Test Optional and Standardized Testing FAQ

What is test optional?
When a college or university is “test optional,” it means the college or university does not require the SAT or ACT from applicants in order to be considered for admission. Not all “test optional” policies are the same across universities, however. Make sure you’re researching each one. Information provided below is on Northeastern’s “test optional” policy for the upcoming year.

Is Northeastern test optional?
Yes. Prospective students applying for the 2021-2022 academic year can apply “test optional” to Northeastern. Students who choose to apply “test optional” will not be penalized or disadvantaged for applying without testing.

Am I required to submit standardized testing?
No. Standardized testing is entirely optional, and you will not be penalized or disadvantaged for applying without testing.

How will Northeastern evaluate my application without standardized testing?
Even before moving test optional, Northeastern evaluated each application holistically, focusing on the rigor of your coursework and academic performance in the classroom, in addition to considering your leadership, extracurricular involvement, personal qualities, interest in experiential learning, and fit for Northeastern. None of this has changed.

Before moving test optional, standardized testing was not reviewed by the Admissions Committee during our evaluation process. We only began to introduce testing into the discussion during our selection process for students who applied from a high school in the United States, while standardized testing was never introduced into the discussion for students who applied “test blind” from an international high school. As we move “test optional,” our selection process will be both the same as it always was, yet entirely different. For applicants who choose to submit standardized testing, we will introduce testing into the discussion during the selection process, while standardized testing will never be introduced into the discussion for applicants who choose to apply “test optional.”
How do I decide whether to submit standardized testing or not?
You should put your best foot forward when applying to Northeastern, by showcasing your application in the best or most positive way possible. If you submit standardized testing, you want to submit testing which is competitive for admission to Northeastern.

Consider our middle 50% score ranges, when available. For the SAT or ACT. If your scores are within the middle 50% or above, submitting your scores may make your application more favorable, although simply receiving a perfect SAT or ACT score does not in any way guarantee admission. For students who applied and were admitted to Northeastern in Fall 2020, 50% of the admitted students scored between 1470 and 1540 on the SAT, or 33 and 35 on the ACT.

Can I submit results from the SAT or ACT and another test included in Northeastern’s testing policy, like my results from AP Exams, the IB Diploma or GCE Advanced Levels? Will the Admissions Committee focus on all results or only the strongest results submitted?
You can submit results from as many tests or as few tests as you’d like. Northeastern’s Admissions Committee will review each test result you submit, and all test results will be considered by the Admissions Committee when making a final admissions decision.

Does Northeastern superscore?
Yes. Northeastern will superscore your SAT and ACT. For the SAT, we will add together your highest Evidence-based Reading & Writing section and Mathematics section, from across multiple test dates, to create a new overall total SAT score. For the ACT, we will average together your highest English, Math, Reading, and Science sections, from across multiple test dates, to create a new overall Composite score.

Does Northeastern accept ACT Single-Section Retesting?
Yes. Northeastern does accept single-section retesting, and includes your single section test results when calculating your superscored ACT Composite.

Does Northeastern require the SAT Essay or ACT Writing sections?
No.
I am applying from an international high school. I thought Northeastern was “test-blind” and would not review results from the SAT or ACT even if I submitted them? From Fall 2008 to Fall 2020, Northeastern was test-blind for all applicants who applied from a high school which was located outside of the United States. For the 2021-2022 academic year, our new optional standardized testing policy applies to all prospective students regardless of where you went to high school. All students will have the choice of whether or not to submit standardized testing for review as part of Northeastern’s admissions process.

Can I self-report my standardized testing?
Yes. All applicants can self-report final results through the Application Status Check. Upon choosing to enroll, all self-reported results must be verified by sending official results from either the testing agency or examination board. If your official results do not match your self-reported results, Northeastern reserves the right to rescind your offer of admission.

If I self-report my standardized testing, am I required to submit my official test results if I am admitted and choose to enroll?
Yes.

Can I apply to Northeastern using my predicted grades?
No. Northeastern will only consider final results from the IB Diploma, GCE Advanced Levels, or any national or international exams.

Please note: While excluded from our standardized testing policy, the Admissions Committee requires predicted grades for applicants whose secondary education culminates in externally assessed high school graduation exams or university matriculation exams.

- If you will not receive your final results until after the application deadline, your high school must submit predicted grades.
- If your final results are available before the application deadline, final results must instead be submitted by your high school.
- Furthermore, all enrolling students will be required to submit final exam results, even students who applied “test optional” to Northeastern, as final exams also serve as proof of high school graduation.
How should my predicted grades be submitted?
Predicted grades must be provided by a high school official who can either submit them by completing Northeastern’s Predicted Grades Request Form or by using your high school’s predicted grades form. Either document can be submitted with the School Report, high school transcript or Counselor Recommendation; or emailed to admissions@northeastern.edu from an official and verifiable school email address. Predicted grades reported on the High School Transcript will also be considered.

Can I self-report my predicted grades in the Application Status Check?
No. You should only self-report final results in the Application Status Check. If you’re admitted and choose to enroll, we will require your official results which must match the results you self-reported. Northeastern has the right to rescind your admissions offer if your self-reported results do not match your official results.

My standardized testing results appear on my high school transcript. Can I still apply test-optional?
If you indicate on your application that you are applying test-optional, we will not review any results from the SAT or ACT that were provided on your high school transcript or elsewhere in your application. Even if you choose to apply with standardized testing, Northeastern will only consider SAT or ACT results which were either submitted officially to Northeastern or self-reported in the Application Status Check.

If I initially apply test-optional, can I change my mind? If I initially applied with testing, can I change my mind?
If you initially applied test optional but would now like Northeastern to consider your standardized testing: please email your admissions counselors regarding the update, and either submit official results, or self-report scores in your myApp Status portal by deadlines listed below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freshmen</th>
<th>Transfer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Decision I by November 15th</td>
<td>Spring Transfer by October 15th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Action by December 1st</td>
<td>Fall Transfer by April 15th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Decision II by January 15th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regular Decision by February 15th</td>
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If you already submitted your standardized testing to the university, you cannot update your application to test optional, as we cannot “un-see” your testing or erase your standardized testing from the system.
If I initially applied test optional and I was deferred to Regular Decision, can I update my application to include standardized testing?
Yes. You should email your admissions counselors regarding the update, and either submit official results, or self-report scores in your myApp Status portal by by February 15th.

If you initially applied with standardized testing and were deferred to Regular Decision, you cannot update your application to test optional, as we cannot “un-see” your testing or erase your standardized testing from the system.