

YOUR GUIDE TO

College Admissions & Financial Terms

During your college search, you're likely going to come across a ton of different terminology that may be unfamiliar. It can be a lot to take in—we get it. That's why we put together a glossary of terms to help make some sense of all those confusing terms.

Admissions Terms:

ACT – A standardized test that measures your knowledge from high school to determine your academic readiness for college. The areas that you are tested on include math, reading, science and English.

ADMISSIONS COUNSELOR – A person who works in the admissions office at each college or school who is assigned to work closely with you and guide you through the college application process. They are often assigned to specific geographic areas.

COLLEGE/SCHOOL – Most universities are made up of smaller colleges and schools of each discipline. Rider has the Norm Brodsky College of Business, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the College of Education and Human Services, and the Westminster College of the Arts. When you choose a major, it will fall under the college or school that matches its discipline.

COMMON APPLICATION – A standardized application for applying to many colleges or universities at once. Rider accepts the Common Application for those who want to apply for first-year admission. Check each college's or university's website to see if they accept the Common Application.

EARLY ACTION – An admission application deadline that takes place during the fall and is non-binding (meaning you can still choose to go to another school upon receiving an offer of admission). The early action option will not be offered to applicants to programs which require an audition and/or interview due to the scheduling of the audition and interview process.

ROLLING ADMISSIONS – Rider practices rolling admissions. Once your application is complete, you will be notified of your decision. Applications completed after the stated deadlines will be considered on a space-available basis.

SAT – A standardized test that measures your knowledge from high school to determine your academic readiness for college. The areas that you are tested on include reading, writing, language, and math.

STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES – Once you take a standardized test such as the SAT, ACT, TOEFL, IELTS, or PTE, your scores should be sent to the school(s) where you're applying for admission and standardized test scores are considered in the admission process.

TEST-OPTIONAL ADMISSION – SAT/ACT scores are not required for admission and most scholarships at Rider. First-year applicants are eligible to apply test-optional, with the exception of home-schooled students.

TRANSCRIPT – This document contains all of your academic history, including courses you have taken and grades you have earned. Your school will send official copies of your transcript to the colleges where you are applying. You will also need a transcript for any college courses you have taken. We have many resources available to help you through the college admission process on our Undergraduate Admissions page.

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Financial Terms:

FAFSA – The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is used to determine eligibility for federal and state financial aid. Eligibility for these awards is estimated using the information reported on the FAFSA form. You must comply with all program requirements to receive these funds. Please follow up on all requests for information from government agencies.

FEDERAL PELL GRANT – Funded by the federal government, eligibility is determined by filing the FAFSA. You will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) indicating eligibility. You will be directed to check and correct all data. Please follow the instructions in the text of Part I of your SAR. An estimate of eligibility is provided in the award letter. If you do not receive your SAR within four weeks of filing the FAFSA, call (800) 4-FED-AID for the status of your application.

FEDERAL WORK-STUDY PROGRAM – This aid is not credited to your student account. Wages are paid bi-monthly, directly to you, for the hours actually worked. The maximum annual earnings are limited to the amount listed in your award letter. If you have been offered work-study in your award and you accept the offer, look forward to attending a Job Fair in September. Employment on campus is another opportunity to be a part of the Rider community while earning income to meet your day-to-day educational expenses.

NEW JERSEY TUITION AID GRANT (TAG) – The New Jersey TAG is a need-based grant to assist with the expenses of students who attend New Jersey institutions. It will not follow students who attend out-of-state institutions. New Jersey residency for one year is required to be eligible for this grant. By completing the FAFSA and indicating New Jersey as your legal state of residence, the New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority will receive your financial information and determine eligibility for the grant. Rider University will include an estimated Tuition Aid Grant on your award letter; however, Rider University does not award the grant money nor administer the NJ TAG program.

RIDER GRANT – The Rider Grant is awarded to students who demonstrate financial need. A student should not expect the same Rider Grant amount each year because demonstrated financial need is reassessed each year. In addition, annual university budgets may make the amount

of funding variable from year to year. Eligibility for this award is estimated using the information reported on the FAFSA Form. The annual university budgets are a key factor in determining grant allotments; therefore, it is imperative that a student file the FAFSA by the priority deadline date of February 1 to ensure full consideration for grant resources.

STAFFORD LOANS – The Federal Stafford loan is obtained directly from the federal government through the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program. You are eligible for the Federal Stafford Loan if your financial aid award offer includes the Federal Subsidized Stafford Loan and/or the Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan. This is determined by your information provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Federal Stafford loans are loans in the student's name and must be repaid. The maximum eligibility amount is determined by your grade level. In addition, the Stafford loan has a fixed interest rate, an origination fee and the payments are deferred while the student is enrolled in at least 6 credits. You are required to begin repayment 6 months after you leave school or reduce your class load to less than 6 credits. First Time Stafford Loan borrowers must complete Stafford Loan Entrance Counseling and Master Promissory Note to ensure your Stafford Loans pay into your account.

SUBSIDIZED STAFFORD LOANS – Offered to undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need based on information provided on the FAFSA. The government pays the interest on this loan while the student is enrolled.

UNSUBSIDIZED STAFFORD LOANS – For students who are not eligible to borrow the Subsidized Stafford Loan as determined by their financial need. The difference is that the interest will accrue while you are in school, rather than being subsidized by the federal government. The interest will begin to accrue on the loan once the funds are released to Rider University. You have the option of making interest payments while you are in school.

For more information:

[RIDER.EDU/TERMS-GUIDE](https://www.rider.edu/terms-guide)



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