

# Weighing the **BENEFITS**



## How GRE® Scores Add Value to Your Holistic Admissions Process

GRE® scores are valued as common, objective measures of an applicant’s readiness for graduate study — and their value only increases within a holistic admissions process. Explore the benefits of including GRE scores compared to the drawbacks of making them optional.

### Holistic admissions inclusive of GRE scores

### Admissions without GRE scores

The GRE® General Test’s [three distinct scores](#) provide evidence of verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning and analytical writing skills — valuable data to be reviewed holistically with other applicant information.



Holistic admissions means including all relevant information about an applicant. So making decisions with less information — in this case, three fewer data points — isn’t holistic.

The GRE test is the only part of the application with evidence backing its validity, reliability and fairness. By thoughtfully evaluating applications holistically, the [benefits and limitations](#) of each component are balanced.



Removing GRE scores inflates the value of subjective information that is not proven to be valid, reliable or fair. For example, even GPAs are [influenced by grade inflation](#) and socioeconomic status.

As a standard measure, GRE scores put those from lesser-known undergraduate schools and lower socioeconomic backgrounds on more equal footing with their more advantaged peers, which can [help increase diversity](#).



Unconscious bias is likely to creep into the admissions process as reviewers will be restricted to information highly influenced by applicants’ socioeconomic background, e.g., the status of the undergraduate school and recommenders.

Undergraduate grades and test scores are [better predictors of graduate grades](#) when used in tandem than either is alone. The GRE Program makes all [validity and reliability](#) data available on its website.



There is little research about the ability of any other components of the application to predict graduate grades or other measures of student success.

Recorded in a secure, proctored environment, applicants’ GRE Analytical Writing responses are reliable and trustworthy, and often the best or second-best predictor of graduate grades. Essays are available through [ETS® Data Manager](#).



Programs are unable to ascertain an applicant’s actual writing ability, as personal statements and other writing samples are often coached and edited by others.

Learn more about the value GRE scores add to a holistic admissions process at [holisticadmissions.org](https://holisticadmissions.org).