



February 27, 2020

To: Dylan Rodríguez, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: Sheldon Tan, Chair  
Committee on Undergraduate Admissions

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheldon T".

Re: Proposed Changes to the Guidelines for Admission by Exception

The Senate Committee on Undergraduate Admissions (UAC) has proposed changes to the Guidelines of Admission by Exception (AxE) (Rev June 26, 2017), in response to the management corrective actions (MCAs) from Phase One of the UC-wide audit of Undergraduate Admissions.

The following are the MCAs that the proposed changes to the AxE Guidelines address.

1. 1.2: Document all admissions decisions with sufficient detail to:
  - Meet the minimum documentation requirements specified in the policies and procedures described in recommendation 1.1.
  - Indicate the specific individuals and/or committees that were involved in the evaluation of the application and the final decision.
    - a. Page 1 of the guidelines indicates the three senior campus leaders who will be involved in the AxE applicant review. This is in response to the CA legislation/ BOARS directive requiring three senior campus leaders to be involved in the review of all AxE admissions decisions. Phase I MCA 1.2 requires that we document all individuals and committees involved in the evaluation of an applicant. The Guidelines already documented the SRC's involvement in the review and the changes will document the three campus leader's involvement in the AxE review.
2. 3.2: Clearly identify and track all applicants that departments recommend on the basis of special talent.
  - a. Appendix B provides an overview of the process for recommending applicants on the basis of special talent.
3. 3.3: Establish and document the minimum requirements for documented verification of special talent for each department. These minimum requirements should identify the types of information and trusted sources that can be used to confirm qualifications or credentials for a

specific sport or talent. Requirements for documented verification of athletic qualifications could be limited to non-scholarship prospective student athletes.

- a. Appendix B defines types and sources for verification documents.
4. 3.5: For all non-scholarship prospective student athletes recommended for admission by athletics, require that the athletics compliance office verify the qualifications of the recommended applicant, in accordance with the requirements referenced in recommendation 3.3.
  - a. Appendix B, Special Talent Verification Process outlines the athletics compliance verification process.
5. 3.6: Require a two-step verification process for any recommendation for admission on the basis of special talent that includes the following:
  - The initiator of the recommendation must document and attest, under penalty of disciplinary action, that they have performed an assessment and determined that the level of special talent warrants a recommendation for admission.
  - An individual in a supervisory capacity must approve the recommendation. For athletics, this process could be limited to non-scholarship prospective student athletes.
    - a. Appendix B, Special Talent Verification Process outlines the two step “initiator” and “supervisor” recommendation.
6. 4.2: Establish a local campus policy that outlines acceptable rationale and the required evaluation process for admissions by exception. At a minimum, this policy should ensure that an individual who identifies a candidate for admission by exception cannot make the final admission decision.
  - a. The complete guidelines document outlines the acceptable rationale and required evaluations process for AxE. The first page documents the CA legislation/ BOARS requirement of 3 senior leadership approvals for all AxE admits as well as how these AxE student are identified and brought to admissions for review.
7. 4.3: Establish controls to ensure that an acceptable rationale for identifying an applicant to be considered for admission by exception is documented for each applicant being considered under the policy.
  - a. The guidelines for AxE documents the rationale for identifying an applicant as AxE in page 3-4.
8. 4.4: Establish local procedures to annually monitor compliance with the campus percentage limits for admissions by exception established by Regental policy.
  - a. Process for reporting campus percentage limits added to first page of guidelines.
9. The percentage for special talents or “other students” applicants defined in the first page, or the first category, has been changed from 1% to 2%.

- a. This change will lead to more consistency with BOARS's AxE guideline
10. The percentage for second category applicants defined in the first page has been changed from 4% to remaining percentage, up total of 6%. The description of the second category applicants was also changed.
- a. The language change gives us more flexibilities for recruiting the second category applicants.
  - b. The description change is more consistent with BORARS's definition of second category.

