

# ALEKS®

## About ALEKS

ALEKS is a web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system. ALEKS uses adaptive questioning to quickly and accurately determine exactly what you know and don't know in particular accounting subjects, and then provides instruction on the topics you are most ready to learn. Students who show a high level of mastery in ALEKS will possess the foundation to be successful in the overall course.

Each of you will have a password-protected account in ALEKS. Registration instructions are noted below. Since all records of your work are kept on the ALEKS servers, you can access your account from any computer connected to the Internet.

As a means to help you succeed in the MBA Program here at Penn State, you are required to complete the ALEKS program curriculum and final assessment prior to August 15, 2014. **The ALEKS system does monitor compliance with this objective and a reporting of non-compliance will be given to the course professor prior to the beginning of the semester.**

## Assessment in ALEKS

ALEKS is being used as a tool to help you “scrape the rust off” your Introductory Accounting knowledge and rudimentary math skills. For some of you, that will be a simple refresher and should not take more than a few hours to complete over the summer. For others, it may represent a more thorough learning experience and will, as such, take somewhat longer.

In ALEKS, you will be guided in your learning based on your knowledge. The system starts with what is referred to as an “Initial Assessment”. If you feel you do not have a solid understanding of financial accounting, you may choose to skip this Initial Assessment and you will then be taken directly to the course content (46 topics – material designed to help you in your preparation for the Financial Accounting course in the MBA program). At any given time during your use of ALEKS, you will be able to access a certain limited set of topics, based on your readiness. As you progress, new topics will continually become available to you.

Do not use the "I don't know" button unless you really do not know the topic. Obviously, you should not get help of any kind on assessments (e.g., the Initial Assessment); doing so may cause inaccurate results and make it harder for you to progress.

There is no partial credit on the Initial Assessment and this is not a component of any grade. It is simply a tool to help assess your current understanding of the material. Take the time to be sure that you have entered your answer correctly. Enter only the final answer. Have a pencil and scratch paper ready to use. Once you have completed the Initial Assessment, you will be directed to the ALEKS Pie Chart. This chart marks your progress through the assigned topics. As you complete each topic, the pie will fill in, signifying “mastery” of that topic.

# ALEKS®

## Registration in ALEKS

1. Go to [www.aleks.com](http://www.aleks.com)
2. Click on the link marked “New User? Sign Up Now!” on the left corner of the page.
3. Under “Using ALEKS with a Class,” enter the **10-character course**: VHFKE-QQNTG  
Verify the course information and click on “Continue.” “Welcome to ALEKS” select option 1 or 2 regarding the question “Have you used ALEKS before” and click “Continue”. In step 3, you will be directed to insert your unique 20-character access code that you received in an email from Penn State Smeal MBA Admissions on July 7, 2014.  
  
\*\*Please Note\*\* When you log in, the course listed will show as “EMBA Financial Accounting”. This is the correct course.
4. Answer the questions on the “Personal Information” page to complete your registration.
5. During the registration process, you will be given a login name and password. You will have the opportunity to change your password if you wish. **Write down your login name and password, and keep them in a safe place.** You will need them to access your ALEKS account in the future.
6. If you do not have a current plug-in for ALEKS, one will be installed automatically at this time (or you may need to use the url provided below). The plug-in is a small software component needed by ALEKS and provided free of charge to all ALEKS users. Normally, installation is fully automatic and requires only a minute or so. If there is any difficulty with installation, please contact ALEKS Customer Support below. When the installation is complete, please be sure to close all of your browser windows and then restart your browser.
7. Go to [www.aleks.com](http://www.aleks.com) and enter your ALEKS login name and password in the Registered Users area and click on “LOGIN.” You will now be in your ALEKS student account and will begin with the ALEKS Answer Editor Tutorial. Next, you will take a course assessment, receive your ALEKS Pie Chart, and enter the ALEKS Learning Mode.

