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More than 3,000 colleges, universities, and scholarship agencies use scores on the ACT<sup>®</sup> test to make decisions about admission, scholarship awards, and course placement.

ACT takes very seriously its responsibility to report valid test scores that accurately reflect examinees' educational achievement and independent work. As one means of helping to maintain the integrity of test scores, ACT conducts reviews of questionable ACT scores. These reviews, known as Individual Score Reviews, are designed to fairly address concerns associated with an individual's ACT scores and balance the interests of ACT, the examinees, and the score recipients in reaching a resolution. The purpose of this document is to summarize ACT's procedures relating to Individual Score Reviews. Please consult ACT's 2019–2020 Terms and Conditions for more specific information.

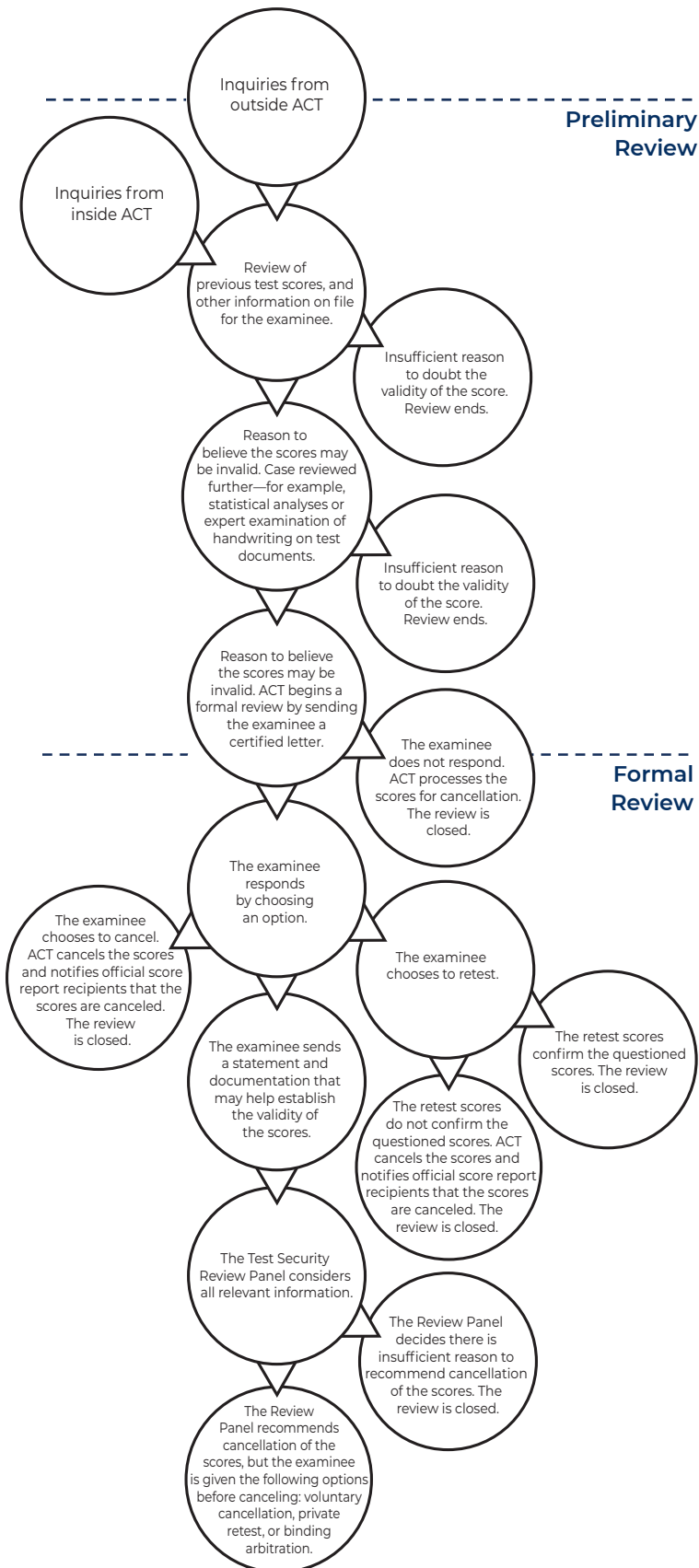
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When registering to take the ACT, examinees agree to abide by ACT's Terms and Conditions, including those concerning ACT's Individual Score Review process. The following excerpt is from the 2019–2020 Terms and Conditions, available at [www.act.org/the-act/terms](http://www.act.org/the-act/terms):