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE**  
**GUIDELINES FOR ADMISSION BY EXCEPTION**  
**SUPPLEMENTAL CRITERIA**  
(Rev June 26, 2017)

Admission by Exception (AxE) is an offer of admission reserved for applicants who do not meet current campus admission requirement ~~\_(based on AIS)~~, but meet a set of minimum academic requirements (as specified in Section I below) and

1. Have a special talent or are defined as "other students" (see criteria outlined in Section II below), or
2. Have attained academic achievement despite ~~major disadvantages compared to other students coming from disadvantaged circumstances, including but not limited to low-income students, first generation college students, and those from low-API schools (see criteria outlined in Section II below)~~

Effective Fall 2006, ~~the Office of~~ Undergraduate Admissions may admit the number of AxE applicants required to yield up to 6% of total freshman enrollment and up to 6% of total transfer enrollment for a specific admission term.

Up to ~~21%~~ of ~~the~~ AxE enrollments may be reserved for applicants outlined in number #1 above.  
~~sSpecial tTalent applicants and~~

The remaining percentage, up to a total of 6%,5% may be reserved for applicants outlined in #2 above.

The admission by exception percentages are reviewed on a bi-annual basis and reported out to the Undergraduate Admissions Senate Committee by the Director of Undergraduate Admissions.

1. The Director of Undergraduate Admissions will monitor these limits using an established report following the third week of each new fall and winter term.
2. The Director of Undergraduate Admissions in consultation with the Undergraduate Admissions Senate Committee will review the percentage of special talent applicants and applicants demonstrating academic promise and/or major disadvantage to determine if AxE percentages have met the established criteria, ensure that special talent applicants are not allocated an excessive number of slots, and whether an adjustment to the AxE percentage allocation is needed for a future term.

All applicants admitted by exception, must be approved by three senior campus leaders, which are defined to be the Director of Undergraduate Admissions, another member of senior leadership in Undergraduate Admissions or Enrollment Services (e.g. Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions or Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Services), and a member of the Academic Senate external to Undergraduate Admissions (e.g. Dean of admitting college or the Chair of the Undergraduate Admissions Senate Committee). In the event that two senior leaders within Undergraduate Admissions or Enrollment Services are not available to approve AxE admits one approver may be replaced with a second approver from the Academic Senate, external to Undergraduate Admissions.

The following criteria have been developed and approved by the Undergraduate Admissions Committee of the UC Riverside Academic Senate.

## **I. Minimum Academic Requirements**

Applicants must meet the following minimum academic criteria in order to be considered for AxE.

### **Freshman Applicant**

1. GPA – 3.00 minimum in A-G-a-g subjects.
2. Standardized Test Scores – SAT - 460 minimum score on the Math component and either a 24 minimum score on the Writing and Language Test or a 23 minimum score on the Reading Test.

#### **OR**

ACT - composite score of 17 (sum of SAT Critical Reading and Math = 830) **and** a minimum ACT English/Writing score of 17 (SAT Writing = 420\*).

- \* Indicates “old” (pre-2016) SAT scores. Until there is a new recognized concordance between the College Board and ACT, ACT scores must be translated via an old SAT score.
  - Applicants who are unable to meet the above exam requirement prior to high school graduation because either, 1) the exams are not offered in their home country and/or 2) they will participate in the UCR Extension Intensive English program prior to taking the exams, may be considered for admission by completing the exams post high school graduation.
3. A-G Course Omissions - 3 courses or less (no Math or English omissions/deficiencies are allowed).
  4. Transferrable coursework taken after the summer following high school graduation – up to 30 units of transferrable coursework can be considered for freshman admission for international students in the Admission Preparation Program and other circumstances as warranted.
    - Freshman applicants with the circumstances outlined in number 4 above, may have a gap in their educational record of up to two years and be considered for freshman admission.

### **Transfer Applicant**

1. GPA - 2.00 minimum allowed in transferable courses.
2. Units - A minimum of 24 transferable quarter units.
3. Subject Requirements – At least one transferable English Composition course, one transferable math course (has intermediate algebra as a prerequisite), and one appropriate third course from the required 7-course pattern.

All applicants who meet the above academic criteria may compete equally for AxE consideration. Declining academic performance is a factor used to defer applicants even though they may meet the criteria described above. Exceptions to the above criteria are rare. Applicants who do not meet these criteria must demonstrate acceptable alternative academic achievement (see below: IV. Special Committee Review).

