



User's Guide

for Financial Accounting

Advanced Customer Solutions

ALEKS Corporation

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1 Student Account Home

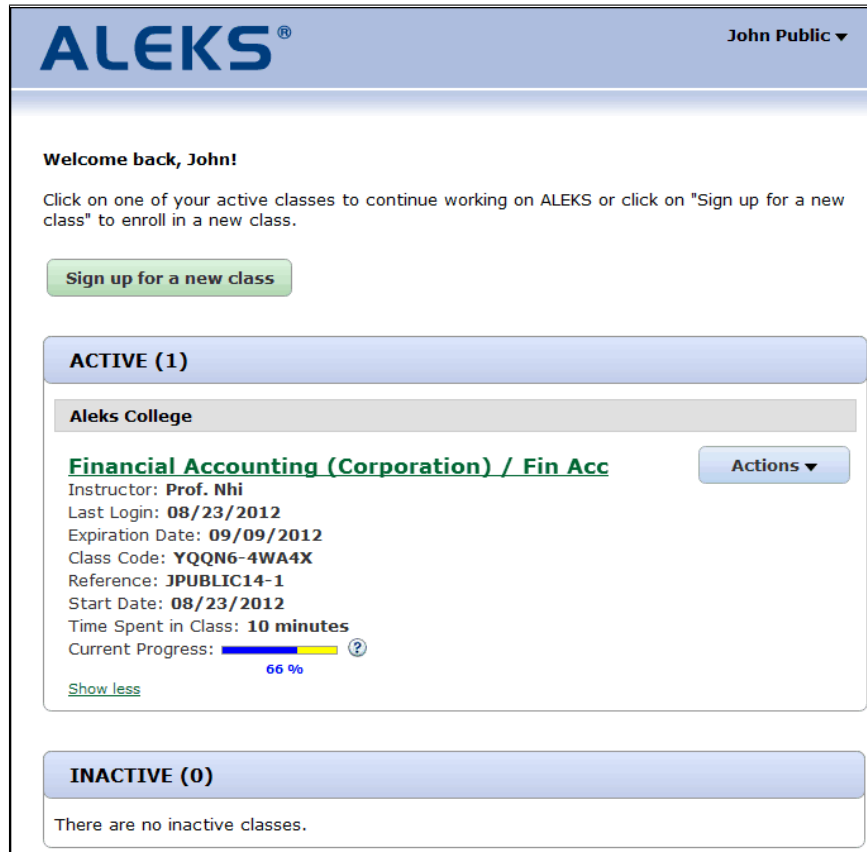


Figure 1: Student Account Home Main Screen

After completing the registration process, you will be taken to the Student Account Home. The Student Account Home groups all ALEKS student accounts for a single student under the same umbrella account. This allows students to manage and add more ALEKS courses to their umbrella account rather than creating separate accounts for each ALEKS course. Students will also only need to remember one Login Name and Password.

The Student Account Home lists your current and past ALEKS courses, and includes options to sign up for new courses, switch courses, suspend courses, extend access to courses, and remove courses from the Student Account Home.

