

Exploratory Approach Review

To address its charge, the National Assessment Governing Board's Ad Hoc Committee on Measures of Postsecondary Preparedness considered the trends that most likely will shape the future, and thereby shape the skills and knowledge that students will need to develop. Through meetings with expert panels, focus groups, and commissioning focused research papers, conducted with the support of its contractor HumRRO, the Committee pursued the answers to the following three research questions:

1. **Work of the future (readiness for what?):** What are we, as a nation, preparing students for? Changes in the workplace are not only inevitable, but are accelerating, driven by technological advances, demographic shifts, and social changes. The growing prevalence of self-driving vehicles, the more widespread use of robots, and advances in artificial intelligence are signs of existing innovations poised to dramatically change the jobs available to young Americans. Young Americans hold different expectations about work, and the ways in which people connect and communicate with each other are all changing. How will the workplace change given these emerging technologies? How will our communities change given these trends?
2. **Requisite skills for future work (skills for what?):** With a better understanding of the future workplace, we can better understand the skills that young Americans will need to succeed. But should we consider more than just workplace skills? What about skills like citizenship and financial literacy? How do these skills factor into the question of measuring postsecondary preparedness?
3. **Measures of preparedness (measures for what?):** Finally, what metrics exist to capture the skills that young Americans will need in the workplace, for their roles in their communities, and in their personal lives? Can such metrics include data from sources in addition to or instead of assessments? Additionally, what metrics do not exist but are needed to help the nation better understand if students are prepared as they exit high school, regardless of which paths they take—through college or other postsecondary learning experiences or directly to the workforce?

The following pages summarize the key findings from the various research and expert consultations; more detailed summaries are provided in the subsequent appendices.