



Navigating the Challenges of Hiring In-Country Representatives in South Asia



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NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF HIRING IN-COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES IN SOUTH ASIA

A Retired Admission Officer's Perspective

By
Rob Yelnosky
Former Vice President for Enrollment
Juniata College



Rob Yelnosky

As global competition for top-tier international students intensifies, many U.S. colleges and universities are increasingly turning to in-country representatives for a strategic advantage. South Asia, with its burgeoning youth population and rising educational aspirations, emerges as a promising region. Employing in-country representatives brings significant benefits, including enhanced cultural understanding and local expertise. These representatives can tailor recruitment strategies to resonate with the cultural nuances of South Asian students, fostering trust and building meaningful connections. Additionally, local representatives enhance brand visibility, leverage existing networks, and potentially reduce travel costs for international admissions officers.

However, while this approach offers significant benefits, it also presents notable challenges that can impact recruitment quality and institutional reputation. This is where Inkarnation steps in. Founded in 2020, Inkarnation offers a specialized solution tailored for higher education institutions seeking to establish a robust presence in South Asia. According to Devesh Lathi, CEO of Inkarnation, "Our local representatives can effectively tailor recruitment strategies to resonate with the cultural nuances of South Asian students, fostering trust and building meaningful connections."

Key Considerations and Challenges

1. Cultural Misalignment and Brand Dilution

One concern is potential cultural misalignment, which could lead to inconsistent messaging and a diluted brand identity, undermining institutional image cohesion. A school counselor from New Delhi mentioned, "We've seen instances where representatives, unfamiliar with the university's core values, struggle to communicate effectively, leading to confusion among prospective students." To combat this issue, Inkarnation ensures that their admission representatives receive comprehensive training directly from the institutions they represent. Mandhana emphasizes, "At Inkarnation, we provide thorough training to our representatives to ensure they fully understand and embody the university's core values and mission, fostering strong brand awareness and trust."

2. Quality Control and Recruitment Standards

In-country representatives may not always receive the same level of training as on-campus staff, impacting their ability to accurately represent the institution. Overselling or providing misleading information can lead to student dissatisfaction and disengagement upon arrival. A mother from Nagpur shared, "We were promised certain on-campus facilities and programs that didn't exist, which left my son disheartened." Additionally, focusing solely on increasing applicant numbers might compromise academic standards, challenging diversity goals and recruitment integrity. Mandhana points out, "Our approach focuses on strategic outreach, ethical practices, and deep local knowledge to deliver high-quality recruitment outcomes, ensuring that all promises made are fulfilled."

3. Weaker Campus Connect

Representatives not based on campus may struggle to stay updated with the latest developments and nuances of campus life, weakening their connection with the institution. This can lead to misunderstandings and delays in communication due to time zone differences and varying communication styles. Common feedback includes sentiments like "I don't know who to connect with on campus" or "I don't know the latest on campus developments." Inkarnation addresses this by facilitating regular campus visits for their representatives, allowing them to immerse themselves in the campus culture and stay updated with the latest developments. Additionally, Inkarnation conducts regular information exchange sessions between the on-campus team and their in-country representatives to ensure seamless communication and up-to-date knowledge.

4. Operational Challenges and Turnover Issues

Time zone differences and communication gaps can hinder effective coordination between the institution and in-country representatives, while high turnover rates disrupt continuity in recruitment efforts. A student from Bangalore shared, "It took a long time to get responses, which made the process stressful." Inkarnation mitigates these challenges by maintaining a robust support system that ensures timely communication and coordination. Their representatives are dedicated professionals who are committed to building meaningful relationships, reducing turnover rates, and ensuring consistent recruitment efforts.

5. Legal and Ethical Risks

Concerns have been raised about universities treating representatives merely as call centers, potentially damaging institutional reputation and relationships with stakeholders. An independent counselor from New Delhi expressed, "Many universities treat their in-country representatives like call centers, continuously phoning high school counselors and independent counselors as if selling credit cards. This approach can tarnish the university's image and alienate key stakeholders." Adhering to legal compliance and ethical recruitment practices is essential to mitigate such risks. At Inkarnation, the representatives have a clear mandate for engaging in long-term relationships with counselors and IECs. Their representatives receive comprehensive training on ethical recruitment practices, ensuring they adhere to the highest standards of professionalism and integrity.