1.1 Account Management

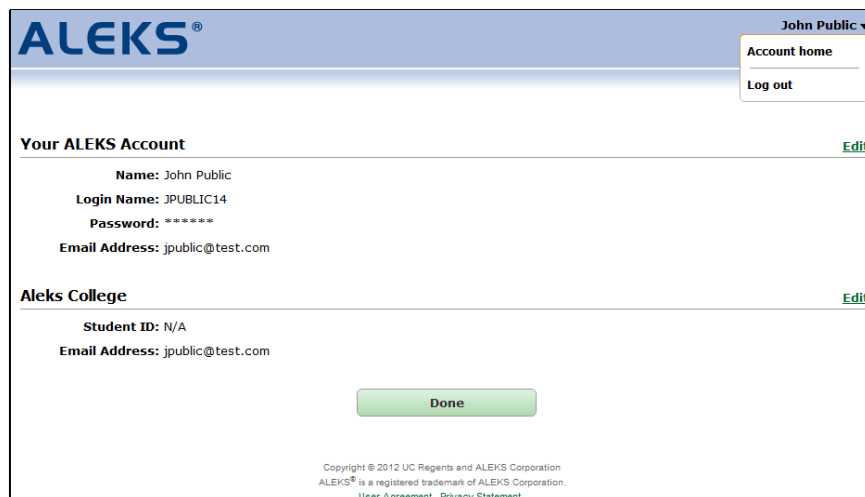


Figure 2: Student Account Home Settings

When you log in to your ALEKS account, you arrive at the Student Account Home main screen and have the following options available to you:

Account Settings

To access the account settings, click on your name in the upper right corner of the Student Account Home main screen. This screen displays information both for the umbrella account and for the college that you attend. This information includes your name, the Login Name for the umbrella account, the account Password (hidden), and the email address linked to the account. You can edit certain entries by clicking on the **Edit** link to the right. To return to the main screen, click on the **Done** button.

Adding a New Course

You can add a new course by clicking on the button **Sign up for a new class** (Fig. 1). You will be prompted to enter the course code for the new course and then purchase a new access code. Once the new course has been added, it will be displayed in the ACTIVE section on the Student Account Home main page, along with any other active courses.

Active Courses

All courses in which you have an active account will be listed here. You will see the name of the course, the name of the instructor, the date you last logged in to the account, and the date your access to the course will expire. Additional information can be accessed by clicking on the **Show more** link, including the Course Code, the Reference ID for the account, the date the account was started, the amount of time spent in the course, and the current level of progress.

Inactive Courses

The INACTIVE section will display a list of your courses that are no longer active. The same course information that is displayed in the ACTIVE courses is available here.

Accessing a Course

You can access an active course by clicking on the course name. You will be taken to your pie chart for that course and will be able to work on topics. To return to the Student Account Home main screen, click on your name in the upper right corner and select the **Account home** option. To completely log out, choose the **Log out** option after clicking on your name.

1.2 Course Management

Different options are available, depending on whether a course is ACTIVE, ON-HOLD, or INACTIVE:

ACTIVE Course Options

The following options are available for ACTIVE courses by clicking on the Actions button:

Switch to a new class

You can switch to a new course by entering a new course code. When you do this, the new course will become active and the previously active course may appear under INACTIVE (see below).

Suspend Access to this Course

This option will only appear when your subscription meets the eligibility requirements for suspension (Sec. 1.4). Once suspended, an account appears in the ON-HOLD section.

Extend Access to this Course

You can extend access to your course by selecting the Extend option and entering a new 20-character access code.

ON-HOLD Course Options

the Actions button:

Reactivate Accounts

You can click on the Reactivate button when you are ready to reactivate a course that was suspended or placed on Leave of Absence (Sec. 1.4 and Sec. 1.5).

INACTIVE Course Options

The following options are available for INACTIVE courses by clicking the Actions button:

Download Progress (PDF)

This allows you to view a Progress Report for an inactive course.

Renew access to this course

This option allows you to renew access to an account by entering a new 20-character access code. The course will then appear under ACTIVE.

Delete from my account

Inactive course accounts may be deleted; they will then no longer be displayed in the Student Account Home.

1.3 Switching to a New Course

If you need to move an account into a new course, ALEKS will behave differently depending on when you make the switch.

If you switch into a new course **within 15 days of enrollment:**

- Your new course will appear in the ACTIVE section.
- Your old course will no longer appear (not even in the INACTIVE section).
- If you are switching into a course using the same ALEKS course product, your progress will be carried over.
- If you are switching into a different ALEKS course, you will be required to take a new Initial Assessment.

