

AUTOMATIC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS



Sec. 51.803. AUTOMATIC ADMISSION: ALL INSTITUTIONS. (a) Subject to Subsection (a-1), each general academic teaching institution shall admit an applicant for admission to the institution as an undergraduate student if the applicant graduated with a grade point average in the top 10 percent of the student's high school graduating class in one of the two school years preceding the academic year for which the applicant is applying for admission and:

(1) the applicant graduated from a public or private high school in this state accredited by a generally recognized accrediting organization or from a high school operated by the United States Department of Defense;

(2) the applicant:

(A) successfully completed:

(i) at a public high school, the curriculum requirements established under Section 28.025 for the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation high school program; or

(ii) at a high school to which Section 28.025 does not apply, a curriculum that is equivalent in content

and rigor to the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation high school program; or

(B) satisfied ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks on the ACT assessment applicable to the applicant or earned on the SAT assessment a score of at least 1,500 out of 2,400 or the equivalent; and

(3) if the applicant graduated from a high school operated by the United States Department of Defense, the applicant is a Texas resident under Section 54.052 or is entitled to pay tuition fees at the rate provided for Texas residents under Section 54.241(d) for the term or semester to which admitted.

(a-1) Beginning with admissions for the 2011-2012 academic year, The University of Texas at Austin is not required to offer admission to applicants who qualify for automatic admission under Subsection (a) in excess of the number required to fill 75 percent of the university's enrollment capacity designated for first-time resident undergraduate students in an academic year. If the number of applicants who qualify for automatic admission to The University of Texas at Austin under Subsection (a) for an academic year exceeds 75 percent of the university's enrollment capacity designated for first-time resident undergraduate students for that academic year, the university may elect to offer admission to those applicants as provided by this subsection and not as otherwise required by Subsection (a). If the university elects to offer admission under this subsection, the university shall offer admission to those applicants by percentile rank according to high school graduating class standing based on grade point average, beginning with the top percentile rank, until the applicants qualified under Subsection (a) have been offered admission in the number estimated in good faith by the university as sufficient to fill 75 percent of the university's enrollment capacity designated for first-time resident undergraduate students, except that the university must offer admission to all applicants with the same percentile rank. After the applicants qualified for automatic admission under Subsection (a) have been offered admission under this subsection in the number estimated in good faith as sufficient to fill 75 percent of the designated enrollment capacity described by this subsection, the university shall consider any remaining applicants qualified for automatic admission under Subsection (a) in the same manner as other applicants for admission as first-time undergraduate students in accordance with Section 51.805.

(a-2) If the number of applicants who apply to a general academic teaching institution during the current academic year for admission in the next academic year and who qualify for automatic admission to a general academic teaching institution under Subsection (a) exceeds 75 percent of the institution's enrollment capacity designated for first-time resident undergraduate students for that next academic year and the institution plans to offer admission under Subsection (a-1) during the next school year, the institution shall, in the manner prescribed by the Texas Education Agency and not later than September 15, provide to each school district, for dissemination of the information to high school junior-level students and their parents, notice of which percentile ranks of high school senior-level students who qualify for automatic admission under Subsection (a) are anticipated by the institution to be offered admission under Subsection (a-1) during the next school year.

(a-3) Notwithstanding Subsection (a-1), The University of Texas at Austin may not offer admission under that subsection for an academic year after the 2017-2018 academic year.

(a-4) If The University of Texas at Austin elects to offer admission to first-time resident undergraduate students under Subsection (a-1) for an academic year, the university must continue its practice of not considering an applicant's legacy status as a factor in the university's decisions relating to admissions for that academic year.

(a-5) A general academic teaching institution that offers admission to first-time resident undergraduate students under Subsection (a-1) shall require that a student admitted under that subsection complete a designated portion of not less than six semester credit hours of the student's coursework during evening hours or other low-demand hours as necessary to ensure the efficient use of the institution's available classrooms.

(a-6) Not later than December 31 of each academic year in which The University of Texas at Austin offers admission under Subsection (a-1), the university shall deliver a written report to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives regarding the university's progress in each of the following matters:

(1) increasing geographic diversity of the entering freshman class;

(2) counseling and outreach efforts aimed at students qualified for automatic admission under this section;

(3) recruiting Texas residents who graduate from other institutions of higher education to the university's graduate and professional degree programs;

(4) recruiting students who are members of underrepresented demographic segments of the state's population; and

(5) assessing and improving the university's regional recruitment centers.

(b) An applicant who does not satisfy the curriculum requirements prescribed by Subsection (a)(2)(A)(i) or (ii) is considered to have satisfied those requirements if the student completed the portion of the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation high school program curriculum or of the curriculum equivalent in content and rigor, as applicable, that was available to the student but was unable to complete the remainder of the curriculum solely because courses necessary to complete the remainder were unavailable to the student at the appropriate times in the student's high school career as a result of course scheduling, lack of enrollment capacity, or another cause not within the student's control.

