

Direct Admit Wisconsin

What is the type of admissions redesign?

Direct Admissions: High school students are proactively notified by a state postsecondary agency or system of their acceptance to at least one two- or four-year institution based on academic criteria (e.g., GPA) and can select the institution(s) of their choice by completing a simplified application without an application fee.

In which state is it based?

Wisconsin

What state postsecondary agency or system sponsors the program?

Universities of Wisconsin (UW)

When was the program first started?


2024; the class of 2025 was the first to participate.

Does the student or state agency/system initiate the admissions process?



Universities of Wisconsin (UW).

What are the central characteristics of the program?

Direct Admit Wisconsin is an initiative by the Universities of Wisconsin to proactively offer admission to qualifying high school students between their junior and senior years. Students receive their Direct Admit offer of admission letter via email, hard copy letter and/or their high school student portal. The letter is an official admission offer from UW and lists all the UW universities/campuses the student has been admitted to. The student is required to take the next step and complete a form indicating which UW university (or universities) they are interested in attending. This form submits the student's information to the UW and will trigger additional UW campus specific communications.

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|  <p>Program Scope</p> | <p>Does the program include all high school districts or only a portion? Is opt-in required?</p> | <p>High schools/districts have to choose to participate in Direct Admit Wisconsin. As of December 2025, nearly 500 out of 802 high schools have done so.</p> <p>Students must be enrolled in a participating school district and agree to participate in the program during their junior year; participation is facilitated by their high school. Depending on the high school, the student will have the option to either opt in to the program or opt out of participation.</p> |
| | <p>Does the program support admission to four-year institutions, two-year institutions, or both?</p> | <p>Four-year institutions; as of fall 2024 the program does not include the Wisconsin Technical Colleges or Wisconsin private colleges and universities. Direct Admit Wisconsin is limited to the Universities of Wisconsin which are all 4-year institutions.</p> |
| | <p>Which institutions are participating in the program?</p> | <p>All Universities of Wisconsin except UW-Eau Claire, UW-La Crosse, and UW-Madison are participating in Direct Admit Wisconsin. Each academic year, UW universities and school districts are given the opportunity to continue participation or join if they have not participated previously.</p> |

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| Eligibility Criteria and Application  | What are the academic eligibility criteria for students? | Students are eligible for direct admission to participating UW Universities based on their unweighted, cumulative GPA at the end of their junior year, being on track to graduate and academic coursework (4 units of English, 3 units of approved college preparatory math, 3 units of social science, 3 units of natural science, and 4 additional academic units). ⁱⁱ |
| | Are students still required to apply to postsecondary institutions? | Students who receive direct admit offers do not need to complete the traditional application if they are interested in attending one of the UWs that offer admission. Students need to complete the Direct Admit form in the Universities of Wisconsin Admission Pathway Portal to claim their direct admission offers. |
| | Is the application fee waived ? | There is no fee or cost to participate or submit the Direct Admit form for students. |
| Data and Policy  | What is the data source for the program? | Direct Admit Wisconsin uses data provided by the high school ⁱⁱⁱ to admit students to universities. Participating high schools provide student demographic information, grade point average data and course data. Most high schools use their student information systems (e.g., Skyward, PowerSchool, Infinite Campus and JMC) to facilitate data transfer, but UW accepts data from high schools in other formats. Students who participate agree to share information with the Universities of Wisconsin to facilitate a streamlined admission process. |
| | Did the state or system adopt policy related to the program, and if so what does the policy include? | This program was developed and implemented by the Universities of Wisconsin. No policy was created to implement Direct Admit Wisconsin. |

Information above is up to date as of December 2025

ⁱIn the future, the choice to participate will become a part of the regular registration process for incoming junior students: <https://www.wisconsin.edu/direct-admissions/students-and-families/>

ⁱⁱ<https://www.wisconsin.edu/direct-admissions/download/DirectAdmissionsFocusGroup20231016.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱThe high school will share the following student data with Universities of Wisconsin: High school and district information, student name, WISEid, high school student ID, graduation year, physical address, school email address, GPA, legal sex, and race/ethnicity. Federal guidelines require us to collect race/ethnicity information and will be used in aggregate for federal reporting. Demographic information is not a factor in the direct admission decision process: <https://www.wisconsin.edu/direct-admissions/students-and-families/>