

ALEKS Glossary

These terms and features are common within the ALEKS platform and are a great reference as you build your course.

Topics

Topic – a specific concept or learning outcome, each topic is made up of multiple 'instances' or 'versions' of questions that are all similar, but unique.

Goal topic – a topic the instructor has assigned for a grade.

Prerequisite topic – a topic that must be learned in order to unlock another topic (usually to unlock a goal topic). Prerequisite knowledge increases student success on goal topics.

Ready to Learn topic – a topic available/unlocked in a student's learning path because they have learned the necessary prerequisite topic(s).

Learned topic – a topic the student has practiced in learning mode and demonstrated they understand by answering 3-4 questions in a row correctly, without help.

Mastered topic – a topic the student has demonstrated they know during a knowledge check. To move a topic from learned to mastered, they must demonstrate they know it on a knowledge check.

ALEKS Pie – the complete collection of topics that make up the course.

Objectives

Objective – a collection of topics that the instructor has assigned, this is what we would typically think of as an 'assignment' or 'homework.'

Objectives with end dates – students are required to learn the topics in the objective by a specific date. On that date, students receive a grade in the gradebook (ex: 8/10 topics learned = 80%).

Objectives with one final due date/by mastery – Students must reach the designated mastery % before they can move on to the next objective. In Chemistry, this % is always 100%. In Math, this can be set by the instructor





Knowledge Checks and Assessments

Knowledge State OR Knowledge Space – the knowledge that each individual student currently has (which is measured in ALEKS through Knowledge Checks).

Knowledge Check OR Assessment – these terms are interchangeable in ALEKS, and students will experience knowledge checks in a few different ways. The goal of each is to determine each individual student's current knowledge state. These are adaptive, open-response and never more than 30 questions.

- **Initial Knowledge Check** – will determine what topics students already know (and don't know) as they enter the course. All students experience this assessment as they begin working in ALEKS.
- **Post-Objective Knowledge Check** – is triggered when a student either completes the topics in the given objective OR after the due-date for the objective passes.
- **Automatic Progress Knowledge Check**– In ALEKS Math, these are triggered after a student has learned 20 topics AND is logged in for 5 hours. Or, if a student has learned less than 20 topics in 10 hours.
- **Scheduled Knowledge Check** – A scheduled assessment is a graded assessment assigned at specific times during the semester. Best practice is to proctor and treat it like a test. There are 2 types of scheduled KCs:
 - Progress – usually assesses the student on everything they've learned since the most recent knowledge check.
 - Comprehensive – operates more closely like the initial knowledge check in that it assesses the student across all content in the course.

Additional terms

Learning Mode – After a student completes the initial knowledge check they will enter learning mode where they work to answer questions on the various topics that they are 'ready to learn' based on their individual knowledge state. Their workflow will be focused on the topics in the current objective.

Review OR Catch-up Objective – In ALEKS Math, review objectives are often built in order to give students access to all (or specific) topics previously covered leading up to an exam. It is recommended to have a knowledge check trigger prior to the start of the review objective.

Open Pie Mode – In ALEKS Chemistry, if a student wishes to work ahead of (or behind) the current objective, they must unlock Open Pie Mode. Any student can unlock this mode at any time simply by learning all of the topics in the current objective before the due-date.

Pacing Goals – this is an assignment type in ALEKS to pace student learning and motivate students to make consistent progress.

- Progress Goal - require students to learn a percentage of the ALEKS content (aka ALEKS PIE) by a specific date, such as 50% by the middle of the term
- Time Goals require students to log a certain amount of time in ALEKS over a defined period of time, such as 10 hours a week
- Topic Goals require students to learn a set number of topics over a defined period of time, such as 20 topics in a week

ALEKS Assignments (Homework, Quiz, Test)- are optional assignments that function more like traditional homework, quizzes, and tests. The instructor selects the topics for the assignment and they are automatically graded by the system. These non-adaptive assignments do NOT affect a student's ALEKS Pie, and can be used for additional reviews or quizzes/tests.