



THE TESTING LANDSCAPE

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UES

EXPERT ADMISSIONS



WHY DO US COLLEGES USE STANDARDISED TESTING?



- US does not have a national curriculum or an equivalent of exams such as GCSEs/A-Levels/IB
- GPA (Grade Point Average) varies between different schools (and states)
- Standardised tests allow admissions professionals to compare students against their peers
- Evidence shows that standardised test scores plus GPA gives a strong correlation of success at college

SAT VS ACT – ONGOING RIVALRY



- SAT has traditional dominance on the US coasts and internationally; ACT has traditional dominance in Midwest
- ACT overtook SAT in 2012 as most taken test worldwide
- SAT redesigned format in March 2016 – numbers dropped slightly
- Last year, SAT surpassed ACT for first time since 2012
- In Class of 2018, 2.1 million students took SAT; 1.9 million ACT
- ACT countered by introducing Computer-Based Testing in Sept 2018

SAT VS ACT



Feature	ACT	SAT
Format	Computer-based (outside US)	Paper-based
Time per question	49 seconds	70 seconds
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broader syllabus• Calculator allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Narrower, deeper syllabus• Non-calc section
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on speed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on depth
Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Science' section	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Within Math and English sections
Essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Debate style	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Similar to English Language GCSE

TYPICAL LEARNER PROFILES



The ACT suits:

- Students who are able to process information quickly
- Students who are not as comfortable with math

The SAT suits:

- Students who are typically doing Maths or Further Maths A-Level or Standard or Higher Level Math in the IB
- Students who take longer to read and to process information, but who work slowly but methodically

UES SAT-ACT DIAGNOSTIC – HOW DOES IT WORK?



- Measures elements common to both tests as well as areas that differentiate each test
- Calculates students' aptitude and speed in each area
- Likely to recommend **SAT** to students who have a slower reading speed but perform well on the maths section
- Likely to recommend **ACT** to students who find maths a little trickier but process other information quickly
- Students who do well on the maths section and process other information quickly and accurately may be recommended **either**.

DIAGNOSTIC TEST – RESULTS



Percentage of students with suitability to each section and overall (based on 1500+ results):

	Reading	Math	Science	Result
ACT	29	40	36	50
SAT	18	41	21	37
Either	53	19	43	13

	Reading	Math	Science	English
St. Dev.	24	20	31	14

Key points:

- >1500 students have now taken diagnostic worldwide
- More students suited to ACT Reading than SAT Reading, but Math is roughly equal
- Majority of students would cope well with the ACT Science section
- Low Math score with high Science/Reading scores push people towards the ACT

ACT RANGES – SELECTED COLLEGES*



College	25 th Percentile	75 th Percentile
MIT	34	35
Rice	33	35
Princeton	32	35
Bowdoin	33	34
Vassar	31	34
USD	25	30

*Based on class of 2022

SAT RANGES – SELECTED COLLEGES*



College	25 th Percentile	75 th Percentile
MIT	1500	1570
Rice	1460	1550
Princeton	1430	1560
Bowdoin	1410	1540
Vassar	1390	1540
USD	1200	1350

*Based on class of 2022

SAT/ACT SCORES – OFFICIAL CONCORDANCE



ACT score	SAT range
35	1530-1560
34	1490-1520
33	1450-1480
32	1420-1440
31	1390-1410
30	1360-1380
28	1300-1320
26	1230-1250

SAT/ACT ACCEPTANCE OUTSIDE US



Many international universities outside of the US accept the SAT/ACT as part of a student's application, but will typically ask for minimum scores:

- **Bocconi University**, Milan: SAT approx. 1300+ for undergrad entry and 1400+ for World Bachelor of Business
- **IE University**, Spain: min SAT 1200, mid-range 1270-1460. Min ACT 24
- **Jacobs University**, Bremen also accepts the SAT and ACT
- Most British universities have a minimum SAT score eg 1300+ at University of Sussex; SAT 1470+ or ACT 32+ at Oxford
- Korean, Japanese, and Canadian Universities all accept SAT grades

