Panther Math Prep: Academic Year 2026-27 Instructions

Panther Math Prep serves two functions for incoming UWM students:

1. Panther Math Prep's Placement Assessment will indicate the appropriate starting point for you in UWM's sequence of math courses.
    a. You may also submit official ACT/SAT Test scores for this purpose.
2. Following placement, students may choose to use Panther Math Prep to refresh their math skills in the interest of re-taking the Assessment for a higher placement in math. You can take the assessment a total of five times.

Placement Overview

Follow these steps to begin the Panther Math Prep Placement Assessment:

Be Prepared

- Carefully read the 'About Placement' and 'Before You Begin' information (p. 2)

Register for the Placement Assessment

- ALEKS Registration Information (p. 3)
- Set Up or Change Your Preferred Email Address (p. 5)

Set Up Your Webcam

- Download Respondus LockDown Plug-In (p. 2)
- Environment Scan & Facial Detection (p. 6)

Take the Placement Assessment

- Taking the Placement Assessment in ALEKS (p. 7)
- Time Limit: 3 hours (most finish in 60-90 mins)

Completed Assessment & Option for Retesting

- Review Your Results (p. 9-10)
- UWM Math Dept reviews your session (1-2 weeks)
- Consider using tools in ALEKS to refresh your skills & retest (p. 10-11)

About Placement

The Panther Math Prep Placement Assessment determines your starting point for required math coursework at UWM. The sequence of math courses you'll complete depends on your placement level and your planned academic program.

You'll use an online system called **ALEKS PPL** (Placement, Preparation, and Learning) to complete your math assessment and determine your math placement level. Depending on the result, you may be satisfied with your placement or you may want to use the tools in ALEKS to review math concepts and problem types then retake the placement assessment to attempt a higher placement.

You are required to record yourself as you take the Panther Math Prep Placement Assessment, using both picture and sound for the entire duration. A staff member in UWM's Mathematical Sciences Department will review your recorded video and will only validate your results if the video follows the guidelines that follow. **If your video does not follow the guidelines below, your score will be changed to zero and you will need to repeat the assessment.** A UWM Mathematical Sciences Department staff member will send you an email with a description of what to do differently on your next assessment. They will use the email address you identify in ALEKS to contact you. See page 5 on how to change your email address within ALEKS. If you do not update your email address, emails will automatically be sent to your UWM email address.

Before You Begin

The Panther Math Prep Placement Assessment requires you to record yourself taking the assessment on camera. ALEKS uses a web plug-in (Respondus LockDown) for that purpose. As you set up your workspace to take the Assessment please take a moment to do the following:

1. **Review system requirements for the Repondus LockDown plug-in.** Before you take the assessment, check your system/setup on ALEKS' System Requirements website.
   You can download the plug-in now or as part of the Environment Scan & Facial Detection step on page 6.
2. **Select a quiet location. Review your surroundings.** Your location must be private and quiet. Clear your surroundings of other people or audio/visual distractions, like sounds from the TV or music.
3. **Set up your workspace.** Your work area should be free of any books, notebooks, phones, and calculators. ALEKS provides a calculator on screen for specific questions when a

calculator is allowed. External devices of any kind are not allowed. You'll need to be in a chair during the Assessment, within view of your web camera. Have a photo ID, blank paper(s), and a pen/pencil available to show to the camera when prompted and to use during the assessment.

4. **Prepare your computer.** Close all other applications and browser tabs other than the window you'll use to access the ALEKS assessment. Ensure that you have a strong and stable internet or wifi signal that will remain accessible for 1-3 hours. Be sure your computer, laptop, or device is resting on a flat, stable surface like a table or a desk.
5. **Ensure you are identifiable on camera.** Check that the room you'll use is well-lit. Avoid backlighting, like sitting with your back to a window. Don't wear sunglasses, brimmed hats, or hoods that might obscure your face. Placement Assessment Requirements.

ALEKS Registration Information

- **Step 1**: Set up your ALEKS account through the following **web link**.
  Enter your ePanther ID and your password, just as you would when logging into PAWS. (Your ePanther ID is the first part of your UWM email address, prior to the "@uwm.edu" portion.)