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## **II. Definitions of Applicants to be Considered for AxE**

The mere presence of one or more of the below factors does not justify review for AxE since such factors exist to some degree for many applicants. Review is justified only in situations where the student’s overall achievement, academic promise in a

specific area, and/or disadvantage, is truly distinctive. Such situations are expected to be rare.

1. **Special Talent or “Other” Applicants (up to 1%)** – Applicants satisfying the above-stated minimum academic requirements [and give evidence \(outlined in Appendix B\) of possessing special talent for University programs requiring such special talent](#), may be considered for AxE. [Students defined as “other” may be considered for AxE](#) if one or more of the following factors have been demonstrated at an exceptional level:

- outstanding achievement in a specific subject area;
- self-motivation and initiative;
- leadership;
- public or community service;
- ~~athletics;~~
- completion of significant special projects;
- special endorsement of academic promise from their school;
- demonstration of academic promise by achievement in specific areas of study; and/or
- marked improvement in academic performance as demonstrated by academic grade point average and/or enrollment in accelerated, challenging course work (e.g., honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and transferable college courses).

~~There is no specific breakdown of the 1% according to these factors. In particular, there is no assumption that there must be a balance of students admitted from the spectrum of factors. Thus, one or just a few factors may account for the majority of special talent admissions. At the same time, however, no one special talent factor should prevent other factors from being fully considered and accommodated.~~

## **2. Applicants from disadvantaged circumstances, including but not limited to low-income students, first generation college students, and those from low API schools**

Students satisfying the above-stated minimum academic requirements may be considered for AxE if they have demonstrated academic achievement in the presence of major disadvantages compared to typical student applicants. Disadvantages may include geographical, physical, psychological, financial, or personal and may include, but are not limited to:

- **Low Income:** Family income and household size will be used to determine if an applicant is financially disadvantaged. The family income cutoff will be directly linked to the size of the family. A scale is used to assign variable points. The actual income cutoffs would be based upon annually published federal standards. The University of California Office of the President will provide the Undergraduate Admissions office applicable standards on an annual basis.

- **First-Generation College Attendee:** Parents/[Guardians](#) of applicant have not ~~completed an undergraduate degree~~~~attended college or have just recently begun attending college.~~
- **Disability (Learning, Physical, and/or Psychological):** Applicant will require further review by Student Special Services for recommendation.
- **English as a Second Language:** Applicant's native language is other than English.
- **Veteran:** Applicant is veteran of U.S. military.
- **Re-entry:** Applicant is 24 years of age or older by term of entry and has been out of school for two years or more.
- **Unusual Life Circumstances/Personal Hardship Indicators:** Applicant is or has one or more of the following: ward of the court; recent or chronic illness/injury; lives in foster home; comes from single parent family; single parent; runaway; death in the immediate family (parent, guardian, sibling); homeless; emancipated minor; incarcerated parent; a current/former inmate of a correctional facility; parolee; and/or a victim of physical/sexual abuse.
- **Location of Residence and/or Limited Educational Opportunity Indicators:** Applicant lives in or around one or more of the following: inner city dwelling/school or rural dwelling/school community with a high crime rate, high unemployment rate, and/or low education level.
- **Applicant Attends High School Where the Following Occurs:** Applicant is bussed to school (therefore, cannot participate in extra curricular/enriching activities); high school does not offer AP/Honors curriculum or high school does not send many applicants to UC; and/or high school has low college-going rate, low high school graduation rate, and low high school test scores (mean average less than 500 on SAT I Math and Verbal).
- **Job:** Applicant is working during school year to supplement family income, save for college, or fulfill other basic needs.
- **Recent Immigrant Status:** Applicant has moved within last six years from non-English speaking country.
- **Applicant from Another Country:** Applicant attended high school or higher level education in another country and is unable to meet traditional UC admission requirements.

~~The mere presence of one or more of the above factors does not justify review for AxE since such factors exist to some degree for many applicants. Review is justified only in situations where the student's achievement, despite harsh challenges, is truly astounding. Such situations are expected to be rare.~~

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### **III. Review Process**

Applicants who qualify for AxE may be identified by the Undergraduate Admissions office in its regular review of applications, by academic departments, or by the Athletics Department. Applicants identified through any of the aforementioned offices will be processed as follows:

1. **Undergraduate Admissions Office:** Applicants identified by the Undergraduate Admissions office will be forwarded ~~by the Admissions Counselor to the Assistant Director – Freshman Evaluations, the Assistant Director – Transfer Evaluations, or the Assistant Director – International Evaluation~~ to the Associate Director of Recruitment

~~and Evaluation in Undergraduate Admissions for consideration, as appropriate.~~ Upon review and in consultation with the Director of Admissions, a decision will be made to determine if an AxE offer will be made.

