General Studies Admissions Exam Test-Taker Guide

Arrangements for Students with Disabilities
If you have a documented disability that will prevent you from taking the test under standard conditions, you may request testing accommodations from the Office of Disability Services. For more information, please contact ODS by calling: 212-854-2388 (voice/TTY), or emailing: disability@columbia.edu.

What to Bring on the Day of the Test
- Valid photo ID and your Social Security Number
- Several No. 2 soft lead pencils with erasers
- Any additional documents needed to complete your application for admission

In addition to the items noted above, you may also bring a watch (without an audible alarm), a bag or backpack (to be kept under your desk), and a snack or drinks (to be stored out of sight in your backpack or paper bag). Snacks may only be consumed in the hall during breaks, never in the test room. You are responsible for bringing equipment in good working order. You will not be able to share materials with another test-taker.

You may NOT bring the following items into the test location:
- Scratch paper
- Notes, books, dictionary
- Pen, highlighter, or colored pencil
- Portable listening or recording device
- Camera or other photographic equipment
- Cell phone, pager, personal digital assistant, or other digital assistant/electronic equipment

Testing Regulations
Anyone who gives or receives help during the test, or uses notes of any kind, will not be permitted to continue the test. No test materials or notes may be removed from the testing location. Your test scores may be cancelled if there is a reason to question their validity. Before your scores are cancelled, you may be given the opportunity to take the test again.

Test-Taking Strategies
The test proctor will give instructions for filling in the necessary information on the answer sheet. Indicate your answer to each question by completely filling in the answer space that corresponds to the correct answer to that question.

Many students wonder whether or not to guess the answers to questions about which they are not certain. In scoring each test, a percentage of incorrect answers will be subtracted from the number of correct answers as a correction for haphazard guessing. It is improbable, therefore, that mere guessing will improve your scores significantly; it may even lower your score. If, however, you are not sure of the correct answer but have some knowledge of the questions and are able to eliminate one or more of the answer choices as wrong, your chance of getting the correct answer is improved, and it will be to your advantage to answer such a question.

You are advised to use your time effectively and to work as rapidly as you can without losing accuracy. Do not waste time on questions that are too difficult for you. Go on to other questions and come back to the difficult ones later if you can.

Test Scores
Results of the General Studies Admissions Exam are used for internal purposes by the admissions committee. Test-takers will not receive scores from the General Studies Admissions Office.
How the GSAE is Scored
The portions of the GSAE that are derived from the SAT: On-Campus program are reported on the College Board scale of 200-800 – one for critical reading and one for writing. You will not receive a number score for your essay, but it will be used as a diagnostic tool by the admissions committee in reviewing your application file.

To get your total score for each multiple-choice section (i.e., reading and writing), a fraction of the questions answered incorrectly subtracted from the number answered correctly. If that number is a fraction, it is rounded to the nearest whole number – one-half or more is rounded up; less than one-half is rounded down. Next, your raw score is converted to a scaled score by a statistical process called equating. The purpose of equating is to adjust scores for minor differences in test difficulty from form to form, so that a score represents the same level of ability regardless of the difficulty of a particular form.

Preparing for the Test
For more information and practice materials, log onto www.collegeboard.com and follow the links For Students to the SAT Preparation Center.

Additional Information or Comments
If you have concerns or need any additional information concerning the GSAE, notify your test proctor, or contact the General Studies Office of Admissions.

Phone: 212-854-2772

Write:
School of General Studies, Office of Admissions
408 Lewisohn Hall, MC 4010
2970 Broadway
New York, NY 10027

Email: gs-admit@columbia.edu

Irregularities During Testing Sessions
If you are aware of an irregularity during your testing session, please report it to your test proctor. You may also report it to the General Studies Office of Admissions using the contact information above.

Confidentiality
The School of General Studies, for admissions purposes, will use test scores and data that you provide as a result of taking the GSAE. Data will not be used for any other reason without your permission. If the data are used for research purposes, special precautions will be taken to ensure that your identity is kept confidential. If you have any questions about the confidentiality of the data you have provided or about the test scores, see your test proctor.

The School of General Studies retains scored GSAE answer sheets in secure storage following the test administration. Answer sheets should be shredded or otherwise totally destroyed after 18 months.