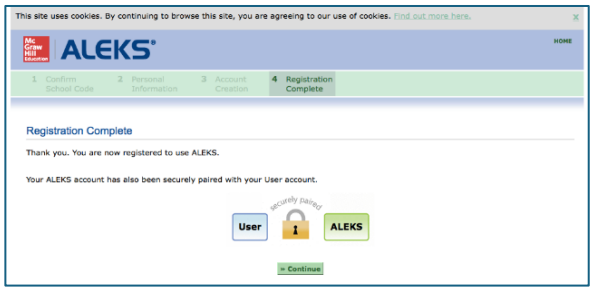
  Click "Login."

  Be sure to bookmark this link if you want to return to complete additional assessments.

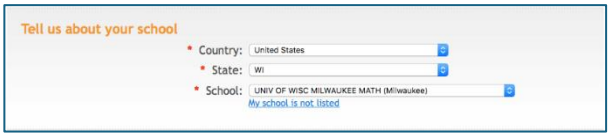
  Please note that the UWM math placement exam can't be accessed through the ALEKS website – you have to use the link above. If at any point in the registration process you are asked to provide a "Class Code" to complete registration, please use the class code: JFG46-KMTA3

- **Step 2:** Read the ALEKS terms of service and check the box to agree to the Terms of Use. Then, click "Continue."

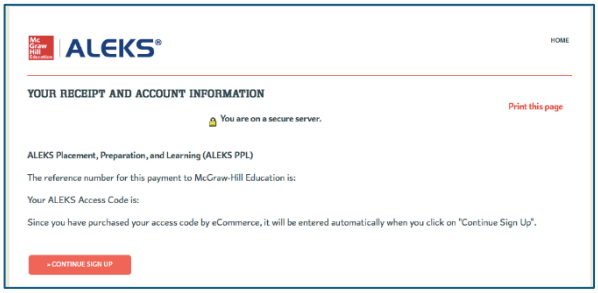
- **Step 3:** You'll receive a confirmation page, which verifies that your UWM ID has been paired with ALEKS.



- **Step 4 (as needed):** If prompted to identify your school, select:
  UNIV of WISC MILWAUKEE MATH (Milwaukee)



- **Step 5:** After completing the previous steps, you'll receive confirmation that your registration is complete. Click "Continue Sign Up."

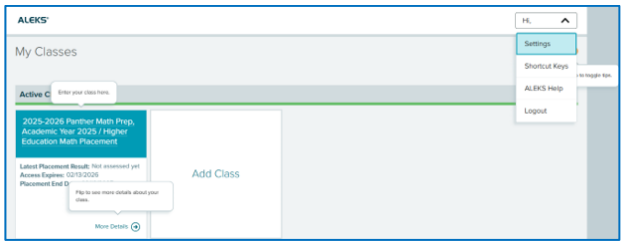


If at any point in the registration process you are asked to provide a "Class Code" to complete registration, please use the class code: **JFG46-KMTA3**

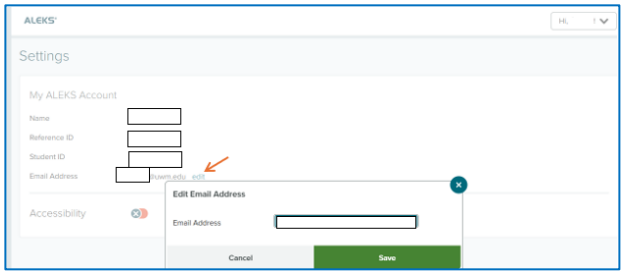
- **Step 6:** Check that you have been enrolled in the correct class.
  Class: **2026-2027 Panther Math Prep, Academic Year 2026**
  School: **University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.**
  Click "Continue to Your Aleks Class."

Set Up or Change Your Preferred Email Address

By default, ALEKS will send email communications to your UWM email address. Follow these steps only if you'd like ALEKS to utilize a personal email address instead.



- Click on "Settings" in the upper right-hand corner dropdown menu.



- Choose "Edit", then enter your preferred email address.

Environment Scan & Facial Detection

Required: Download the Respondus plug-in that matches your device and operating system from ALEKS' System Requirements website.