If you switch into a new course **after 15 days of enrollment:**

- Your new course will appear in the ACTIVE section.
- Your old course will appear in the INACTIVE section.
- If you are switching into a course using the same ALEKS course product, your progress will be carried over.
- If you are switching into a different ALEKS course, you will be required to take a new Initial Assessment.

1.4 Suspend Account

This feature is intended to provide additional flexibility in the student's access to an already purchased subscription with ALEKS. The **Suspend access to this class** feature is used when a student has already purchased an access code and registered with ALEKS, but then decides to drop the course with the intention of taking it again at the next opportunity.

This feature can be used within a limited time after the student activates their account.

- 6-week access codes can be suspended within 7 days of activation **OR** if the account has less than 5 hours of use, whichever comes first.
- 11-week access codes can be suspended within 14 days of activation **OR** if the account has less than 8 hours of use, whichever comes first.
- 18-week, 2-semester, 3-quarter, and 52-week access codes can be suspended within 30 days of activation **OR** if the account has less than 10 hours of use, whichever comes first.

To suspend access to their class, students choose the action **Suspend access to this class** from the Actions drop-down menu.

After students select this option, they will be asked to confirm whether or not they wish to suspend the account. Once this feature has been activated, the system will suspend the account for a period of time equal to the length of the access code they purchased (6 weeks, 11 weeks, 18 weeks, etc.). At the end of this period the account will be reactivated automatically, and its time will begin to run. Once the account is reactivated, the student will have the full subscription length originally purchased.

Cancel Suspension. Should the student suspend their account and then need it to be reactivated, they will need to contact ALEKS Customer Support. If the suspension is cancelled, the time remaining for the access code will be recalculated from the original start date. Note that the Suspend feature can only be used once per account.

1.5 Leave of Absence

In contrast to the Suspend feature, the Leave of Absence feature applies only to 2-semester (40 week), 3-quarter (also 40 weeks), and 52-week access codes; it takes effect automatically after a certain number of weeks have passed since the access code was activated.

First Notification

20 weeks after the access code was used to activate the account, students will see a warning message informing them that their first 21 weeks of use will expire on a specified date. The leave will begin automatically 21 weeks after the account is activated.

Second Notification

When students log in after the 21st week, they will see another message informing them that the account is on hold and the date on which the account will automatically resume, if not manually reactivated.

If students choose to resume using the account prior to the specified automatic reactivation date, they will be asked to confirm the reactivation. Once that is confirmed, students will be given access for the appropriate length of time remaining on the access code.

2 Tutorial

After Registration, the ALEKS Tutorial will teach you how to enter your answers in ALEKS (Fig. 3). There is plenty of feedback to help you complete it successfully. The Tutorial is not intended to teach accounting. It just trains you to use the ALEKS input tool (called the **Answer Editor**). Online help is also available while you are using ALEKS; just click the **Help** button, which gives you access to the sections of the Tutorial.

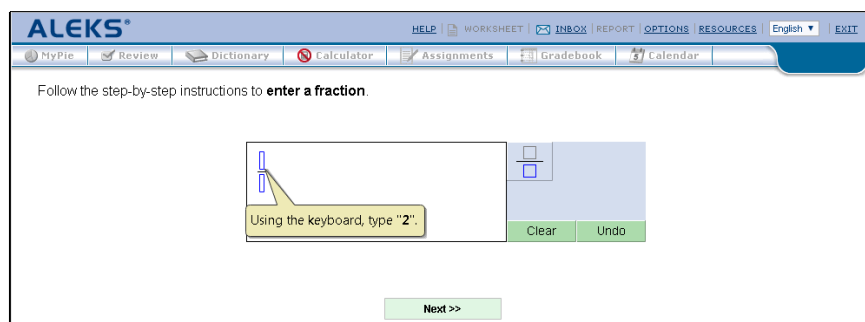


Figure 3: The Answer Editor (Tutorial)

3 Assessments and Learning

3.1 Assessments

Instruction through ALEKS is guided by precise understanding of your knowledge of the subject. This information is obtained by assessments in which ALEKS asks you to solve a series of problems. (ALEKS's estimate of your knowledge is also updated when you make progress in the Learning Mode.) Your Initial Assessment occurs immediately after the ALEKS Tutorial.