Conclusion

While the strategic benefits of hiring in-country representatives in South Asia are evident, institutions must effectively navigate challenges to safeguard their brand equity and recruitment standards. Inkarnation offers a viable solution by leveraging local expertise, enhancing recruitment quality, and ultimately achieving successful student outcomes in South Asia. Mandhana emphasizes, "Our approach at Inkarnation focuses on strategic outreach, ethical practices, and deep local knowledge to deliver high-quality recruitment outcomes. By addressing these considerations proactively, colleges and universities can optimize their international recruitment strategies and establish enduring relationships within the region." With Inkarnation's support, institutions can confidently navigate the complexities of international recruitment and build a strong presence in South Asia.



Your Regional Admission Office In South Asia

Inkarnation operates the in country offices for its educational partners globally. With five years of experience and an unparalleled distribution network across high school, IECs, and other educational organizations, we provide strategic support to our partners in enhancing outreach, managing application reading, and ensuring positive enrolment management. Our personal approach and commitment to excellence ensures a hassle-free experience for our partners.



Contact Us

ESSENTIAL SKILLS TO LEARN BEFORE STARTING YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT

The Secret Steps to Crafting a Compelling and Personalized 'Why Us' Essay

By
Jin Yun Chow
Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer
Polygence



Jin Yun Chow

A big benefit of doing a research project is being able to learn technical skills as you go along. But at Polygence, we've helped over 4000 students complete research projects in all kinds of fields and we've noticed that knowing skills before you start your project can help you go even deeper into your analysis. In this article, we'll share essential skills to learn and resources for how best to learn these skills.

Top Skills to Learn Before Doing Research

1. Microsoft Excel

Excel is a spreadsheet software used for data organization, analysis, and visualization. Finance projects specifically involve a lot of accounting and financial data. Excel spreadsheets can help you organize that financial data to understand profits and how a company is growing over time. This YouTube playlist from Kenji Explains gives great Excel tutorials specifically for finance and business applications. It is useful for all research project topics!

2. AutoCAD

AutoCAD is a software used to create precise 2D and 3D drawings and models AutoCAD offers a great solution to visualize your designs and build them up over time. The AutoCAD website itself also offers an excellent quick start guide for beginners. It is useful for engineering design projects, and architecture projects.

3. ChatGPT

As an artificial intelligence chatbot, ChatGPT is great for research and creating research paper outlines as long as you're not using ChatGPT to generate full essays for you. If you'd like to learn more about using ChatGPT for research, check out our article Leveraging ChatGPT to Elevate Your High School Research Paper. If you want to see how professionals use ChatGPT in their work, we highly recommend Every's channel and their videos! It is useful for any research project!

4. Python

Python is a coding language known for its readability and versatility. You can use Python for data analysis and visualization, building machine learning models and algorithms, and creating websites and apps. It is a great place to start is the Introduction to Computer Science course on Khan Academy. It is useful for data analysis projects, coding projects, video game design, app development. Check out our blog article on Polygence alumni Arul and how he used Python code to calculate the brightness of nearby galaxies!

5. Zotero

A [free, open-source tool](#) that helps you organize, cite, and annotate sources for your research. The technical details of [citations](#) can often be confusing and it can be very useful to have a software to help you. Zotero provides a [quickstart guide](#) on their own website. It is useful for any research paper.

6. SPSS and R

[SPSS](#) and [R](#) are used for data management, statistical analysis, and survey analysis. Both SPSS and R are great tools for cleaning up data, performing basic statistics, and also advanced statistical procedures such as factor analysis and cluster analysis. YouTube offers [tutorials for learning SPSS](#), and Codecademy also has [free courses on learning R](#). It is useful for social science research, government and education research, business projects, and STEM projects.

7. PowerPoint

[PowerPoint](#) allows you to make slide presentations and pitch decks. When you've completed your research project it's important to then [showcase your findings](#). A PowerPoint presentation is a common way to showcase your work and make your research come to life. This YouTube [video by Kevin Stratvert](#) should be a great place to start for most beginners. It is useful for any kind of research project!

8. Google Scholar

A [web search engine](#) where you can search a database of scholarly literature. Google Scholar is a great tool for students who are in the preliminary phase of their research project and are looking for interesting articles or papers to help guide or support their arguments. [Sam Houston State University](#) provides a simple guide to using Google Scholar. It is useful for all research projects.

9. Tableau

[Tableau](#) is a data visualization software that allows you to turn data into charts and dashboards. Tableau allows for creative data visualizations and can also allow you to find trends and insights in your data. YouTube creator sqlbelle has a great [playlist for learning Tableau](#) with over 100 videos! It is useful for any kind of research project!