2. **Academic Departments:** Academic departments, which independently identify applicants, will ~~prepare a letter of endorsement~~ submit the Special Talent and AxE Recommendation Form and forward it to the Undergraduate Admissions office for a final decision. The application file will be reviewed by the ~~Assistant Director – Freshman, Transfer, or International Evaluations~~ Associate Director of Recruitment and Evaluation in Undergraduate Admissions, who will consult with the Director of Admissions to determine if an AxE offer will be made. If the recommendation for admission is made primarily on the basis of special talent, the recommending department must follow the procedures outlined in Appendix B.
3. **Athletics Department:** The Athletics Department will submit the Athletic Release Authorization Form and the Request for Admission by Exception Form ~~Admission by Athletics Form~~ to Undergraduate Admissions. Upon receipt of these forms, the application file will be reviewed following the procedures outlined in Appendix B. ~~prepare a letter of endorsement and forward it to the Undergraduate Admissions office for a final decision.~~ ~~Upon receipt of the Athletic Release Authorization Form and the Request for Admission by Exception Form, the Assistant Director – Freshman, Transfer, or International Evaluations will process the AxE offer.~~

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#### **IV. Special Review Committee**

Applicants who *do not* qualify for AxE and are supported by a UCR faculty, staff, or department may be reviewed by a Special Review Committee (See Appendix A.)

## Special Review Committee (SRC)

### Charge:

Applicants who *do not* qualify for Admission by Exception and are supported by a UCR faculty, staff, or department may be reviewed by a Special Review Committee comprised of UCR faculty, with faculty or staff from the appropriate UCR unit, staff from the Academic Resource Center, and the Director of Undergraduate Admissions as Ex-Officio members. The Special Review Committee will make final admissions decisions for such applicants based on its assessment of the likelihood of their academic success at UCR, which in turn is based on:

1. Academic history as reported on the *Application for Undergraduate Admissions and Scholarships*;
2. An academic evaluation by the Undergraduate Admissions office of all requested official transcripts and completed test scores;
3. The Personal ~~Statement~~Insight Questions; and other relevant materials provided to the Special Review Committee for consideration
4. Additional requested materials.

As a condition of admission, the Special Review Committee may require the applicant to:

1. Meet specific goals at ~~t~~he Academic Resource Center; and/or
2. Meet specific goals from the Athletics Department's required Study Table; and/or
3. Meet other conditions as deemed appropriate.

There will be approximately 3-4 meetings each year with the majority of the meetings occurring during the winter and spring quarters. Meetings may occur during the summer only when necessary.

### Appeal Process

For an appeal to be considered by the Special Review Committee, new and compelling information must have come to light for the student that was not presented to the Special Review Committee when the student was originally considered for admission. This information must clearly show the student to be significantly stronger overall than had been earlier evidenced.

Items that must be included in the appeal:

1. A letter written by the original supporting department (including the student's full legal name and UCR student ID) requesting that the Special Review Committee reconsider its decision. Letter must include an explanation as to why the new and compelling information was not originally presented to the Special Review Committee.
2. New documentation that supports the appeal such as a transcript or a revised test score report.

Appeal documents must be received in Undergraduate Admissions no later than 14 calendar days from the date the Special Review Committee's decision was communicated to the original supporting department.

Decisions made by the Special Review Committee as a result of an appeal are final.