Follow these steps correctly in Respondus LockDown before you begin the Assessment:

- Step 1: Accept **Terms of Use**.
- Step 2: **Webcam Check**. Do you see your image clearly in the window?
- Step 3: Review **Guidelines + Tips**.
- Step 4: Review instructions for the **Student Photo** you'll use in Step 5.
- Step 5: **Show ID**. Steadily hold a photo ID – preferably a driver's license, state ID or school ID – to the camera and select "Take Picture."
- Step 6: **Environment Check.** The area around your computer must be cleared of any books, notebooks and other people. Don't use your phone or an external calculator for the length of the Assessment.
  a. Click "Start Recording" and slowly tilt/pan your webcam to show the area around your computer, your entire table or desk, and the whole room. Walking around with your webcam or laptop may be useful. (If you're using a desktop computer, do your best to show the surrounding area.)
  b. Show both sides of any blank paper you may be use during the test. Only use individual sheets of unlined blank paper. Do not use a notebook or lined paper.
  c. Click "Stop Recording" once you've captured your full surroundings.
- Step 7: Review **Additional Instructions**.
- Step 8: **Facial Detection Check.** Your face needs to be well-positioned in the video window and clearly visible throughout the Assessment. This may require adjusting the lighting in your work space. Proceed only when facial detection is successful.
- Step 9: Begin Exam – You're now ready to begin the Panther Math Prep Placement Assessment through ALEKS – instructions follow on page 7.

Please Note: Failure to clearly show ID or do a complete and thorough environmental scan will result in your assessment being invalidated when the math department reviews your session. An invalidated assessment will change your score to zero, and you will need to retake the assessment.

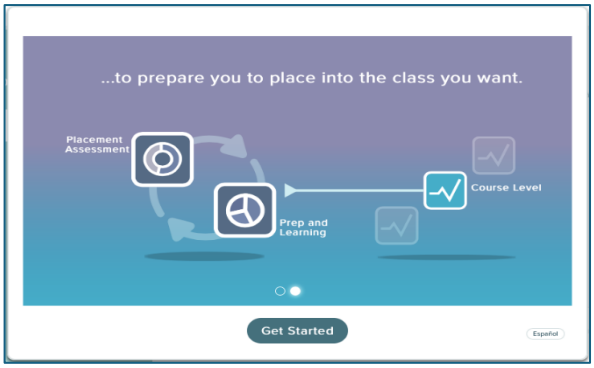
Taking the Placement Assessment in ALEKS

Your first placement assessment in ALEKS will determine your math placement level and establish your baseline math knowledge. Based on your results, ALEKS will establish a placement score that your academic advisor will use to help you enroll in your first UWM math course. ALEKS will also use your results to recommend a learning module to work on if you want to improve your placement. The learning modules are free to use in ALEKS.

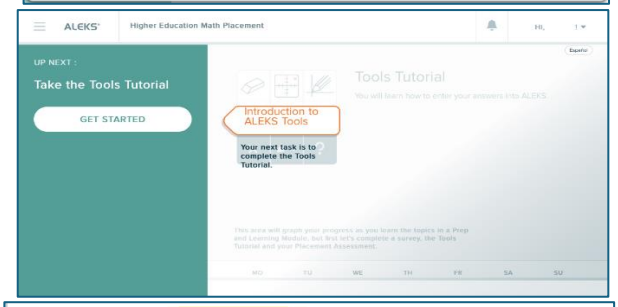
NOTE: The Panther Math Prep Placement Assessment can only be accessed through the link listed under Step 1 on Page 3. It can't be accessed directly through the ALEKS website.

The Assessment begins with an overview and a tools tutorial.

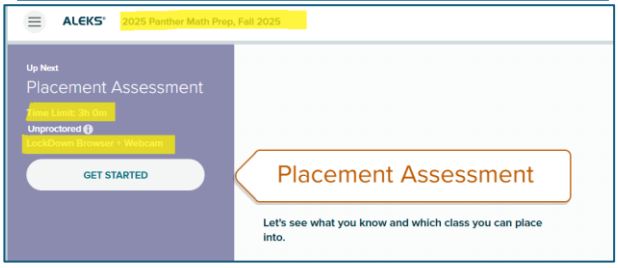
- **Step 1:** You will be directed to your student account in ALEKS. Click "Get Started," then read and follow the prompts as ALEKS describes its features.



- **Step 2:** Complete the ALEKS Tools Tutorial. Follow the prompts.
  Verify that the correct class name (**2026-2027 Panther Math Prep, Academic Year 2026** appears at the top of the page.
  Once completed, click "Continue."



