



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. 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 share 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 share 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 would like to have testing considered. How do I share my scores?

All students must share the scores they would like considered in their application through the Application Status Check. This allows students the most control over the tests that are attached to their file. Students who indicated they would like to be test optional may not self-report, though you may control your Test Optional status through your 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?](#)

You may control your Test Optional status through your Application Status Check. Your test optional preference will default to what you indicated in the application, and you have until the following dates to finalize your choice. Your test optional status will be locked in after that date.

Freshmen Early Decision I by November 10th Early Action by December 1st Early Decision II by January 10th Regular Decision by February 1st	Transfer Spring Transfer by October 15th Fall Transfer by April 15th
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Please note, the ability for students to have a grace period to finalize their test optional choice is a policy update from prior publications.

[Can I add test scores after that date?](#)

Students who indicate that Yes, they would like testing considered, may add any new testing information at any time through the Application Status Check. Students who choose No, they would *not* like testing to be considered, will not have any scores on their file for admission consideration.

[I was deferred to Regular Decision, can I update my testing status?](#)

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.

If you initially applied without testing considered and believe you would like to share testing information, you may change your test optional status through instructions provided in the deferral reconfirmation process.

[I have requested that official scores be sent. Why must I instead self-report?](#)

As there can be a delay between request and receipt of official scores, we want students to be able to share their testing information with us as soon as they have access to it, if they choose to do so. Additionally, self-reporting allows students the ability to decide if they would like to be considered with testing or not through our deadlines listed above.



My standardized testing results appear on my high school transcript. What does that mean in Northeastern's process?

Northeastern will only consider testing which self-reported in the Application Status Check. If you indicate 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.

I understand that I must self-report my testing. Am I required to submit my official test results if I am admitted and choose to enroll?

Yes. 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

I am applying from an international high school. I thought Northeastern was "test-free" and would not review results from the SAT or ACT even if I submitted them?

From Fall 2008 to Fall 2020, Northeastern was test-free 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 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 studying at an overseas high school 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.

Northeastern Undergraduate Admissions

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 admission offer if your self-reported results do not match your official results.