*"In some cases, testing staff do not suspect, observe or report prohibited behavior in the testing process, but other information comes to the attention of ACT that raises questions about the validity of your test scores. For example, ACT may find unusual similarities in the answers of you and another examinee, indicators that you may have falsified your identity or impersonated someone else, indicators of possible advance access to test questions or answers, or other indicators that your test scores may not be valid.*

*In these cases, ACT may choose to conduct an Individual Score Review. . . If your ACT scores become the subject of an Individual Score Review, ACT sends you a letter that gives you three options: (1) submit written information to ACT in support of your scores; (2) take a private retest at ACT's expense to confirm the validity of your scores; or (3) voluntarily cancel your scores. Additional details regarding these options will be provided in ACT's correspondence to you. . . If you choose to submit written information to ACT in support of your scores, the information you submit is provided to a Test Security Review Panel, which will consider the totality of the evidence and will determine whether to recommend cancellation of the scores."*

**Figure 1.** Steps in the Review of Test Scores



## Identification and Review of Testing Irregularities

ACT does not engage in random reviews of test scores. Rather, in every case, some specific situation or instigating factor leads to the Individual Score Review.

**Information external to ACT:** ACT frequently receives requests to verify test scores from persons outside ACT. For example, a school counselor or a college admissions officer who has received a score report from an examinee may contact ACT because the examinee’s record of academic performance seems inconsistent with his or her test scores, or because the test scores from another or prior test date are substantially lower than the current scores. ACT generally treats all such requests as confidential.

**Information within ACT:** ACT staff may be alerted to irregularities in the scoring patterns of an examinee or in the answers of examinees at the same test center.

Individual Score Reviews are generally handled the same way regardless of the source or situation that initiates the review. ACT will first review information on file related to an examinee’s scores and any other available information. If there is not sufficient evidence to question the validity of scores, the review will be terminated without involving the examinee. Figure 1 shows the steps in the preliminary review of test scores.

If further review of the scores is warranted—for example, if there are unusual similarities in the answers of examinees at the same test center—ACT staff may conduct additional statistical analyses that provide further information about the validity of the scores. In other cases, an examinee’s test materials may be referred to a forensic document examiner for a handwriting analysis.

After careful consideration of all the available information, if ACT still has reason to believe a score may be invalid, ACT will send the examinee a certified letter stating the reasons for ACT’s concern and asking for the examinee’s assistance in answering questions about the scores. Figure 1 shows the steps in the formal review of test scores.

## Confidentiality

ACT is sensitive to the privacy rights of examinees. The following describes ACT's typical practices regarding the confidentiality of Individual Score Reviews. ACT may make exceptions to these practices, but any such exception will be in accordance with ACT's Terms and Conditions ([www.act.org/the-act/terms](http://www.act.org/the-act/terms)), and ACT's Privacy Policy ([www.act.org/content/act/en/privacy-policy.html](http://www.act.org/content/act/en/privacy-policy.html)).

In the typical case, only the examinee is advised of a pending Individual Score Review, and correspondence with the examinee is treated as confidential. If the examinee is a minor, ACT may release information regarding the score review to a parent or guardian. In addition, ACT may communicate with a third party about an Individual Score Review if the examinee has provided written authorization for ACT to do so, or if the score review becomes the subject of an arbitration or lawsuit. ACT encourages an examinee whose scores are reviewed to seek advice and counsel from parents, teachers, school counselors, and other trusted individuals. However, whether an examinee does so remains his or her decision.