Conclusion

Doing a Polygence project can also help you to gain and build a lot of these skills while also helping you formulate a compelling research project that you'll be proud of. Further, you won't have to tackle this project alone! Polygence has [3000+ PhD/expert mentors](#) in all kinds of fields.



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PURDUE UNIVERSITY: AN NM SQUAD REVIEW

10 Features That Define Purdue University

By
Ravisha Maheshwari
Research Associate
NM Squad



**Ravisha
Maheshwari**

Purdue University, located in West Lafayette, Indiana, is a public research and land-grant institution. In 2023, it received 72,800 applications, admitted 36,602, and enrolled 9,285 students. Engineering applicants at the West Lafayette campus select "first-year engineering" as their primary choice, while Indianapolis campus applicants must apply directly to their major. Purdue's newest major is Artificial Intelligence, available in both the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Science. The university is known for its organized academic structure and diverse, intellectually driven community, fostering significant cultural exchange among its large student body.

1. Unique Travel Logistics

Traveling to Purdue can be lengthy. The nearest major airport is Chicago O'Hare International Airport and flights through Chicago are more affordable. A former student noted that travel time includes 1-2 hours at the airport and about 3 hours on the bus, totaling 8-9 hours. Purdue plans to introduce a direct flight from Chicago, but trips from India usually involve a one-stop flight and a shuttle to Purdue.

2. Dual Campus Experience

Purdue offers distinct experiences at its West Lafayette and Indianapolis campuses. The campus is a college town. West Lafayette is not developed much and is not a very safe area overall, so individuals don't prefer to go across the river at night. There is not much to do except for a few hangout spots around. Campus culture and student experiences vary between the two locations. Indianapolis provides an urban setting integrated with a larger city, offering students diverse internships and job prospects. This urban environment, especially advantageous for fields like biomedical engineering, benefits from proximity to medical institutions.

3. High Indian Enrollment

Every year, around 150 Indians enroll at Purdue. It currently hosts 2,782 Indian students, including 876 undergraduates. Indian students make up 21.9% of the international student body. They play an active role in campus activities, with dozens of student organizations available for them to join.

4. Minimal Financial Aid for Internationals

Because of citizenship requirements, international students frequently do not qualify for many scholarships or grants. They are mostly reserved for US citizens. Even if scholarships are awarded to international students, they cover a minimal amount. Purdue has offered merit-based scholarships to students from India, through the Indian Emerging Scholar fund. It has a no-aid policy for need-based aid.

5. Top-Ranked Agricultural Program

Purdue's Agricultural and Biological Engineering program holds the prestigious rank of number one globally, underscoring its exceptional quality and the opportunities it presents for students. Additionally, the university emphasizes natural resources and environmental sciences across its College of Agriculture and the College of Science, fostering interdisciplinary learning experiences for students interested in these vital areas.

6. STEM-Focused Business School

Purdue's Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr. School of Business requires rigorous math prerequisites, such as Calculus 1 and 2. Notably, its STEM-focused programs, including business analytics and information management, economics, integrated business and engineering, and supply chain and operations management, are gaining popularity, particularly for its integration of data science into business decision-making.

7. World's Largest Drum

Purdue is home to what they refer to as the "World's Largest Drum." The Purdue Big Bass Drum is a percussion instrument played by the All-American Marching Band of Purdue University. The drum itself weighs 315 pounds, while its carriage weighs 250 pounds, making the total weight 565 pounds.

8. Breakfast Club Tradition

On game days, especially for big morning football games, students participate in the "Breakfast Club" tradition. They dress in Purdue merchandise and celebrate early in the morning, creating a festive and spirited atmosphere on campus.

9. Purdue's SafeWalk Program

Purdue offers a SafeWalk Program, providing 24/7 escorts for students, faculty, and staff needing assistance to and from campus buildings. This service ensures safety, especially after dark, through the Purdue Student Security Patrol, highlighting the university's commitment to campus safety.

10. Diverse Top Employers

Purdue students are recruited by a wide range of top employers, including companies like ALDI, American Structurepoint, Arconic, Belden, and Cleveland-Cliffs Inc. The strong alumni network also plays a crucial role in providing career guidance and connections.

LEAD ONSM TO A BRIGHT FUTURE.



Ranked among the nation's top universities by *U.S. News & World Report*, Texas Christian University is a powerful academic community made up of passionate and ethical leaders, all striving to become a force for the greater good.

