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Updated Testing Policies For Top 20 Colleges During The 2020-2021 Application Cycle



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Education

As the CEO of Command Education, I write about emotionally intelligent leadership and education.



NEW HAVEN, CT - Yale University is one of the few schools that will go "test blind" for the SAT II ...

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Six of the top 20 schools listed on Forbes' America's Top Colleges for 2019 have announced test-optional policies for students applying in the 2020-2021 admission cycle. Of those six, four are Ivy League schools: University of Pennsylvania, Dartmouth College, Columbia University, and Cornell University. The adoption of a test-optional policy is unprecedented in recent history. All four schools have stated that these are one-year policies applicable only to the 2020-2021 application cycle. Changes to the

standardized testing requirements are a direct response to the challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic, which has forced the cancellation of multiple test dates this spring.

These schools join more than 1,200 others that have adopted test-optional or test flexible policies, as reported by the National Center for Fair & Open Testing.

Test-optional does not necessarily mean test-blind. Unless schools explicitly state that they will not consider test scores, they will continue to consider submitted scores. CalTech is the only school on this list that will not consider any SAT or ACT scores in its review process. A handful of schools, including MIT and Yale, have adopted a test-blind policy for SAT Subject Tests.

Adopting test-optional policies allows more students the opportunity to apply to competitive schools. Some students have not yet had the opportunity to take standardized tests for the first time or to retake and improve their scores. On the other hand, these policies single students out. Colleges can tell whether or not students took the time to plan and prepare for university admission early in their high school careers. Most students aiming for some of the top schools in the country prepare and sit for these tests early in their high school career. Omitting test scores on a college application to a competitive school indicates a failure to prepare as early as students can.

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