PROCEDURES
Conducting Individual Score Reviews
2025–2026

PROGRAM: THE ACT | PRODUCT: THE ACT |
AUDIENCE: EXAMINEES, PARENTS, SCORE RECIPIENTS

Individual Score Reviews: The purpose of this document is to summarize ACT's Individual Score Review procedures. Please consult the *Terms and Conditions*: Testing Rules and Policies for more specific information.

Colleges, universities, and scholarship agencies use ACT® scores 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.

To maintain the integrity of test scores, ACT conducts reviews of testing irregularities and situations where score validity may have been compromised or is in question. These reviews, known as Individual Score Reviews, are designed to fairly address concerns associated with an individual's ACT scores and to balance the interests of ACT, examinees, and score recipients in reaching a resolution.

When registering for and taking the ACT, examinees agree to abide by the *Terms and Conditions: Testing Rules and Policies for the ACT Test* (the *Terms and Conditions*), including those related to the ACT Individual Score Review process. The following excerpt is from the *Terms and Conditions,* available at www.act.org/the-act/terms: "In some cases, test staff may 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 an examinee's test scores. For example, ACT may find unusual similarities in an examinee's answers and the answers of another examinee through statistical or other analyses, indicators that an examinee may have falsified his or her identity or impersonated someone else, indicators of possible advance access to test questions or answers, or other indicators that an examinee's 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 will send you a letter that gives you three options: (1) submit documentation to ACT in support of your scores; (2) take a free, private retest to resolve the score review; or (3) voluntarily cancel your scores. Additional details regarding these options will be provided in ACT correspondence to you. . . . If you choose to submit documentation to ACT in support of your scores, this documentation is provided to a Test Security Review Panel, which will consider the totality of the evidence from you and ACT and determine whether to recommend cancellation of the scores."

Identification and Review of Testing Irregularities

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

Information external to ACT: ACT may receive 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 their test scores, or because the test

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scores from another test date are substantially different than the other test scores for the examinee. ACT generally treats such requests as confidential.

Information within ACT: ACT staff may become aware of 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 other available information. If there is insufficient evidence to question the validity of the scores, the review will be closed. Steps in the preliminary review of test scores are outlined below.

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 expert analysis.

If, after careful consideration of the available information, ACT still has reason to believe a score may be invalid, ACT will send the examinee a letter explaining some of the reasons for the concerns and providing options for resolving those concerns. Steps in the formal review of test scores are also outlined below.

Preliminary Review

- **Inquiries:** Inquiries received
  - from outside ACT
    AND/OR
  - from inside ACT
- **Review:** Review of test scores, and other information on file for the examinee
  - Insufficient reason to doubt the validity of the score. The review is closed.
    OR
  - Reason to believe the scores may be invalid. Case reviewed further (e.g., statistical analyses or expert forensics on test documents).
    - Insufficient reason to doubt the validity of the score. The review is closed.
      OR
    - Reason to believe the scores may be invalid. ACT begins a formal review by sending the examinee a letter.

Formal Review

- The examinee does not respond to communication from ACT in a timely manner or does not participate in the Individual Score Review process. ACT determines whether there is reason to believe the scores are invalid, based on substantial evidence. If so, ACT processes the scores for cancellation and the review is closed.
  OR
- The examinee responds by selecting an option.
  - The examinee selects to cancel. ACT cancels the scores and notifies official score recipients of the cancellation. The review is closed.
    OR
  - The examinee submits documentation in support of the scores.
    - The Test Security Review Panel considers relevant information.
      - The Review Panel recommends cancellation of the scores. The examinee is given the following options before cancelling: voluntary cancellation, private retest, or challenge the cancellation recommendation. OR
      - The Review Panel does not recommend the cancellation of the scores. The review is closed.
        OR
  - The examinee selects to take a private retest.

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- The retest scores do not confirm the questioned scores. ACT cancels the questioned scores and notifies official score recipients of the cancellation. The review is closed.
  OR
- The retest scores confirm the questioned scores. The review is closed.

Confidentiality

ACT is sensitive to the privacy rights of examinees. The following describes ACT 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 the *Terms and Conditions* (www.act.org/the-act/terms/rules), and ACT's Privacy Policy (https://global.act.org/content/global/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 Individual 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 Individual 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 their 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 recipients that an examinee's scores are being reviewed. If an examinee does not respond in a timely manner, does not participate in the Individual Score Review process, or unreasonably delays the Individual Score Review process, ACT may cancel those scores if it has a reason to believe that the scores are invalid, based on substantial evidence.

If the scores are cancelled at the conclusion of the Individual Score Review, ACT will inform official score recipients of the cancellation. ACT generally does not inform official score recipients 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 the test, disturbances, or irregularities at a test center or at the election of the examinee. If a score is cancelled as a result of an Individual Score Review and that examinee has chosen to send those scores as part of Superscore, that Superscore will be updated to reflect the cancellation of a score.

Options Available in an Individual Score Review

The letter ACT sends to examinees at the outset of an Individual Score Review offers the following options:

- **Voluntarily cancel the questioned test scores.** If the examinee selects this option, ACT will cancel the questioned scores. ACT will notify official score recipients of the cancellation but generally will not provide a reason for the cancellation unless the examinee has authorized ACT to do so.
- **Take a free, private retest to resolve the Individual Score Review.** If the examinee selects this option, ACT staff will arrange a private retest at a location acceptable to ACT. The retest will be administered under secure conditions by testing staff 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 takes the private retest and achieves a confirming score, and the retest is a valid administration, both the questioned and the private retest scores will remain in ACT's records, and the

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Individual Score Review will be closed. If the examinee does not achieve a confirming score, the questioned scores will be cancelled. ACT will notify official score recipients of the cancellation but generally will not provide a reason for the cancellation unless the examinee has authorized ACT to do so. The private retest scores will remain in ACT's records.

- **Provide documentation in support of the questioned test scores.** An examinee who selects this option may submit a school transcript, a statement in their own words supporting the validity of their questioned scores, and other supporting documentation to the Test Security Review Panel.

  The Review Panel considers the examinee's documentation, the results of ACT's review, and other relevant information. The Review Panel recommends, based on the totality of the evidence, whether there is substantial evidence that the scores are invalid. ACT will notify the examinee of the Review Panel's recommendation. If the Review Panel recommends that the questioned scores be cancelled, ACT will notify the examinee, and the notification will also explain that the examinee has the option to challenge the Review Panel's recommendation to cancel the scores.

Section 14 of the *Terms and Conditions* describes the arbitration process available to examinees for challenging the Review Panel's recommendation.

ACT 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. Proof of misconduct is not required to cancel scores. If an examinee arbitrates a decision by ACT to cancel their test scores, the examinee will be required to pay a portion of the filing fee for arbitration, as permitted by the AAA's rules. This fee is payable in full when a claim is filed. ACT will pay the remainder of the filing fee.

Fairness

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

Contact Information

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