

# 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.