With a choice of rigorous academic programs in 115 undergraduate areas of study, TCU offers the resources and opportunities of a major university and the intimacy and feel of a small college. Horned Frogs are equipped and empowered to leave a positive imprint on the world, each in his or her own way. TCU enlivens the soul.

27 average class size

13:1 student-to-faculty ratio

86% faculty hold a PhD or terminal degree

99% faculty teach undergraduate classes

9,445 undergraduate students

10,918 student population



LOCATION

Fort Worth, Texas (pop. 874,000), is part of the thriving Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area; the nation's fourth largest. The urban city is popular, due in part to its welcoming spirit and moderate climate. DFW International Airport is close by, and Dallas is less than an hour's drive away.

INDEPENDENT

Founded in 1873, TCU is historically related to, but not governed by, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a Protestant denomination that values social justice and inclusiveness. All values and viewpoints are welcome with more than 60 faith traditions and denominations represented on campus.

FACILITIES

At TCU, you'll discover sparkling new facilities for most academic areas, along with a spacious recreation center and completely renovated sports venues. Similarly, all residence halls are either new or recently renovated. Most upper-class dorms feature suite-style living with full-size beds in private bedrooms, bathrooms and living areas. Wifi covers the entire campus.

The University Union offers multiple food stations and an all-you-can-eat meal plan, so going hungry is not an option. Vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options are available.

When it's time to hit the books, you'll find millions of resources at the campus library (open 24 hours a day during the school week), along with a huge computer lab, coffee shop and comfy chairs.

CAMPUS

Our 291 beautifully-landscaped, tree-lined acres are nestled in a residential neighborhood near parks, museums and shops, and just a few minutes from downtown Fort Worth.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS

The Wall Street Journal ranks TCU #3 in the nation for student engagement. More than 200 student groups including community service, leadership development, religious clubs, ROTC, national sororities and fraternities, intramural sports, student media, Phi Beta Kappa and the Honors College keep students busy outside of classes. NCAA Division I athletics competing in the Big 12 Conference make for plenty of school spirit and a contagious sense of pride.

APPLYING TO TCU

While the statistics show that TCU students are far from ordinary, admission to TCU is not a numbers game. We consider the whole picture - grades and scores, yes, but you too: your goals, your potential, your ability to communicate, your leadership and work experience. To apply to TCU, visit admissions.tcu.edu/apply.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

TCU offers merit scholarships to high academic achievers. For need-based financial aid consideration, submit the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE (cssprofile.org). U.S. citizens and permanent residents must also submit the FAFSA (fafsa.gov).

MISSION: To educate individuals to think and act as ethical leaders and responsible citizens in the global community

TCU

DEADLINES

Freshman Deadlines

November 1	Early Action, non-binding decision by January 1
November 1	Early Decision, binding decision by January 1; Enrollment deposit required by January 15
October 1	Application deadline for spring semester
February 1	Regular Decision, non-binding decision by April 1

Transfer Deadlines

November 1	Spring Final Deadline
February 1	Fall Early Action Deadline
June 1	Fall Final Deadline



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AREAS OF STUDY

Actuarial Science
African American And Africana Studies*
Anthropology
Applied Geoscience
Architectural Lighting Design*
Art Education
Art History
Arts Administration*
Arts Leadership & Entrepreneurship*
Asian Studies*
Astronomy
Biochemistry
Biology
Biophysics
British & Colonial/Post-Colonial Studies*
Business
• Accounting#
• Business Information Systems#
• Entrepreneurship and Innovation#
• Finance#
• Finance/Real Estate#
• Management and Leadership#
• Marketing#
• Supply and Value Chain Management#
Chemistry
Child Development
Chinese*
Cinema & Media Studies
Classical Studies*
Combined Science
Communication Studies
Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies
Computer Information Technology
Computer Science
Creative Writing*
Criminal Justice
Cultural Awareness in Health and Healthcare*
Dance
Data Science*
Design of The Built Environment*
Digital Culture and Data Analytics*
Economics
Education
• Accelerated Masters Program
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• Early Childhood Education
• Middle School Education
• Secondary Education
Educational Studies*
Energy Management and Technology*
Engineering
• Electrical
• Mechanical
English
Environmental Science
Fashion Merchandising
Film/Television/Digital Media
Food Management
French
General Business*
Geography
Geology
German
Graphic Design
Habilitation of the Deaf
And Hard of Hearing
Health & Fitness
Health Communication & Media*
Healthy Aging*
History
Human-Animal Relationships*
Interdisciplinary Inquiry
Interior Design
International Economics
Italian*
Jewish Studies*
Journalism
Latin American Studies
Mathematics
Middle East Studies*
Movement Science
Music
• Brass
• Church Music
• Music Education
• Organ
• Percussion
• Piano
• Strings
• Theory/Composition
• Voice
• Woodwinds
Neuroscience
News & Media Studies
Nursing
Nutrition
Philosophy
Physical Education
Physics
Political Science
Political Science - International Relations
Pre-Health Professions Track
• Pre-Dentistry
• Pre-Medicine
• Pre-Optometry
• Pre-Physician Assistant
• Pre-Pharmacy
• Pre-Podiatry
• Pre-Veterinary
Pre-Law Track
Pre-Major Track
Psychology
Ranch Management
Religion
Reserve Officers' Training Corps
(U.S. Citizens & Residents)
• Aerospace Studies (Air Force)
• Military Science (Army)
Social Work
Sociology
Spanish and Hispanic Studies
Spanish for Business Professions*
Spanish for the Health Professions*
Speech-Language Pathology
Sports Broadcasting
Strategic Communication
Strength & Conditioning
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IEC'S INVADE LONDON!

