



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Appalachian's GEAR UP Guarantee

#### 1. Where can I find general information about the GEAR UP Guarantee?

The GEAR UP Guarantee is listed on the Appalachian State University admissions website at this link under the section titled "Minimum Requirements": <https://admissions.appstate.edu/admission-process>

More details can also be found on the Appalachian GEAR UP website here:  
<https://gearup.appstate.edu/node/112>

#### 2. What is the application deadline for the GEAR UP Guarantee?

The application is due by November 1st. Supporting materials should be received no later than November 15th. To learn more about scholarship eligibility opportunities, visit [scholarships.appstate.edu/apply/first-year-students](https://scholarships.appstate.edu/apply/first-year-students).

#### 3. The GEAR UP Guarantee eligibility requirements say a minimum of 3.50 weighted GPA. What if I have a 3.49?

Unfortunately, the GEAR UP Guarantee does not permit rounding of GPAs. However, Appalachian uses a holistic review process for admissions which takes into consideration a multitude of other factors in the scoring process. Students also still have time to work hard and improve their GPA with the classes they are taking in their senior year. If their GPA improves to a 3.50 GPA, they can submit their updated transcript and request a re-review of their application to qualify for the guarantee.

#### 4. Which graduating classes will be eligible for the GEAR UP Guarantee?

The following graduating classes of [GEAR UP high schools](#) who are enrolling in college in the fall following their graduation are eligible for the GEAR UP Guarantee:

Class of 2020  
Class of 2021  
Class of 2022  
Class of 2023

#### 5. What is the best way to apply for the GEAR UP Guarantee?

Appalachian State University accepts admission applications through the [Common App](#) (preferred) and through [CFNC](#) (College Foundation of North Carolina). Students who are eligible for the GEAR UP Guarantee are encouraged to apply through whichever application method they choose. There are no additional steps to be considered for the GEAR UP Guarantee.

**6. Is the background check something extra that students have to do to be eligible for the GEAR UP**

**Guarantee?** If required, the background check process happens automatically once the student completes their application for admission to Appalachian State University. The student will be notified via email if they have additional steps to complete.

**7. If a student is registered as a homeschool student in one of the GEAR UP counties, do they qualify for the GEAR UP Guarantee? No. What if the homeschool student is taking part-time classes at one of the GEAR UP high schools?** In order to be eligible for the GEAR UP Guarantee, the student must graduate from one of the [GEAR UP high schools](#).

**8. Is Appalachian lowering their standards?**

Appalachian State has conducted extensive research within the current 11 GEAR UP districts and has determined that there is a significant number of students that are competitive for admission to Appalachian that do not apply. We do not believe that our profile will change significantly by providing this streamlined admission opportunity for first-year applicants from [GEAR UP high schools](#). Given the millions in GEAR UP funding and the tremendous support and investments made by the staff in the GEAR UP districts, we are confident that our retention and graduation rates, which far surpass national averages and are extremely competitive in the state, will continue to be strong. We hope this will give students more confidence that college is within reach.

**9. What if Appalachian isn't the best college for me?**

Choosing a postsecondary institution is such an important decision. Critical to the work of Appalachian GEAR UP is exposing students to a variety of institutions and encouraging them to do research on their own, so that they can make an informed decision about what is the best academic match and personal fit for them. We encourage students to discuss their individual college goals and pathways with a school counselor or college adviser. While this program is intended to offer a more flexible and seamless pathway to Appalachian State University, it is important that all students are exposed to and can consider all of their options to best meet their college and career goals.

**10. I would like to go to a community college first, then transfer to Appalachian. Will I be eligible for the**

**GEAR UP Guarantee as a transfer student?** Appalachian loves transfer students and because of that already has articulated agreements with many of our local community colleges. Students who enroll in community college directly after high school would fall under the programs that are already in place between Appalachian and their community college, which are different than the GEAR UP Guarantee. The GEAR UP Guarantee only applies to first-time college students enrolling out of high school.

**11. Can I use an application fee waiver and still be eligible for the GEAR UP Guarantee?**

Absolutely! Appalachian accepts Official Application Fee Waivers from the Common App, the [College Board](#), [ACT](#), and the National Association for College Admission Counseling ([NACAC](#)). Students are encouraged to work with their high school counselor for help with fee waivers.

**12. Does the GEAR UP Guarantee apply to students who are interested in the SDAP program?**

GEAR UP Guarantee only covers students seeking degrees at Appalachian and does not cover SDAP (Students with Diverse Abilities) as that is a separate application process. Students interested in the SDAP program can learn more here: <https://sdap.appstate.edu/> and can apply here: <https://sdap.appstate.edu/apply>

**13. My score on the SAT is better than my score on the ACT. Can that be considered for the guarantee instead of the ACT score?** Yes, absolutely! The GEAR UP Guarantee requires a 3.5 GPA and the UNC System [Minimum Admission Requirements](#). These requirements for a first-time freshmen are either an ACT composite score of 17 or an 880 on the SAT. If you have taken multiple college entrance exams, Appalachian will consider whichever is higher.

*\*For first-year students applying for a 2021 term, official test scores (ACT/SAT) will not be required for admission. Students will have the option to select on the application whether or not they will be submitting test scores for review. Read more about the 2021 test waiver policy at <https://admissions.appstate.edu/node/690>.*

**14. Who can I talk to if I have more questions about the GEAR UP Guarantee?**

The Appalachian State University Admissions Counselor assigned to your district would love to connect with you and answer any questions you have. You can find your counselor's contact information [here](#).

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