In some ALEKS Accounting courses your Initial Assessment may be optional based on ALEKS course settings. If you choose to skip this assessment, you will begin working in ALEKS with the most basic topics of the curriculum. If you take the assessment, you may be able to skip ahead to somewhat more advanced topics, depending on the knowledge you show in your responses. If you have any previous experience with Accounting, you may wish to take this assessment in order to move directly into material that is appropriate for you.

NOTE. Your instructor may require that the Initial Assessment be taken under supervision. **Don't try to begin your Initial Assessment at home until you find out where your instructor wants you to take it.** Additional assessments may be scheduled for you by the instructor. These may or may not need to be supervised, depending on the instructor's preference. ALEKS also prompts automatic re-assessments when you have spent a certain amount of time in ALEKS or have made a certain amount of progress.

3.2 Results

Assessment results are presented in the form of a color-coded pie chart. Slices of the pie chart correspond to parts of the syllabus. The solidly colored part of a slice indicates how close you are to mastering that part of the syllabus; the lighter portion represents the material you have left to master.

3.3 Learning Mode

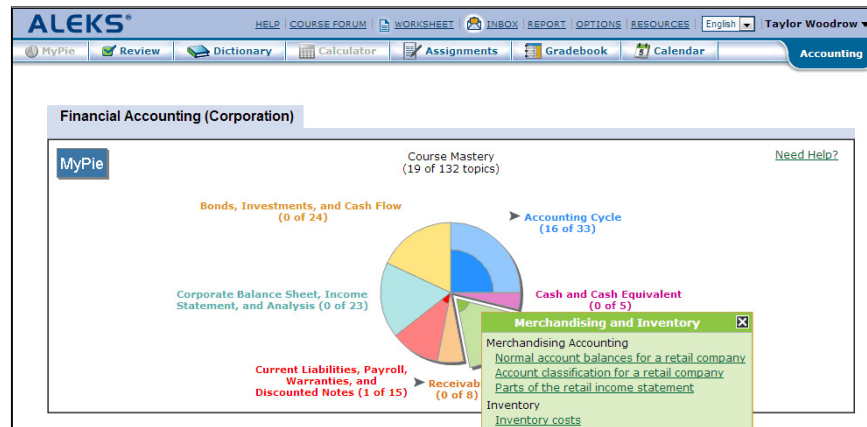


Figure 4: Assessment Report

Following the presentation of assessment results, ALEKS will introduce you to a pie chart navigation tool (**MyPie**) (Fig. 4). By placing the mouse pointer over slices of the pie, you can see which concepts you are now most ready to learn. Not all slices will contain concepts at any given time. They may have been mastered already, or work may need to be done in other slices before they become available. The concept you click on becomes your entry into the Learning Mode. ALEKS will help you to master that concept and add it to your pie.

3.4 Progress in the Learning Mode

In the Learning Mode, you are given problems based on the chosen topic. Additionally, you have access to explanations of how to solve the particular kind of problem and to a dictionary of concepts. Underlined

terms are links to the Dictionary. Click on any term to get a complete definition. ALEKS will require a number of correct answers before it assumes that you have mastered the concept. When the topic is mastered, ALEKS will add the topic to your pie. At that point, a revised pie chart will be shown reflecting your new knowledge. You will be able to choose a new concept to begin. If you make mistakes, more correct answers may be required. If you tire of the topic and wish to choose another, you can click on **MyPie** near the top of the window. If you make repeated errors on a concept, the system will conclude that the concept was not mastered, and will offer you a new choice of other concepts.

3.5 Additional Features

All buttons described below are available in the Learning Mode. In the Assessment Mode, certain buttons may be temporarily inactive.