AIIEC's London Visit in July 2024

By
Katherine Ernst Mehta
Founder
Edvanta Consulting



**Katherine Ernst
Mehta**

In late July, twelve members of AIIEC came together for a 7 day tour of London universities. While some were familiar with the city, for a few of us—including myself—it was a first-time experience.

We kicked off the trip with a lovely welcome dinner organized by our friends at Lumiere. The next morning, we started early with a visit to UCL, where Arvind Vepa gave us an excellent tour filled with interesting details about the university's history, notable alumni like Coldplay's Chris Martin and director Christopher Nolan, and admissions trends. The tour ended with a highlight: a sneak peek into the university's fantastic zoological specimens.

Following our UCL visit, we had lunch and an information session with InvestIn, an organization that offers high school students internship experiences. After a quick group catch-up, we had the evening free shop, grab dinner and explore the city.

The rest of the week followed a similar pattern. On Tuesday, we took the train out to Cambridge, where we learned about boarding school and prep school options in the UK with the Dukes Education group, and visited a few of their schools. Afterwards, we had a guided tour of Robinson College, the newest of Cambridge's colleges, and then toured the city (and, of course, stopped for lots of photo ops!)

After soaking in Cambridge's historic charm, the next day we had a very different experience as we visited Central Saint Martins in the morning, followed by lunch and a visit to Northeastern London. I personally loved touring Central Saint Martins' design labs and facilities, and seeing students' work in progress. Afterwards, hearing professors, students and admissions officers and Northeastern speak about their emerging tech-focused majors, global expansion, and thesis projects at the intersection of AI, ethics, and law enforcement felt like a glimpse into the future of global, interdisciplinary education. Through these interactions and site visits, I came away feeling much better equipped to speak with students and parents about the universities and respective student experience.

On Thursday, we had the pleasure of meeting David Hawkins (a bit of a celebrity in the college counselling world), who gave us a fascinating overview of trends shaping UK and international admissions. After a brief tour of SP Jain's sleek London campus (including their 360-degree viewing room), we headed to Bayes where we met with admissions officers for a tour, and learned more about their new programs and student life.

Friday's visit to Imperial College London started with an informal tour (thanks to Google Maps) followed by an official student tour where we learned more about majors, research and incredible industry partnerships with companies like Bayer, Dyson, Nestle, and Jaguar Land Rover. This was followed by a presentation with admissions officers, which was spot-on in terms of the attention to detail and specialized information they included relevant to Indian IECs. I think I can speak for all of us when I say that we were blown away by the kinds of projects students were working on in Imperial's Enterprise Lab.

On our final day, Saturday, some of the group visited Oxford, while the rest of us prepared to fly back to our respective cities.

The trip left me with a fresh perspective and a deeper understanding of the UK university experience. What I valued most, however, was the sense of collaboration and camaraderie among my fellow IECs. During and after all of the college visits, inevitably someone would comment, "Man, I wish I could go back to college." But as we congregated in someone's hotel room for an evening, explored London's nightlife together, and met up with familiar faces the next morning at breakfast, I couldn't help but recall some of the best parts of my own college experience.

I think many of us become IECs because we loved college - the continuous learning, the excitement of new beginnings, and the joy of meeting new people. With AIIEC, I don't long for my college years; I've found a way to bring the best parts back into my life.

