

Iowa's Regent Admission Index

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Which Iowa universities are Regent universities?

A: Iowa State University, the University of Iowa, and the University of Northern Iowa are the three Regent universities governed by the Iowa Board of Regents. The RAI applies equally to all three institutions.

Q: What is the RAI?

A: The RAI is used to determine automatic admission for residents of the state of Iowa who apply to one of the three Regent universities. A student's RAI score is derived from a mathematical equation that includes factors shown to be predictive of academic success at the Regent universities: ACT/SAT scores, high school grade point average, and the number of college preparatory or "core courses" completed.

RAI Formula
$\begin{aligned} & (3 \times \text{ACT composite score}) \\ & + (30 \times \text{Cumulative GPA}) \\ & + \underline{(5 \times \text{Number of years of high school core} \\ & \quad \text{courses})} \\ & = \text{RAI score} \end{aligned}$

Note: For purposes of calculating the RAI, SAT scores will be converted to ACT composite equivalents, 4.00 is the top value for GPA, and the number of high school core courses completed is expressed in terms of years or fractions of years (e.g., one semester equals 0.5 year). Applicants whose academic records do not include all of the factors listed above will be evaluated on an individual basis by the Regent universities to which they apply.

Q: Does this mean each Regent university no longer has minimum high school course requirements for admission?

A: No. Each Regent university still has its own minimum high school course requirements for admission. These requirements serve as the first screen in the admission decision process. In other words, if the students don't meet these minimum high school course requirements, they generally won't be offered admission, regardless of their RAI score.

Q: Does an RAI score of at least 245 mean the student will be automatically admitted to any of the three Regent universities?

A: Yes, if the student is a resident of the state of Iowa and meets the university's minimum high school course requirements for admission. Each Regent university has the option to use the RAI for admitting out-of-state students.

Q: Does an RAI score below 245 mean the student won't be admitted to any of the Regent universities?

A: Not necessarily. Each university evaluates applicants with less than a 245 RAI score holistically (on an individual basis) and makes their own admission decisions. Any holistic review decision made by one university is specific to that university. In other words, a student with less than a 245 RAI who is offered admission to one university is not guaranteed admission to the other two universities.

Q: Where can I find a list of the approved SCED codes?

A: A current list of SCED codes and their standard course names can always be found online at <https://www.iowaregents.edu/media/cms/sced-pdf198A8E2F.pdf>. It's important to note that just because a particular SCED code is approved for admission, it does not necessarily mean that course is offered by a high school in Iowa.

Q: Since high schools assign the SCED codes to their own courses, does this mean the high schools have control over which of their courses count toward the RAI calculation?

A: Yes. However, it is our expectation that the SCED codes assigned by high schools are a true reflection of the course content and are college preparatory in nature. Schools assigning inappropriate SCED codes to their courses will only end up hurting their students' chances of being successful once they enroll at a Regent university.

Q: Why are only English, math, science, social studies, computer science, and world language courses acceptable for the RAI? What about courses in areas like business, music or art?

A: When the RAI requirements were developed, the Regents decided to restrict the acceptable courses to five core subject areas. The reason behind this decision is that all students are expected to have completed a minimum level of preparation in each of these core subject areas (with the exception of world languages for some majors) before they enter a Regent university. For applicants starting in the Summer of 2020 and beyond, the Regents added computer science to the original five core subject areas.

While courses in other subject areas are certainly beneficial for college-bound students, especially for those who wish to pursue majors in those respective fields, they are not courses that all Regent university bound students are expected to have completed. While courses in areas are not counted in the RAI calculation, they will be viewed favorably by the admissions officers when they consider applicants who fall below the RAI 245 automatic admission score.

Q: Our school is on a trimester system. How does that impact the calculation of our students' RAI scores?

A: Students are awarded 5 points for every year of core courses they will complete by graduation. Therefore, a student who completes one trimester of a core course would be awarded 1.67 points (1/3 of 5), and a student who completes two trimesters of a core course would be awarded 3.33 points (2/3 of 5).

Q: What about high school core courses that are completed before ninth grade?

A: In general, high school core courses completed before ninth grade may be counted in the RAI calculation. If the course is an obvious sequential course (e.g., Spanish 1, Algebra 1), it does not need to be listed on the high school transcript in order to be counted in the RAI calculation, provided a higher level course appears on the transcript (e.g., Spanish II, Algebra 2). However, if the course is not an obvious sequential course (e.g., Biology, American History), the course must appear on the high school transcript in order to be counted in the RAI calculation.

Q: What about college courses that are taken in high school?

A: College courses taken in high school may be counted in the RAI calculation only if they fall into one of the six core subject areas: English, math, science, social science, computer science, or world languages. In order to count toward the RAI calculation, these college courses must be listed on the high school transcript or a college transcript must be provided to the university. College courses taken in high school do not receive any additional weight when the RAI score is calculated. For example, one semester of college course work would generate an additional 2.5 RAI points since students receive 5 points for every year of core courses completed.

Q: Our students have the option of taking Algebra 1 over a two-year period. How is that factored into their RAI score?

A: Only the second year may be counted. When schools assign the SCED code number, they should assign a code that begins with 02053 to the first year course of a two-year Algebra 1 sequence, and they should assign a code that begins with 02054 to the second year course of the two-year Algebra 1 sequence. The 02053 course will not be counted in the RAI calculation, but the 02054 course will be counted.

Q: What about integrated courses that combine more than one subject area? For example, our school offers a course titled Heritage that is taught jointly by our English and social studies departments.

A: There are SCED codes that address courses like this (e.g., 01055 for American Literature/History). These codes have been approved for the RAI.

