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Test Optional Policy

Bowdoin does not require most applicants to submit SAT or ACT scores for the purposes of admission. The College has been "test optional" since 1969. See below for important exceptions to this policy.

This policy allows applicants to decide for themselves whether or not their test results accurately reflect their academic ability and potential. For candidates electing to submit them, test scores will be reviewed along with other indicators of academic ability.

Around 30 percent of matriculants (in the class of 2018) chose not to submit scores.

Score Suppression

Applicants indicate on the Common Application whether they would like Bowdoin to review their standardized test results. Applicants also have the option to select some test types and not others for review (for example, a student might choose to include SAT Subject Test scores but not an SAT score). Applicants have until the application deadline to suppress their scores.

Bowdoin will not review selected sections of an SAT or an ACT score (for example, just the Science portion of the ACT). If an applicant chooses to include scores for a specific test type, Bowdoin will review the complete score for that test type.

Redesigned SAT

The College Board began administering the Redesigned SAT in March 2016. Applicants who decide to include their SAT results as part of their applications will **NOT** be required to submit the optional written section (SAT Essay).

Bowdoin will continue to accept SAT results for exams taken before the March 2016 redesign for first year and transfer applicants.

Superscoring

Bowdoin will "superscore" the SAT. That is, the admissions committee will consider the highest Critical Reading, Math, and Writing Scores submitted by an applicant, irrespective of test date.

Bowdoin will **NOT** combine results from Redesigned and pre-Redesign SAT exams to create a new total score. We will superscore Redesigned and pre-Redesign results separately, considering the highest section and total scores submitted from either set of results.

Bowdoin does not superscore the ACT. The admissions committee will consider the highest submitted Composite score and subsection scores. We will not recalculate a new Composite score from subsection scores earned on different test dates.

Is standardized testing required for certain applicants?

Yes. Home-schooled applicants and candidates applying from secondary schools that provide written evaluations rather than grades are **required** to submit ACT test results OR SAT test results and two or more SAT Subject Tests. SAT Subject Tests should include Math Level 1 or Math Level 2 and a science.

International applicants can find more information about required testing on the [International Applicant](#) page.

Note: Because standardized test results are used for academic counseling and placement as well as for the College's ongoing research into the relationship between standardized testing and success at Bowdoin, all entering first-year students must submit scores over the summer prior to matriculating at Bowdoin.

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