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MAJOR SHIFTS IN STANDARDIZED TESTING

How ACT and AP Exams Are Adapting to Modern Needs

By
Srinjay Ray
Director
Tutela Education Pvt Ltd.



Srinjay Ray

Introduction

The standardized testing domain is undergoing significant changes, with both the ACT and Advanced Placement (AP) exams recently having implemented crucial updates. These changes reflect the evolving needs of students and educators, aiming to make these tests more accessible, less stressful, and better aligned with modern educational goals.

The Changing Landscape of Standardized Testing

The SAT has always been a strong competitor to the ACT. The SAT has strengthened its position against the ACT with smart updates like shortening the test and streamlining its format, making it more appealing to students. As a result, the ACT has seen a 20% decline in test-takers since its 2012 peak, raising concerns about its future. Factors such as the ACT's length, difficulty, and challenging science section have made it less attractive. Similarly, the College Board's AP exams are grappling with challenges around maintaining the integrity and security of paper-based tests in an increasingly digital world.

ACT Exam Updates: A Response to Declining Popularity

The ACT organization has taken a bold step to regain its popularity by introducing several changes starting in 2025. Here is a comparison of the old ACT exam format with the new ACT Exam format, covering up all the major changes that have been implemented recently.

Features	Old ACT Format	New ACT Format
Test Length	Upto 3 hours	Upto 2 hours
Number of questions	215 questions (English, math, reading and science)	131 questions from English, math, and reading, with the science section being optional.

Features	Old ACT Format	New ACT Format
Sections	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English 2. Math 3. Reading 4. Science 5. Essay Writing (Optional) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. English 2. Math 3. Reading 4. Science(Optional) 5. Essay Writing(Optional)
Science Section	Mandatory	Optional
Scoring	Composite score: 36	Composite score: 36
Reading Passages	Lengthy, varied topics	Shorter passages, potentially easier topics
Focus Area	Content-heavy with emphasis on problem-solving	Increased focus on critical thinking and reasoning
Time per question	Rigid time constraints across all sections	Potentially more time per question due to the reduced number of questions

Shorter Test Length and Fewer Questions

The ACT will now be an hour shorter, from nearly three hours to around two. This adjustment is crucial, as research revealed that 70% of students found the ACT's length to be one of the most challenging aspects of the test. The Reading and English sections will have 44 fewer questions, i.e., 131 questions will be there in total from the Reading, Math, and English sections combined. The reading passages will be shorter. This should make the test less intimidating and more manageable. The Composite score will now be the average of the English, Reading, and Math sections.

Optional Science Section

Around 35% of students found the ACT's science section the most anxiety-inducing, mainly due to the scientific terminologies, even though it focused on logical interpretation. By making this section optional, the ACT addresses student concerns and allows them to focus on their strengths. This change aims to attract students who might have otherwise chosen the SAT, which lacks a dedicated science section.

Now, students can choose any one of the following formats:

- ACT Core (English, Reading, Math)
- ACT Core plus Science
- ACT Core plus Writing
- ACT Core plus Science and Writing

Digital and Pen-and-Paper Testing Options

While the SAT has moved online entirely, the ACT will continue to offer both digital and traditional pen-and-paper formats for the students taking the test in the U.S.A., with the digital option becoming available from Spring 2025. For Indian and other international students, the ACT test is CBT (Computer-based testing).

AP Exams Go Digital: Enhancing Security and Accessibility

The College Board administers AP exams and is also undergoing a digital transformation. Starting in May 2025, a total number of 28 AP exams will transition entirely to a digital format, delivered through the Bluebook testing application. This move is primarily driven by the need to enhance exam security and address the growing problem of cheating.

Combating Misconduct with Digital Exams

The integrity of test-taking has been a significant concern for the College Board. Paper-based testing has proven vulnerable, with exam papers shipped weeks in advance to various locations, increasing the risk of unauthorized access and academic dishonesty. The shift to digital exams aims to mitigate these risks by ensuring that test materials are secure and accessible only during the exam period. This change is expected to preserve the integrity of the AP exams, ensuring that all students are evaluated on a level playing field.

Improved Accessibility and User Experience

The AP Exams will now be conducted on the Bluebook platform, which has already demonstrated consistency and reliability with the SAT. This platform supports exams on both personal and school-issued devices, potentially increasing participation. According to a College Board survey, 60% of students prefer digital testing on their own devices. Bluebook's features, including focus-enhancing tools and efficient writing and editing capabilities, aim to reduce test-day stress and improve the overall exam experience.