COMPUTER BASED TESTING – FEATURES/BENEFITS



- ACT has been computer-based from September 2018 – mostly at PSI-affiliated test centres
- Test can normally be taken on one of four sessions: **Friday am/pm**, or **Saturday am/pm**
- Laminated paper is available for students to make notes
- Scores available within 48 hours
- Coverage across the UK is better than before
- Testing accommodations available: usually paper-based in school

COMPUTER BASED TESTING – CHALLENGES



- Capacity (especially in London and the South-East) continues to be an issue for students
- Several centres have had issues with cancellations (Liverpool, Canterbury, London in the Autumn Term)
- Online registration system is unwieldy and it is difficult to access information on test centres (e.g. addresses) before registration
- Limited capacity to deliver special accommodations at test centres

SAT VS ACT – THE VERDICT



- College Board took a calculated risk in 2016 and it paid off
- SAT is a better test of skills students need at college
- Cancellations and capacity continues to be issues for both SAT and ACT; test integrity is still concern for SAT
- ACT still edges SAT in terms of continuity of format and test dates, and CBT offers flexibility and speed (e.g. October test for ED)
- We strongly recommend students requiring accommodations in ACT to a **paper-based** test in school, not at a test centre
- Where possible it's better for students to take test based on aptitude
- Schools should consider parallel (separate) SAT/ACT courses

SAT & ACT INTL. TEST DATES 2019-20



	2019			2020		
Month	ACT	SAT	Subject Tests	ACT	SAT	Subject Tests
February	X			X		
March		X			X	
April	X			X		
May		X	X		X	X
June	X		X	X		X
July	X			X		
August		(US only)	(US only)		X	X
September	X			X		
October	X	X	X	X	X	X
November			X			
December	X	X	X	X	X	X

TESTING IN LONDON AREA



ACT:

Search “LONDON”:

Intech Centre (British Council), Essex Road, Islington, N1 3PD

Computer Learning Centre, 65 Kingley Road, Hounslow,
TW3 1QB

Iranian Association, 222 King Street, Hammersmith, W6 0RA

Search “London”:

M2M Exams Co, Ltd, Paxton House, 30 Artillery Lane,
Bishopsgate, E1 7LS

Search “Croydon”:

PSI, Grosvenor House, 8th Floor, 125 High Street, Croydon,
CR0 9XP

Search “Ilford”:

PSI, 2 Caxton Place (off Roden Street), 2nd Floor, Ilford, IG1 2AH

SAT:

Southbank International School, Marylebone

International School of London, Ealing

University College School, Hampstead

ACS Cobham, Hillingdon and Egham

Wellington College, Berks

RECOMMENDED YEAR 12 TESTING JOURNEY 2019-20



	ACT	Subject Tests	SAT	Subject Tests
Nov 2019		(language)		(language)
Dec 2019	1 st		1 st	
March 2020			2 nd	
April 2020	2 nd			
May 2020		1 st	3 rd	
June 2020				1 st
July 2020	3 rd			
August 2020		2 nd		2 nd
Sept 2020				
Oct 2020	final for ED		final for ED	3 rd
Nov 2020		final for ED		final for ED
Dec 2020	final for RD	final for RD	final for RD	final for RD

TRENDS



- SAT/ACT are being accepted by more universities worldwide
 - Unconditional offers at some UK universities
- Subject Tests also considered worldwide
 - e.g. Canadian universities, particularly for Engineering, and British universities
- College Board may switch to online format within a few years
- College Board introducing August 2020 date internationally
- Standardised testing is here to stay – it's still the best way for universities to compare students' academic attainment with their peers

OUR SERVICES



- SAT-ACT Online Diagnostic test offered as service to schools
- Parallel (separate) SAT-ACT courses
- Essay workshops for Lower Sixth in summer term
- Discounted intensive course rates
- CPD through conferences, training, and masterclasses
 - Next event 23rd September Teacher training followed by panel event
- Links to specialists in different areas including sports scholarship advisors and international college counsellor
- Individual test preparation and essay advice services for students

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