ACT generally reports scores pending the completion of the Individual Score Review process, treats the questioned scores as valid throughout the Individual Score Review process, and does not inform official score report recipients that an examinee's scores are being reviewed.

If the scores are canceled at the conclusion of the Individual Score Review, ACT will inform official score recipients that the scores have been canceled. ACT generally does not inform them of the reason for the cancellation, and the standard cancellation letter explains that ACT cancels scores for a variety of reasons, including examinee illness, mistiming of a test, or disturbances or irregularities at a test center.

## Options Available in an Individual Score Review

The certified letter ACT sends to examinees when it begins an Individual Score Review offers the following options:

1. **Cancel the questioned test scores.** At the examinee's request, ACT will cancel the questioned scores. ACT will notify any institutions that received official score reports that the scores have been canceled but generally will not give a reason for the cancellation unless the examinee has authorized ACT to do so.
2. **Private retest to resolve the Individual Score Review.** At the examinee's request and at ACT's expense, ACT staff will arrange a private retest at a location acceptable to ACT. The retest will be administered under secure conditions by a test coordinator selected by ACT. Additional identification procedures apply to examinees whose scores are being reviewed. Examinees may report their retest scores to official score recipients.

If an examinee retests and achieves a Composite score no more than three points lower than the questioned Composite score, and the retest is a valid administration, both the questioned and the retest scores will remain in ACT's records, and the Individual Score Review will be closed. If the Composite score achieved on the retest is more than three points lower than the Composite score in question, the questioned scores will be canceled and removed from ACT's records, and any institutions that previously received official score reports from ACT will be informed that the scores have been canceled.

3. **Provide a statement and supporting documentation that may help establish the validity of the questioned test scores.** An examinee who chooses this option may submit a school transcript, a statement in their own words supporting the validity of their questioned scores, and any other supporting documentation to the Test Security Review Panel.

The Test Security Review Panel, an impartial group of professional ACT staff who make decisions about challenged test scores, reviews the information provided by an examinee who chose this option.

The Review Panel considers the examinee's statement and submissions, the academic preparation in the subject areas measured by the ACT, the consistency of the questioned scores with the results of any other college admissions test scores, the results of ACT's review, and other relevant information. The Review Panel decides, based on the totality of the evidence, whether substantial evidence supports cancellation or invalidation of the questioned scores. ACT will notify the examinee of the Review Panel's decision. If the Review Panel recommends that the questioned scores be cancelled, this notification will also explain that the examinee has the option to challenge ACT's decision.

Section 14 of ACT's 2019–2020 Terms and Conditions describe the options available to you for challenging ACT's decision.

ACT's arbitrations with examinees are generally conducted by the American Arbitration Association ("AAA") in accordance with its Consumer Arbitration Rules. The AAA is a public service, not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping resolve disputes.

ACT is not related to or affiliated with the AAA in any way. The arbitrations are conducted through written submissions unless the arbitrator decides that a hearing is necessary. The only issue for arbitration is whether ACT acted reasonably and in good faith in deciding to cancel the scores. Proof of misconduct is not required to cancel scores. Most of the filing fee for arbitration will be paid by ACT, but the examinee will pay a portion of the fee, as permitted by the AAA's rules. Under the January 1, 2016 AAA Consumer Arbitration Rules, if an examinee arbitrates a decision by ACT to cancel his or her test scores, the examinee must pay a filing fee of \$200 to the AAA as the examinee's share of the filing fee. This fee is payable in full when a claim is filed. ACT will pay a \$1,700 filing fee and a \$1,500 arbitrator compensation fee.

## Fairness

ACT encourages and appreciates examinees' participation in resolving concerns about their ACT scores. ACT's procedures give examinees an opportunity to participate in the Individual Score Review process before a final decision is made regarding the validity of their scores, thereby respecting the interests of examinees while maintaining the fairness and integrity of the ACT testing program for all examinees.



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