NEW FIRSTS FOR STUDENTS TAKING THE ACT® TEST

Visit act.org/newfirsts for more information.

Every student deserves the BEST chance to succeed.

That’s why we’re providing new options for the ACT® test beginning with faster results with online testing and superscoring in September 2020 and section retesting in 2021. The options are designed to give students more choices, a better experience, and provide greater confidence that their test scores reflect their overall academic achievement and potential.

While our mission of helping people achieve education and workplace success stays the same, HOW we help people achieve that success continues to evolve. Many factors influence our ongoing evolution, from technology and user experience to new market needs. The ACT continues to be driven by research and the education and career ecosystem in which today’s students live.

The ACT can have a significant impact on people’s lives. Because of this, we work hard to avoid unnecessary risks that might come with large-scale changes or total product reinvention by conducting thorough research around the product’s reporting, delivery methods, and technology. Research is continuously informing the content tested on the ACT to ensure it matches what is being taught in the high school classroom and what is needed to be successful in the first year of college courses. Data direct us toward what is most needed and requested by our customers.

Today’s students are deserving of fresh approaches that better match the way they learn and measure their progress, and to help them navigate through their personal journeys to success. As leaders in the industry, it is our charge to provide students with the appropriate tools in the ways that are most relevant to them while remaining the most reputable and trusted college admissions test.

A LEGACY OF FIRSTS

1ST college entrance exam to focus on what students learn in school
1ST to define college & career readiness standards
1ST to define college & career readiness benchmarks
1ST and only college entrance exam to test science independently
1ST to allow guessing
1ST to use common vocabulary words
1ST to allow calculators during the entire math test
1ST to offer the writing test as optional
1ST to offer a college entrance exam on a school day
1ST to report on the condition of education at the aggregated state level
1ST college entrance exam to be offered as a required state test
With online testing, students can test in an environment that may be more familiar and more comfortable to the digital-native generation.

Students who choose online testing will get their multiple-choice test results back in as soon as two business days.

“[ACT Section Retesting] plays to the student’s strengths. That seems like a really fair way to go about things.”

–Parent of high school student

“Faster Results takes away a lot of the waiting and the anxiety.”

–Student planning to attend college

ACT started testing on computers in 2013. That was only after multiple years of studies, including comparability studies in operational testing environments where participating students received college-reportable scores.

Schools who offer the ACT to their students as part of the school day program have had the option to test the ACT online since 2016. International students have been taking the ACT test online since September 2018.

60% of students surveyed want their ACT scores faster!

(ACT Research April 2019)
The ACT score reports will now include a superscore. An ACT Superscore is the average of the four best section scores from each of the student’s ACT test attempts.

The number of students retaking the ACT has increased over time. Superscores truly reflect the student’s proficiency in the subject matter, and are proven to be a more accurate predictor of first-year college grades compared to other score evaluation methods.

“I think, from their standpoint, that [superscoring] would be a relief to the students.”

–Higher Ed Professional

What’s Staying the SAME
ACT has always been rooted in service to students

1. The ACT is the same trusted college admissions test institutions have relied on to help students achieve success for the past 60 years.

2. The ACT has always been and will continue to be reflective of evidence.

3. The validated ACT® College and Career Readiness Standards continue to be the backbone of our assessment systems. They describe the essential skills and knowledge students need to succeed in college and career. The standards provide clear meaning to ACT test scores and serve as a link between what students have learned and what they need to learn next.

4. The ACT test has always measured all students’ knowledge fairly and equally and will continue to do just that.

5. The ACT® College and Career Readiness Benchmarks set the bar for excellence. These subject-area benchmarks represent the level of achievement required for students to have a successful academic experience.

6. The ACT® Holistic Framework® for College and Career Readiness provides a well-rounded description of the knowledge and skills individuals need to know (and be able to do) to succeed as they progress from school to career.

7. All students will continue to have free ACT® Test Prep with ACT® Academy™.

8. ACT® Aspire®, PreACT®, and The ACT are an aligned, coherent assessment system on a vertical scale and anchored in the empirically derived ACT College and Career Readiness Benchmarks and ACT College and Career Readiness Standards.

9. ACT helps remove barriers in the college admissions process for students from underserved backgrounds. Beginning in September 2020, ACT is offering four fee waivers and unlimited free score reports to all fee waiver students.

“ACT should emphasize particularly the educational development of the student for purposes of guidance and counseling, as well as enable the colleges to select as they needed.”

–ACT founder, E. F. Lindquist
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