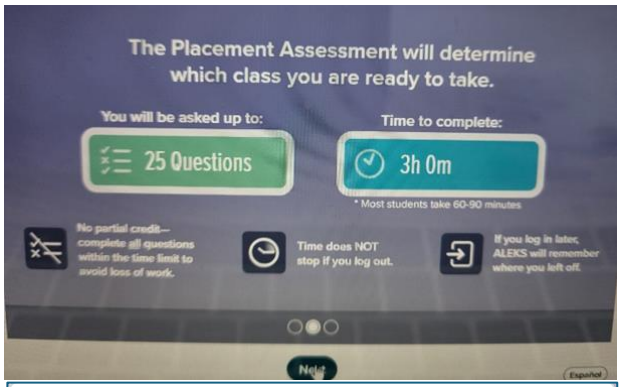
- **Step 3**: You are now ready to take the Placement Assessment. You have 3 hours to complete up to 25 questions, but most students complete the assessment within 60 to 90 minutes. Please note that the assessment is personalized and adapts based on your responses so you may see as few as 7 questions or as many as 25 questions.



  You should continue to see the class name displayed at the top of the page. If you are not in the correct class, you can click on the menu at the top left. Choose "Manage my classes," then "add class," and use the class code listed under **Step 5** on page 4.

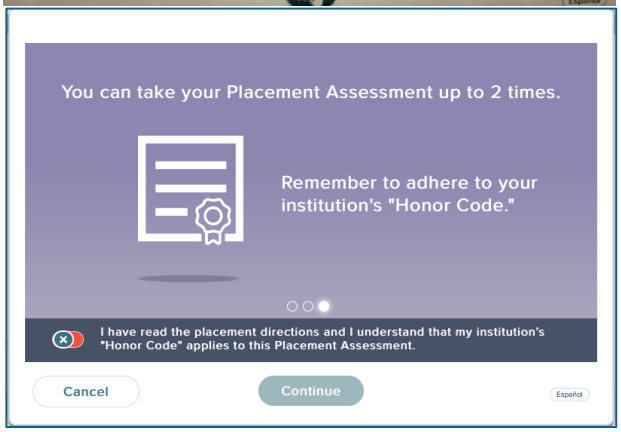
NOTE: Repondus LockDown Browser + Webcam is required to complete the assessment. See Environment Scan & Facial Detection on page 2.

Step 4: Once the Repondus steps are completed, you are ready to begin the Assessment. Review the assessment information on this page, then click "Next".



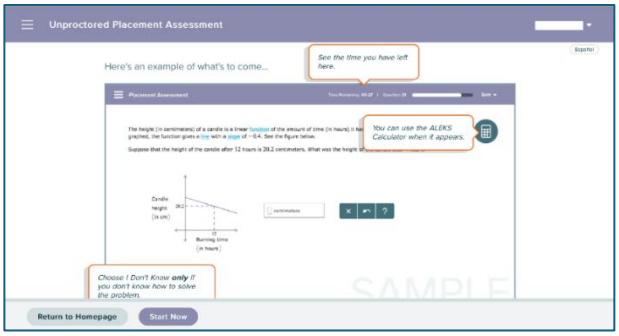
Step 5: Agree to abide by UWM's Honor Code.

You must take the ALEKS assessment independently without any outside help. Utilizing outside help is a violation of UWM's honor code and may result in your test being invalidated and/or further consequences. Results of this assessment establish your starting math course at UWM and determine the review material you are provided should you be interested in retaking the assessment. Utilizing outside help is not only a violation of the honor code, you also run the risk of enrolling in a math course for which you are not prepared which can negatively impact your academic success and GPA.



Read and agree to the placement directions.

Step 6: ALEKS will show you a sample of what is to come on the assessment, including how to find how much time you have left. Note the progress bar across the top. While taking the assessment, only choose "I Don't Know" if you don't know how to solve the problem – note that you cannot go back to solve a prior problem. Partial credit is not accepted, so be sure of your answers before you submit them.

