

# DEFINITIONS OF ADMISSION OPTIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION



National Association for  
College Admission Counseling  
Guiding the way to higher education

## STUDENTS: WHICH COLLEGE ADMISSION PROCESS BEST SUITS YOU?

### Non-Restrictive Application Plans

#### Regular Decision

##### DEFINITION:

Students submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision in a clearly stated period of time.

##### COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

#### Rolling Admission

##### DEFINITION:

Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render admission decisions throughout the admission cycle.

##### COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

#### Early Action (EA)

##### DEFINITION:

Students apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date.

##### COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

### Restrictive Application Plans

#### Early Decision (ED)

##### DEFINITION:

Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted they definitely will enroll. The application deadline and decision deadline occur early.

##### COMMITMENT:

BINDING

#### Restrictive Early Action (REA)

##### DEFINITION:

Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying ED or EA or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm.

##### COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

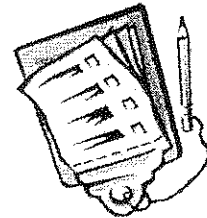
Students are not restricted from applying to other institutions and have until May 1 to consider their options and confirm enrollment.

Students are responsible for determining and following restrictions.

For a copy of this flyer, please visit [www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org)

## Wait-listed?

What do I do if I am put on the Wait-list?



- Do not panic, you were wait-listed, not turned away!
- The Wait-list is the college's enrollment cushion or safety net. You should remain on the wait-list only if you are truly still interested in attending that college.
- Whether a college will utilize its wait-list is unpredictable from year to year. Some colleges go to the wait list every year. Other colleges rarely go to their waitlist.

### Get a better sense of your chance of admission:

- Contact the college admissions office immediately if you want to remain on their wait-list.
- Find out if the admissions office ranks the wait-list or has a priority list.
- Write a letter to the admissions office. Admissions officers are interested in any NEW information not already listed on your original application. For example, new awards or letter of recommendation.
- Remain on the wait-list only if you are truly still interested in attending that college.
- Continue to study hard, final semester grades may be a reevaluation factor.
- If you are wait-listed at more than one college, it is best practice to only remain active on one wait list. (With the exception of the University of California where special rules apply)

### Reconsider the colleges that accepted you:

- If you can picture yourself at one of your second choices and be happy, send in your deposit and plan to attend that school. You'll be relieved after a decision has been made.

Wait-list decisions are not made until after May 1<sup>st</sup> decision deadline. You should prepare to attend another school where you have been accepted by sending in the necessary paperwork and deposit. If you are accepted off the wait-list, you will have to forfeit your deposit at the first school and send a deposit to the second school.