement.
- Share information on math and English course pathways and supports available so students can make an informed decision about their placement.

PROMISING EXAMPLE: Santa Rosa Junior College’s [website](#) explains the elimination of placement tests and presents all the relevant placement information organized by type of student, including

¹ Leal-Carrillo, N., Diaz, A., Castañeda, I., Pereschica-Follert, P., & Croopnick, R. (2021). *AB 1805 Submission Form: Analysis of college communication materials*. Success Center for California Community Colleges.

specific information and resources for English Language Learners. For an additional example see Diablo Valley College's [website](#).

3. Present information in a manner that is easy to understand

Using accessible language and formats ensures that all students have a clear picture of the policy changes and what these changes mean for them. To do this, colleges should:

- Avoid jargon or acronyms students may be unfamiliar with when presenting the placement information and changes as well as in headings and navigation menus.
- Break up information into smaller parts and use direct and concise language and sentences.
- Use graphics, flowcharts, and/or videos to present information and accompany them with clear directions on how to interpret or use the information.

PROMISING EXAMPLE: Bakersfield College's [website](#) communicates the placement changes in an easy-to-understand manner, avoiding jargon and technical language. For an additional example see Orange Coast College's [website](#).

4. Communicate consistently across materials

Consistent communication across materials ensures that all students receive the necessary placement information, regardless of which material(s) they look at. To ensure this, colleges should:

- Consider the key pieces of information that will help students feel empowered about their placement in transfer-level courses and ensure this information is shared across materials.
- Ensure that all materials use similar terminology and tone to explain the policy changes and placement information.

PROMISING EXAMPLE: Across their [website](#), [counseling webpage](#), [catalog](#), and [placement process brochure](#), College of Marin shares the same information and uses common language. The college includes a "Good News" heading throughout the materials, demonstrating how messaging should be consistent and encouraging. For an additional example see Long Beach City College's [website](#) and [catalog](#).

5. Adopt equity-minded communication practices

Colleges need to communicate placement information to students in an equitable and student-centered manner. The [Center for Urban Education's \(CUE\) Equity-Minded Inquiry Series: Web Scan guide](#) for websites offers ways in which colleges can use communication materials to promote educational equity. To strengthen equity-minded communication practices, colleges should:

- Use language, tone, and images that communicate a commitment to equity and to their students' success.

PROMISING EXAMPLE: Merced College's [website](#) uses videos to guide students step-by-step through the self-guided placement process and feature diverse representation of both students and faculty. For additional examples see Butte College's [website](#) and Fullerton College's [website](#).