### Plug-In

<http://www.aleks.com/downloads>

### **Contact Customer Support - Higher Education**

#### **Hours (Eastern Time):**

Sunday, 4:00 PM to 1:00 AM

Monday - Thursday, 7:00 AM to 1:00 AM

Friday, 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM

**Phone: (714) 619-7090**

**Email:** contact us at <http://support.aleks.com>

# ALEKS®

## **ALEKS Tutorial**

After Registration you will take a brief "Tutorial," or introduction to the ALEKS interface. It shows you how to enter the various kinds of answers you may be called on to give in ALEKS. Please note that you can always return to particular parts of the Tutorial by using the "Help" button in ALEKS (see below).

## **ALEKS Initial Assessment**

Following the Tutorial, you will be directed to take an Initial Assessment. As noted above, you may skip this assessment and start the program at the beginning or you may take this assessment (but be sure to do so in its entirety in one sitting - it is about 30 questions and generally takes about an hour to complete). You will then be assessed to determine the correct starting point for your work in the course content. As you make progress, your ALEKS Pie will begin to fill out.

## **ALEKS Pie Chart**

The results of your assessment are shown in a color-keyed pie chart. The pie chart itself represents the course curriculum and its various parts; each slice of the pie chart represents a part of the curriculum, and is filled in with solid color (from the center outward) to show the extent of your current mastery in that part of the curriculum. If you move your mouse pointer around the slices, they will pop out and display lists of items that you are currently ready to work on. Click on any one of these items to begin working in the Learning Mode. Your goal is to fill in the slices of the pie chart, demonstrating your mastery of the course curriculum. There are 46 topics representing "mastery" of the material required for this course preparatory material.

## **ALEKS Final Assessment**

At the completion of all of the topics in the ALEKS Pie Chart, please proceed to the Final Assessment for the course. **DO NOT COMPLETE THE FINAL ASSESSMENT UNTIL YOU COMPLETE THE TOPICS IN THE ALEKS PIE CHART. When taking the Final Assessment, do not use any aids. This will help you, and the course instructor, assess your understanding of the material prior to the start of the fall semester course work. Please be sure to complete the Final Assessment before August 15, 2014.**

## **ALEKS Learning Mode**

Most of your time in ALEKS will be spent in Learning Mode, working practice problems. ALEKS can provide a nearly unlimited variety of practice problems, but in most cases you will do only a few problems per topic in order to establish your grasp of the concept. Every time you do a problem, ALEKS will give you immediate feedback on your answer and tell you how many more problems you need to do for that topic. Note that if you make mistakes, ALEKS requires a little extra practice, but it doesn't start you over; you always get credit for the problems that you have answered correctly.

# ALEKS®

## Timing Out

ALEKS will automatically terminate your session after 10 minutes if there has been no activity in your account. There is no warning message before the session is terminated. If this occurs, simply log back on. ALEKS will bring you back exactly to where you left off.

## ALEKS Buttons

The following is a brief summary of the main buttons you will need in ALEKS, and what they do.

- *Explain.* This button leads to an explanation and solution of the given practice problem. If you choose to view the solution, you will not get the same problem back again for practice, but rather a different problem of the same type.
- *Dictionary.* This button leads to an online dictionary of terms. Terms appearing in the Learning Mode are also hyperlinked to corresponding entries in the Dictionary.
- *Help.* This button leads to a selection of Tutorial pages that you can access if you don't know how to enter your answer.
- *Next.* This button submits your answer to the problem.

## Browser Buttons

Please do not use the “Back” and “Forward” buttons on your browser while logged on to ALEKS. They may produce undesired results, and all necessary navigation features are built into ALEKS itself.

## Use of Accounting Course Textbook

**PLEASE DO NOT USE THE TEXTBOOK WHEN TAKING THE INITIAL OR FINAL ASSESSMENTS AS IT MAY RESULT IN AN INACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE MATERIAL.**

## Support

If you have questions or registration/system issues with ALEKS at any point during the term, please contact ALEKS customer support at <http://support.aleks.com>.