Hybrid Digital Exams for STEM Subjects

Recognizing the unique needs of certain subjects, the College Board is implementing a hybrid model for STEM-related exams like AP Biology and AP Calculus. Students will view questions digitally but answer free-response questions on paper, accommodating the need for graphing and symbolic notation. This approach strikes a balance between modernizing the exam process and maintaining the integrity of subjects that require traditional methods of problem-solving.

Conclusion: A Step Towards the Future

The updates to the ACT and AP exams represent a significant shift in the standardized testing landscape. The ACT Core is a great option for students who are stronger in English than in Math. Those planning to pursue non-STEM undergraduate courses might prefer taking the ACT Core, while students aiming for STEM programs

should consider the ACT Core Plus Science. However, the choice ultimately depends on the specific requirements set by the colleges they're applying to. As we move forward, these updates will likely shape the future of college admissions, ensuring that standardized tests remain relevant, fair, and accessible for all students.

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3 CONSIDERATIONS WHEN APPLYING EARLY DECISION TO A SCHOOL IN THE UNITED STATES

Early Decision (ED) Is a Unique Opportunity: Here's What to Know

By
Adi Ram
Founder
Admyssion



Adi Ram

Introduction

One of the unique aspects of applying to a university in the United States is the “Early Application” aspect of the process. Early Decision (ED), Early Action (EA), and Regular Decision (RD) application cycles all operate in different timelines and offer different probabilities of admission for students. Understanding the differences between these options and their implications on your chances of getting in are critical for every student who hopes to study in the USA.

Understanding ED, EA, and RD

Early Decision (ED) is a binding application process where students commit to attending the college if accepted. Typically, applicants submit their applications in November and receive decisions by mid-December. If accepted, students must withdraw all other college applications. ED cycles typically have the highest acceptance rate, although that data is skewed by the presence of legacy and highly qualified applicants.

Early Action (EA), on the other hand, is a non-binding process that allows students to apply early and receive decisions early without the obligation to attend. Students usually apply in November and hear back by mid-December or January. This flexibility enables them to apply to other colleges and compare financial aid offers before making a final decision. EA cycle admission rates are comparable to those of ED schools.

Regular Decision (RD) is the standard application process where students apply by a set deadline, typically in January, and receive decisions in March or April. Unlike Early Decision and Early Action, Regular Decision offers the most flexibility, allowing students to apply to multiple colleges and compare offers before making a decision. RD cycles typically have the lowest acceptance rates but also the weakest applicant pools, giving many students a shot at admission.

How Should Students Approach These Application Cycles?

Consideration 1: Assess Your Commitment and Confidence Level

The first major step is to assess your commitment and confidence level in your top-choice school. ED is a binding agreement, meaning if you're accepted, you must attend that school and withdraw all other applications. Therefore, it's crucial to be absolutely certain that this school is your top choice and that you're comfortable committing to it without comparing other offers. If you have a clear first choice and are confident that this institution is the best fit for you academically, socially, and financially, ED might be the right option. Applying ED is also seen as the ultimate form of demonstrated interest.

Consideration 2: Evaluate Your Application Readiness

ED and EA deadlines are typically in November, much earlier than the RD deadlines in January. This means you need to have your application materials, including your personal statement, recommendation letters, and standardized test scores, ready well in advance. If you feel that your application could benefit from additional time to strengthen your test scores or rec letters, then applying in the RD cycle could give you that extra time.

Consideration 3: Work with Your Parents to Evaluate Cost

Work closely with your parents to evaluate the cost of attending each institution and how it fits into your family's financial plan. While ED can boost your chances of acceptance, it limits your ability to compare offers from different schools, as you're committed to attending if accepted. This can be a significant drawback if you need to consider different cost options to make college affordable. Discussing these factors with your parents can help ensure that you make a financially sound decision.

Final Thoughts

The college application process is a significant milestone in a student's academic journey. Whether you choose to apply early through ED or EA or wait for RD, it's important to approach the process with a well-thought-out strategy and the right support. The ED/EA cycle is critical to many American universities, and students who hope to study in the US need to learn how to navigate this process properly.

