— REIMAGINING —
COLLEGE ACCESS

Expanding Admissions Systems for Equity and Success in Higher Education

Starting in August 2019, students applying to some New England colleges and universities through the Common Application will see a new option to submit performance assessment artifacts. Students from schools, districts, and networks of schools that use performance assessments are encouraged to submit artifacts from those assessments if applying to these select colleges and universities. For more info on this new opportunity, please read on.

2019 Reimagining College Access Pilot

Increasingly, k-12 schools are focusing more intentionally on developing students' deeper learning and higher order skills such as collaboration, communication, problem solving, and critical thinking that are associated with college, career, and civic readiness. As schools are developing ways to measure student development of these skills using performance assessments, colleges and universities are acknowledging their importance.

Building on the progress of other efforts, the Reimagining College Access Initiative (RCA) supports colleges and universities that are considering performance assessment artifacts in their admissions, placement, and advising processes through a community that is sharing high-quality research and promising practices in the field. Each institution of higher education (IHE) will consider performance assessments in its own way, but all will use them to inform decisionmaking.
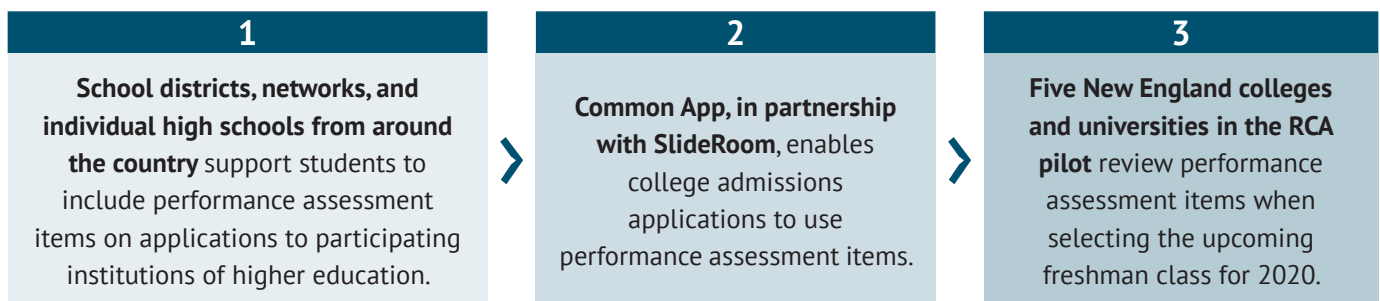
What Is a Performance Assessment?

Performance assessments are demonstrations of student learning, often used alongside more traditional tests. Performance assessments measure how well students apply knowledge, skills, and abilities to authentic problems. A key feature of these assessments is that they require students to produce an artifact—a report, experiment, performance, presentation, video, or other product.

These assessments provide robust information about students' achievements and potential for postsecondary success.

The pilot was developed to create opportunities for students to provide evidence of their deeper learning and higher-order skills—skills that are not typically revealed through other materials submitted to colleges and universities. By integrating performance-based assessment artifacts into decisionmaking, colleges and universities can more deeply inform not only admissions decisions but also decisions around student placement and the kinds of supports a student may need once on campus.

How the 2019 Pilot Works

Students from schools, districts, and networks of schools that use performance assessments can submit artifacts from those assessments on select college applications through the Common Application. Participating colleges and universities will then review those artifacts when selecting the upcoming freshman class for 2020.

1	2	3
School districts, networks, and individual high schools from around the country support students to include performance assessment items on applications to participating institutions of higher education.	**Common App, in partnership with SlideRoom**, enables college admissions applications to use performance assessment items.	**Five New England colleges and universities in the RCA pilot** review performance assessment items when selecting the upcoming freshman class for 2020.

Participating Institutions of Higher Education

The RCA pilot is made up of a diverse group of New England institutions of higher education - small and large, public and private, and with varying degrees of selectivity. Five colleges and universities are participating in this first pilot. They are Castleton University, Clark University, Pine Manor College, Southern New Hampshire University, and Wheaton College. These pioneering colleges and universities are part of the growing Reimagining College Access learning community, which includes other organizations and institutions of higher education, such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), as supporters of this work. This pilot group has committed to sharing their experiences with the RCA community so that others can learn from their experiences.

Resources

- RCA project website: https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/rca
- *The Promise of Performance Assessments: Innovations in High School Learning and Higher Education Admissions* (report and brief) https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/promise-performance-assessments-report.
- Questions? Contact us if you would like additional information or support: rca@learningpolicyinstitute.org

Stay Involved

If you would like to receive updates about the RCA initiative and New England pilot, please subscribe to our email list at this link: https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/rca-mailing-list.

What Can Students Submit?

Possible performance assessment submissions include, but are not limited to, written samples from original research, digital media portfolios, and/or photographs of completed student work. Colleges and universities participating in the RCA pilot will provide additional guidelines for submission of performance assessment items.

How Will Colleges and Universities Use Performance Assessment Submissions?

Each participating college and university will use the additional performance assessment submissions in accordance with their needs and guidelines alongside other information as part of the general admission decision. They may also use this information once students are accepted to inform placement and advising decisions. In this pilot, all admitted students will be full admits (not special program/status admits).

LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE
Research. Action. Impact.

educationfirst

EducationCounsel
Policy | Strategy | Law | Advocacy