Test-Optional Policy

At Earlham, we take a holistic approach to our applicants, looking beyond the classroom when reviewing applications. When provided, we take into consideration leadership experience, extracurricular involvement, community service and work experience.

Earlham College adopted a test-optional policy in 2011 and no longer requires students to submit standardized test scores (either SAT or ACT) with other materials in support of their application for admission (*see below for exceptions).

For many students, standardized test results are not an optimal predictor of the ability to succeed in college. Furthermore, Earlham has always taken a holistic approach in its review of students’ applications for admission, giving consideration to academic achievement, writing ability (the essay is very important) and letters of recommendation from teachers and guidance counselors. In determining academic ability and college readiness, the College gives particular weight to a student’s performance in high school courses and the quality of their chosen college preparatory academic program. Earlham also recognizes applicants’ commitments, accomplishments and contributions beyond the classroom.

Under Earlham’s test-optional policy, applicants can submit their scores and choose to have them considered or ask that the scores not be taken into account during review for admission. Earlham accepts the best score on each section of a student’s test. Students indicate their preference for use of test results on the Earlham section of the Common Application and may elect to consult with the Earlham Admission Staff about their decision.

Test score results are also not required by Earlham for review of admitted students for merit scholarships. For reference, the middle 50% of enrolled applicants who chose to submit a standardized test score ranged between a SAT (critical reading and math) total score of 1170 to 1350 or an ACT composite score between 24 and 32.

*International students for whom English is not their first language must submit results from an English proficiency test. We accept TOEFL, IELTS, Duolingo English Test, Pearson, SAT, and ACT.