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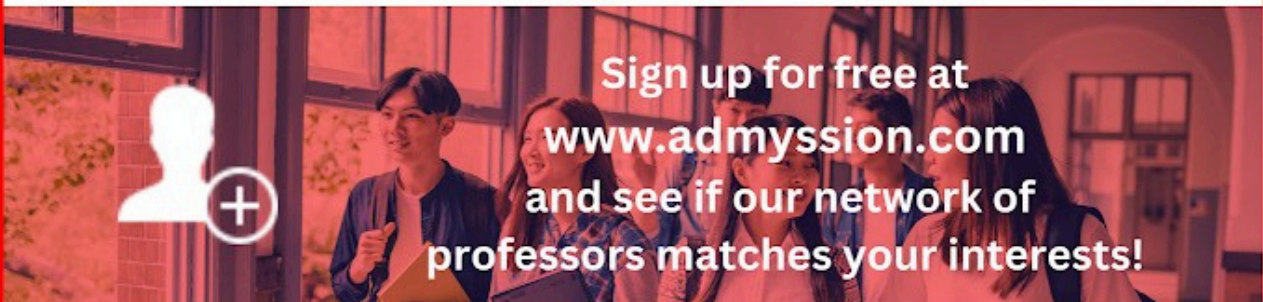


3 Demonstrate Interest

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STUDENTS GET WORK EXPERIENCE WHILE STUDYING AT YORK UNIVERSITY IN TORONTO, CANADA

From Co-ops and Internships to On-campus Jobs, Students Are Building Their Resumé and Gaining Valuable Experience that'll Prepare Them for Their Future.

By
Jacky Au Duong
Director, Strategic Communications
York University



Jacky Au
Duong

With nearly 10,000 international students from 175+ countries, York University in Toronto, Canada, is rapidly climbing in rankings in the Higher Education arena. With more than 200 academic degree program options and three unique campuses, York offers a diverse student experience – helping students create successful, rewarding futures and make a global impact.

At York University, there are many ways that students can prepare for the professional world while studying. Getting work experience on campus offers unique perspectives, setting students apart from others when applying for jobs.

Resumé Building with Co-op, Internships, and Placements

Students may be curious about what co-ops, internships, and placements are, and what the difference between them is. In the York University context, these are distinguished as:

- **Co-op:** Combines in-class learning with hands-on, paid work experience in a student's related field of study.
- **Internships:** Part-time and full-time internships help students gain a deeper understanding of their program and build their professional networks.
- **Placements:** Allows students to learn in a supervised, hands-on environment to gain practical experience with professionals in their field.

There are many exciting opportunities to help students find their specialty in their chosen field. When they are considering York for their studies, they will be able to explore what is available in their program of interest and get inspired by the possibilities.

The process of applying for co-ops, internships, and placements can be done directly through the student's program or Faculty.

Finding a Job on Campus

At York, students have the opportunity to join the Work/Study program and discover a variety of paid positions. Working on campus will help build transferable skills, like leadership and communication, while making meaningful connections with colleagues. There are three types of paid opportunities available at York:

1. **General Work/Study:** On-the-job training, guidance, and mentorship from supervisors while having the chance to explore several roles.
2. **Leadership, Engagement, and Ambassadorship Program (LEAP):** Engage in jobs within Faculties, colleges, programs, or York at large to make an impact.
3. **Research at York (RAY):** Take part in projects with faculty members and fellow students while supporting research on campus.

Working on York's campuses can help students get involved in the University community, feel more connected to campus, and create lifelong memories.

"Having a part-time job on campus through the work-study program at Glendon has helped me improve my communication skills through multiple discussions with future students and parents," **says Nathalie Morcos, a third-year political science student and student ambassador on the Glendon Campus.** "I am fortunate enough to work with an amazing team who not only help me manage my workload to be able to focus on my studies but has also become my second family, right here at Glendon."

Applying for Positions

After browsing what is available at York, students are encouraged to work on their **Curriculum Vitae (CV)** which highlights education, accomplishments, projects, and awards, and their **resumé and cover letter**. It's always a good idea to have these documents updated and on-hand – even before starting their York journey.

As they prepare to apply for positions as a student, York's Career Centre can support them in navigating the professional world. At the Career Centre, students can get information and examples on the difference between a resumé and a CV, writing an engaging cover letter, and more – helping them feel confident in their applications.

Preparing for the Future

At York University, student success remains a top priority both in and out of the classroom. Opportunities like Career Fairs help students meet employers who are recruiting talent in the short and long term. International partnerships with other institutions and a well-connected alumni community continue to support students with quality learning experiences. Find out more about York University here.

Learn more about York University's network of campuses and learning opportunities.



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