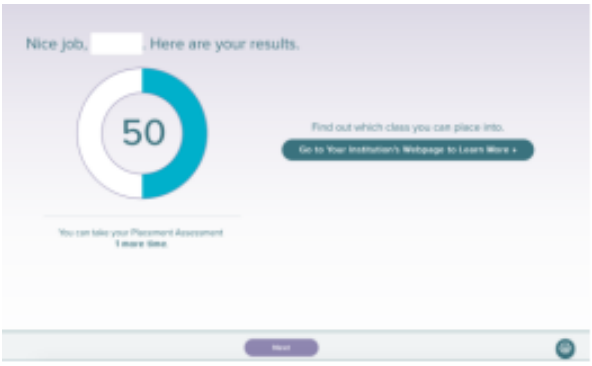


ALEKS is an adaptive test, which means that the Assessment will adjust the questions you are presented as you answer problems to pinpoint your current math skills.

Click "Start Now" and continue on to complete all the problems in the Placement Assessment.

Once You've Completed the Assessment

After you've completed your Placement Assessment, you will receive a screen similar to the one to the right. Your score helps ALEKS determine your current math level.



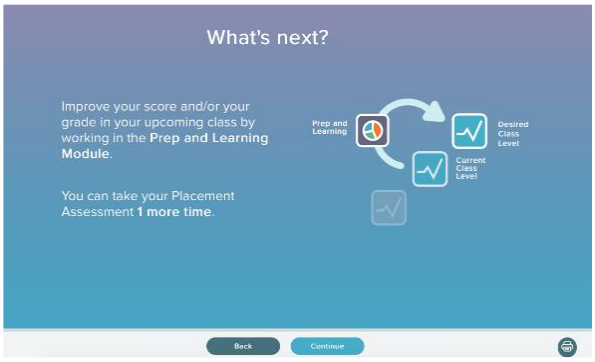
This screen also shows UWM's Math Placement Level score cutoffs and link to our placement webpage.

NOTE: You will only retain this score if the UWM Mathematical Sciences Department determines through a review of your recorded assessment that you have followed all guidelines on page 2 and 3. **A violation of any guidelines will result in your score being changed to zero**.

Your academic advisor can help you decide upon the right math class for you, factoring in both your placement level and your major or other educational goals.

The next screen will show you a breakdown of skill levels you've demonstrated on various math topics.

The **What's next?** Screen will present you with the option to work in ALEKS' Prep and Learning Module to refresh your math skills before retaking the Placement Assessment, should you wish to do so.

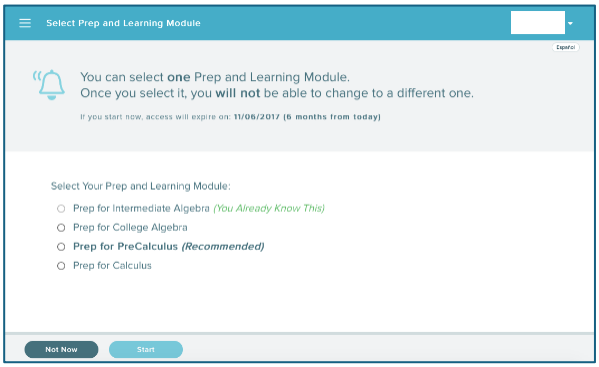


- If you are satisfied with your score, you can use it for your UWM math placement level. If this is your choice, you do not need to take any further action.
- It will take 1-2 weeks for your session to be reviewed by the UWM Math Department.

Approved scores will be automatically uploaded to your UWM PAWS account.

- If your session is not approved by the Math Department, you will receive an email outlining the issue with your sesssion and how to correct the issue going forward.

This screen is particularly important. Based on your Placement Assessment, ALEKS will recommend a group of math topics for you to work on in preparation for re-taking the assessment if you would like to try to improve your score. You are welcome to choose whatever module you wish, but you will not be able to change your mind later. We recommend that you choose the option that ALEKS recommends.



If you are feeling ambitions, then you may select the next more advanced option. Make your selection and click "Start." You'll then see a confirmation screen.

If you are satisfied with your score or want to meet with your academic advisor before deciding your next steps, you can select 'Not Now' and return to these options later.