HELP

For online help with the use of the Answer Editor, click **Help**.

CLASS FORUM

To participate in course discussions, click **Course Forum**.

WORKSHEET

To print out an individualized homework sheet based on your most recent work in ALEKS, use the **Worksheet** button.

INBOX

Your instructor can send you messages via ALEKS. You see new messages when you log on. You can also check for messages by clicking on **Inbox** (Sec. 3.6). ALEKS provides a way to send your instructor a specific problem you are working on in ALEKS. Your instructor can choose to let you reply to messages as well.

REPORT

Any time you wish to look at your assessment reports, click on **Report**. Choose any date from the drop-down menu and click **OK**.

OPTIONS

This page gives you the option to forward your ALEKS messages to your email account. This page also shows the total number of hours you have spent using ALEKS.

RESOURCES

To access any special resources posted to your course by your instructor, click on the **Resources** button. This button will only be available if resources have been posted to your course.

Log out

To end your ALEKS session and exit, click on your name (top right), and select **Log out** from the drop-down menu.

MyPie

Clicking **MyPie** gives you a pie chart summarizing your current mastery. You can use this pie chart to choose a new concept.

Review

To review past material, use the **Review** button.

Dictionary

To search the online Dictionary, click **Dictionary**. You can also click on hyperlinked terms in the ALEKS interface to access the Dictionary.

Calculator

To access the online ALEKS Calculator, use the **Calculator** button. This button will be inactive for material where the use of a calculator is not appropriate. When this button is inactive, do not use any calculator.

Assignments

To see the results of assignments you have taken in ALEKS or to begin a pending assignment, use the **Assignments** button. If assignments are currently available, you will see an orange burst on the **Assignments** button.

Gradebook

To access the Gradebook for your course, click on the **Gradebook** button.

Calendar

To access the Calendar for your course, click on the **Calendar** button.

3.6 ALEKS Inbox

The Inbox allows you to send messages to your instructor if you need assistance with a topic or problem in ALEKS. To compose a message,

click **Compose**. There is an option to include mathematical notation in your messages.

To include mathematical notation and illustrations:

1. Click the **math** tab at the right end of the tool bar. This switches you to the **Enhanced message editor**, with a robust set of math input tools.
2. Click on the **Graphs** tab for graphing tools, or on **Algebra**, **Trig**, **Matrix**, or **Stat** for symbolism specific to these areas.

While working in the Learning Mode, you can send a specific problem type to your instructor for assistance. This will include a link in the message, showing a screenshot of the practice problem that you see on your screen.

To attach a specific problem, make sure the practice problem is still on the screen, then:

1. Click on the **Inbox** link. This will take you into the ALEKS Message Center.
2. Click on the **Compose** button.
3. Below the body message section, check the box next to **Attach Page**.
4. Click on the **Send** button to send the message.

You also have an option to include attachments in your messages. The attachments can be up to 2MB in size.

4 Guidelines for Effective Use

Please take note of the following important suggestions for successful use of ALEKS.

Supplementary Materials

You should have pencil and paper ready for all assessments and for use in the Learning Mode. Basic calculators should be used only when you are instructed to do so. (A basic calculator is part of ALEKS.)

Assessments

You should not ask for any help during assessments. Even explanations or rephrasing of problems are not permitted. If you receive help, ALEKS will get a wrong idea of what you are most ready to learn, and this will hold up your progress. If you are sure you don't know the answer, click **I don't know**.

Learning Mode

You should learn to use the special features of the Learning Mode, especially the explanations and the Dictionary.

Review

Whenever ALEKS suggests topics for you to review, you should review them. Spending a few minutes daily on such review will help you retain what you have learned and do well on reassessments.

Regular Use

Nothing is more important to your progress than regular use of ALEKS. Three hours per week is a recommended minimum; five or more are normal in many cases.

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