

# Online Professional Development for Higher Ed: SAT Foundations

A free, on-demand tutorial providing admission professionals and application readers foundational information on the appropriate use of the SAT®.

## About SAT Foundations

Developed in partnership with higher education leaders, SAT Foundations is a free professional development resource that gives admissions staff foundational information and guidelines for appropriate use of the SAT and the SAT Suite of Assessments.

This online, multimedia training module provides roughly 75 minutes of information that enrollment leaders told us was most important to the work admissions professionals such as:

- Basic concepts such as what the SAT measures; what it does and doesn't predict; how students can improve their scores; and the history of the assessment.
- Information and guidelines helpful to understanding and interpreting scores when reading applications, such as score structures, concordance, and small score differences.
- Test fairness, including how the College Board ensures the SAT is fair to all demographic groups and the ways the College Board supports low-income and underrepresented student populations.
- Frequently asked questions that come up when traveling, including how K–12 schools use the SAT, how the SAT and the PSAT™ work together, and what students and counselors see when they get scores.

Each module is a self-directed session containing a mix of video and written material ending with a brief quiz to assess mastery. A successful completion also generates an email to the participant that can then be forwarded to managers.

## Training Pilot

We are inviting institutions to participate in a second-year training pilot. Participating offices will require all, or a portion, of

## Advisory and Pilot Institutions

We developed SAT Foundations through extensive conversations and in partnership with higher education institutions, including leaders from:

- American University
- Appalachian State University
- Brown University
- California Institute of Technology
- Florida State University
- Georgia Institute of Technology
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Pomona College
- Purdue University
- Rice University
- Rutgers University
- Stephen F. Austin University
- Texas Wesleyan University
- Trinity University Texas
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Santa Cruz
- University of Georgia
- University of Michigan
- University of San Diego
- University of San Francisco
- University of South Carolina
- University of Southern California
- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Vermont

their admission staff or applications readers to take SAT Foundations. They will then provide feedback on the course through a very brief survey and conversation. If you are interested in participating in this pilot program, email Nathan Boltseridge, Senior Director of Higher Ed Initiatives, at [nboltseridge@collegeboard.org](mailto:nboltseridge@collegeboard.org). *Note: Participation in the pilot is not necessary to use SAT Foundations.*

Access SAT Foundations at: [collegeboard.org/satfoundations](https://collegeboard.org/satfoundations).

## Detailed Outline of SAT Foundations

### Lesson 1: The Basics of the SAT (10-15 minutes)

The first lesson focuses on giving foundational information on the SAT, including what it measures, and why it's used.

- **Video: Introduction** discusses why we developed the course, what it covers, and the history of the SAT.
- **Video: What Kind of Test is the SAT?** examines how the SAT measures student achievement rather than aptitude; its focus on the skills needed for freshman year courses; uses beyond admission.

### Lesson 2: How to Use the SAT While Reviewing Applications (30-40 minutes)

The core lesson in SAT Foundations delivers targeted information helpful to reading and evaluating applications. This lesson was shaped in partnership with first-year pilot colleges.

- **Introduction and Intro to the Structure of the SAT** introduces the second lesson and concepts around using the SAT in reviewing applications.
- **About the Evidence-Based Reading & Writing Test; About the Math Test; About the Essay** give brief discussions on the SAT structure, subscores, the sections of the exam, and what they measures.
- **What is Predictive Validity?** explores predictive validity and the science behind it, focusing on data from the National Validity study. It emphasizes the combination of GPA and SAT – rather than one measure alone - as the most accurate and powerful prediction.
- **Understanding Scores in Context** discusses how college applicants are always more than simply an SAT score and methods to understand scores within the context of the rest of the application.
- **Test Fairness** examines how the SAT reflects national educational inequities, how the College Board works to help disadvantaged students, and how individual questions are Q/Ced for fairness.
- **How to Interpret Score Differences** gives information on how to know when a difference between two SAT scores points to significant differences in student academic achievement.
- **What is Equating?** gives a brief, layman's overview of how equating exam scores works, why it's scientifically valid, and what it means to the admissions process.
- **What is Concordance?** discusses how concordance works and how it is a scientifically valid way of comparing two different assessments.
- **Get the Facts about the SAT and ACT** lays out a comparison between the SAT and ACT including their key similarities and differences.

### Lesson 3: What You Need to Know About the SAT on the Road (20-25 minutes)

The last session gives participants answers to a range of frequently asked questions that we hear from students, parents and high school counselors about the SAT and how it's used.

- **How High Schools Use the PSAT and SAT** gives an introduction to the third lesson and how the SAT and the Suite of Assessments are used by high schools to support student growth and achievement.
- **How the SAT & the PSAT Work Together** shows how the assessments that make up the SAT Suite of Assessments used to measure student progress throughout high school.
- **SAT Schedule** – gives an overview and schedule of the SAT administrations throughout the year.
- **Student FAQs on Taking the SAT** answers frequently asked questions including test length, how students register, how scores get set to colleges, and the options available for students with disabilities.
- **What is Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy** looks at College Board's partnership with Khan Academy and how to access free practice materials.
- **Benefits of Practice** explores the results from research on students who use Official SAT Practice.
- **Fee Waivers and Supports for Low Income Students** gives details on the resources and supports available for students from low-income backgrounds, including fee waivers for the SAT and college applications.
- **How High Schools Use OSP** looks at one high school's experiences using Official SAT Practice and what it's meant for the students there.

## Using SAT Foundations On Campus

Colleges and universities who participated in the first year of the SAT Foundations pilot reported using the course in the following ways:

- As a requirement for all new admissions counselors before they begin applications reading.
- As a suggested supplement for more seasoned staff who need to understand the changes to the SAT after the redesign.
- As a recommended orientation to application readers.

Additionally, several institutions piloting SAT Foundations this year have indicated that they will be incorporating it into their in-person training through group work and watching the videos as a team. If you are interested in further details, email Nathan Boltseridge, Senior Director of Higher Ed Initiatives, at [nboltseridge@collegeboard.org](mailto:nboltseridge@collegeboard.org).