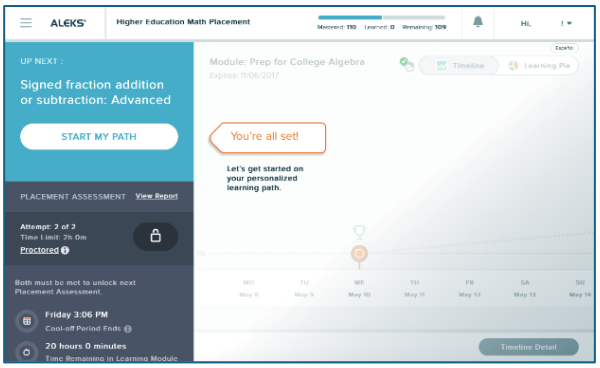
Refreshing Your Skills & Retaking the Assessment

Your initial Placement Assessment and your choice of Prep and Learning Module will present you with an ALEKS "pie" of math topics to work on. If you'd like to improve your placement, your goal is to finish the topics presented and then retake the placement assessment. We suggest investing ***at least*** 20 hours of ALEKS preparation to adequately get you ready to attempt to place into a higher-level math course.

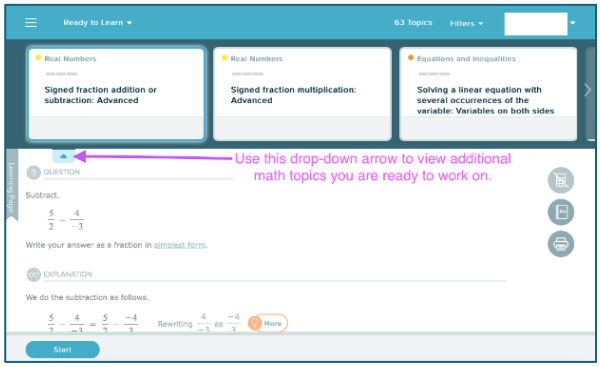
If you've not done so already, this is a good point to change your preferred email address within ALEKS – see page 5.

The home screen and pie will be your starting point whenever you log into ALEKS going forward.

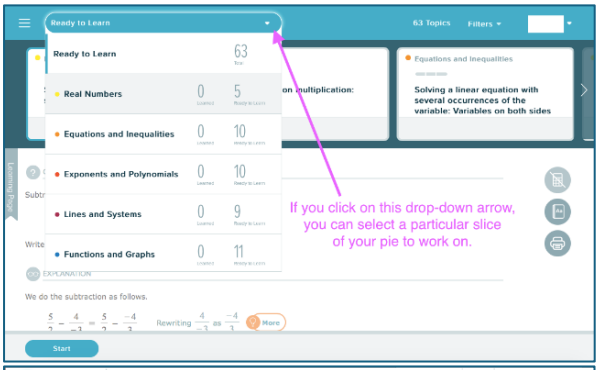
Keep following the prompts as ALEKS introduces you to its features. When you're ready to start working on math topics, click "Start My Path" and follow more prompts to guide you through the program.



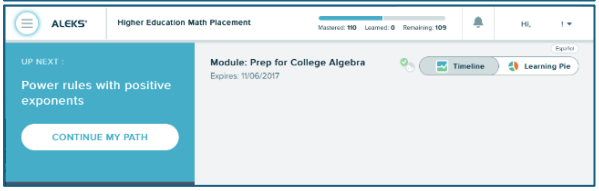
While you're working, ALEKS will suggest math topics that are appropriate for you to work on. If you wish to work on a different topic, select the drop-down arrow to view more topics.



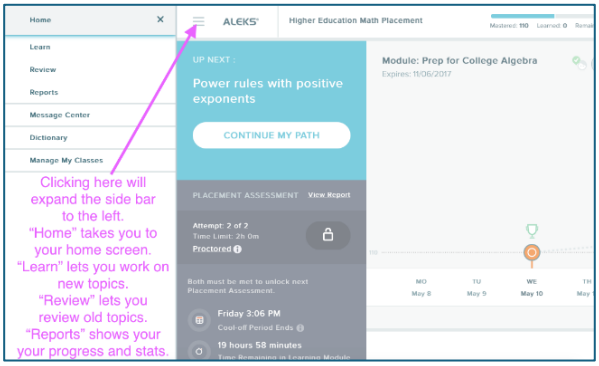
If you select the upper drop-down arrow next to "Ready to Learn," then you will be able to select topics from a different slice in your pie.



The following is a view of your home screen in ALEKS, which is similar to what you will see when you log in. To continue working on topics, click "Continue My Path."



Clicking on the three horizontal lines in the corner will show you expanded options:



Logging Into / Out of ALEKS

You can only access ALEKS through **this link.**

You'll use your UWM ePanther ID and Password to log in.

To log out, close your browser window or click on "Log Out" in the upper right corner.