(c) To qualify for admission under this section, an applicant must:

(1) submit an application before the expiration of any application filing deadline established by the institution; and

(2) provide a high school transcript or diploma that satisfies the requirements of Subsection (d).

(d) For purposes of Subsection (c)(2), a student's official transcript or diploma must, not later than the end of the student's junior year, indicate:

(1) whether the student has satisfied or is on schedule to satisfy the requirements of Subsection (a)(2)(A)(i) or (ii), as applicable; or

(2) if Subsection (b) applies to the student, whether the student has completed the portion of the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation high school program curriculum or of the curriculum equivalent in content and rigor, as applicable, that was available to the student.

(e) Each institution of higher education shall admit an applicant for admission to the institution as an undergraduate student if the applicant:

(1) is the child of a public servant listed in Section 615.003, Government Code, who was killed or sustained a fatal injury in the line of duty; and

(2) meets the minimum requirements, if any, established for purposes of this subsection by the governing board of the institution for high school or prior college-level grade point average and performance on standardized tests.

(f) After admitting an applicant under this section, the institution shall review the applicant's record and any other factor the institution considers appropriate to determine whether the applicant may require additional preparation for college-level work or would benefit from inclusion in a retention program. The institution may require a student so identified to enroll during the summer immediately after the student is admitted under this section to participate in appropriate enrichment courses and orientation programs. This section does not prohibit a student who is not determined to need additional preparation for college-level work from enrolling, if the student chooses, during the summer immediately after the student is admitted under this section.

(g) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board by rule shall develop and implement a program to increase and enhance the efforts of general academic teaching institutions in conducting outreach to academically high-performing high school seniors in this state who are likely to be eligible for automatic admission under Subsection (a) to provide to those students information and counseling regarding the operation of this section and other opportunities, including financial assistance, available to those students for success at public institutions of higher education in this state. Under the program, the coordinating board, after gathering information and recommendations from available sources and examining current outreach practices by institutions in this state and in other states, shall prescribe best practices guidelines and standards to be used by general academic teaching institutions in conducting the student outreach described by this subsection.

(h) An institution that admits under this section an applicant qualified for automatic admission under Subsection (a) may admit the applicant for either the fall semester of the academic year for which the applicant applies or for the summer session preceding that fall semester, as determined by the institution.

(i) If a general academic teaching institution denies admission to an applicant for an academic year, in any letter or other communication the institution provides to the applicant notifying the applicant of that denial, the institution may not reference the provisions of this section, including using a description of a provision of this section such as the top 10 percent automatic admissions law, as a reason the institution is unable to offer admission to the applicant unless the number of applicants for admission to the institution for that academic year who qualify for automatic admission under Subsection (a) is sufficient to fill 100 percent of the institution's enrollment capacity designated for first-time resident undergraduate students.

(j) A general academic teaching institution that elects to offer admission under Subsection (a-1) for an academic year may not offer admission to first-time undergraduate students who are not residents of this state for that academic year in excess of the number required to fill 10 percent of the institution's enrollment capacity designated for first-time undergraduate students for that academic year.

(k) A general academic teaching institution may not offer admission under Subsection (a-1) for an academic year after the 2017-2018 academic year if, on the date of the institution's general deadline for applications for admission of first-time undergraduate students for that academic year:

(1) a final court order applicable to the institution prohibits the institution from considering an applicant's race or ethnicity as a factor in the institution's decisions relating to first-time undergraduate admissions; or

(2) the institution's governing board by rule, policy, or other manner has provided that an applicant's race or ethnicity may not be considered as a factor in the institution's decisions relating to first-time undergraduate admissions for that academic year.

(l) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall publish an annual report on the impact of Subsection (a-1) on the state's goal of closing college access and achievement gaps under "Closing the Gaps," the state's master plan for higher education, with respect to students of an institution that offers admission under that subsection, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and geographic region and by whether the high school from which the student graduated was a small school, as defined by the commissioner of education, or a public high school that is ranked among the lowest 20 percent of public high schools according to the percentage of each high school's graduates who enroll in a four-year institution, including a general academic teaching institution, in one of the two academic years following the year of the applicant's high school graduation. On request, a general academic teaching institution that offers admission under Subsection (a-1) shall provide the board with any information the board considers necessary for the completion of the report required by this subsection.

(m) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the commissioner of education shall jointly adopt rules to establish eligibility requirements for admission under this section as to curriculum requirements for high school graduation under Subsection (a)(2)(A) for students participating under the recommended or advanced high school program so that the admission of those students is not affected by their participation in the recommended or advanced high school program. This subsection expires September 1, 2020.