**Membership:**

The Special Review Committee is comprised of at least four Academic Senate faculty members and up to five non-voting University faculty or staff members in Ex-Officio status. Membership is as follows:

**Senate Faculty Members**

Undergraduate Admissions Committee Representative, Chair

-Appointed by the Committee on Undergraduate Admissions

Faculty Representative from CHASS

-Appointed by the Committee on Committees

Faculty Representative from CNAS

-Appointed by the Committee on Committees

Faculty Representative from BCOE

-Appointed by the Committee on Committees

Faculty Representative

-Appointed by the Committee on Committees

**Ex-Officio Members**

ACE Program Coordinator, The Academic Resource Center

Director of Undergraduate Admissions

Admissions Counselor

Faculty Athletic Representative to NCAA when appropriate

Chair, Committee on International Education when appropriate

Other pertinent individuals as deemed appropriate by the chair

Voting members must recuse themselves from any case file for which they serve as the faculty advocate. Further the SRC shall be considered a senate committee for the purpose of executing an annual COI.

## Special Talent Admissions

### Definition of Special Talent Admissions

Special talent admissions is inclusive of any circumstance in which an applicant is considered for admission to the University of California, Riverside primarily on the basis of their special talent. Special talent refers to a talent that is non-academic in nature, typically presented by Athletics or areas encompassing the visual and performing arts.

### Minimum requirements for documented verification of special talent:

A minimum of two verifiable pieces of information from the options listed below must be obtained for any student being recommended for admission solely on the basis of the special talent. Two of the same type of verifiable pieces of information will not be allowed except for letters of recommendation. Information submitted for verification of special talent must be retained and attached to the official student record. It is the responsibility of the recommending department to verify all documentation submitted on behalf of the applicant is official in nature (e.g. team roster is on letterhead or includes an official team logo, etc.)

### Types of information and trusted sources that can be used to confirm qualifications or credentials for a specific sport or talent:

#### 1. Athletic Talent

- a. Video of athlete competing where the student is clearly identifiable
- b. Team roster with athlete listed as competing team member
- c. Documentation of talent from third party website to include achievement levels by sport\*
- d. Two letters of recommendation by current and/or recent club or high school coach
  - i. Verified internet search to confirm person writing the letter has a confirmed association as a coach for the club or high school team
- e. Verified internet search of athlete to confirm recent participation in the sport and recognition received

#### 2. Visual and Performing Arts Talent

- a. Video or portfolio of student's musical, theatrical, artistic, dance, or other visual and performing art talent
- b. Program from visual and performing art performance, showcase, or competition listing the student
- c. Two letters of recommendation from visual and performing arts professionals familiar with the student's work
  - i. Verified internet search to confirm person writing the letter has a confirmed association as a visual and performing arts professional in the noted area
- d. Verified internet search of student to confirm recent visual and performing arts performances and recognition received

#### 3. Other Special Talent

- a. Video or portfolio of student's special talent
- b. Documentation of talent from third party website to include achievement or award in a particular field

- c. Two letters of recommendation from professionals familiar with the student's work
  - i. Verified internet search to confirm person writing the letter has a confirmed association as a professional in the noted area
- d. Verified internet search of student to confirm recent recognition in particular field received

\*Third party websites include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Tennis: <https://www.atptour.com/en/players>
2. Golf: <https://www.amateurgolf.com/Players/Search>; <https://www.ajga.org/Rankings/>;  
<https://scpgajt.bluegolf.com/bluegolf/scpgajt17/profile/memsearch.htm>
3. Track and Field: <https://www.usatf.org/resources/statistics>
4. Softball: <https://www.softballamerica.com/rankings/>
5. [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0A5W66\\_0K-\\_HnZEqecYGSw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0A5W66_0K-_HnZEqecYGSw)
6. <https://www.maxpreps.com/>
7. <http://www.verbalcommits.com/>

### **Special Talent Verification Process:**

A two-step verification process is required for any applicant recommended for admission primarily on the basis of special talent that includes the following:

1. \*The initiator of the recommendation must document and attest, under penalty of disciplinary action that they have performed an assessment and determined that the level of special talent warrants a recommendation for admission.
2. An individual in a supervisory capacity to the initiator must approve the recommendation being put forward. Individuals designated in a supervisory capacity, must minimally be at the Director or Associate Dean level.

\*For applicants recommended by Athletics it is required that the Athletics Compliance Office verify the qualifications of the recommended applicant.

Approval from a member of senior leadership from an office external to the recommending department is required for all applicants recommended for admission primarily on the basis of special talent. The person serving in this capacity can be either the Director of Undergraduate Admissions or the Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Services.