

I'm not a bot



Ap exam leak 2024

The world of AP testing has recently been rocked by two concerning reports. The first is that a record number of AP test scores were canceled this year, the second is that AP scores are higher than ever across the board. Both of these incidents raise questions about the state of AP testing, its place in the college admissions process, and where things are going from here. In this article, we're going to examine these revelations, and explore how they will impact both current and future students. We'll let you know what's going on, and what the AP test plans to do about it. AP classes are an important part of high school for many students, and anything which disrupts that causes ripples of concern to spread outwards. Let's get to the bottom of what's going on, and how it will impact you. The first story, reported in the Times of Higher Education, is on a major AP cheating scandal which rocked the AP tests this year. A number of tests were leaked back in May, and testing materials made it onto the international black market. It turns out that it is much easier to do well on a test when you know exactly what questions are going to be asked ahead of time. This was not the first cheating scandal that College Board has dealt with, but it did lead to a significant number of score cancellations for suspected bad behavior. No cheating reports were so widespread that entire countries suffered, but this was still far more pervasive than usually occurs during AP testing. As a result of this, College Board is looking into new digital distribution methods for their tests. Their current method relies on mailing out thousands of paper exams weeks in advance to schools all over, making it easy for a single bad actor to gain access to testing materials. The other reason the AP tests are in the news is a report by the Wall Street Journal bringing to light an interesting new trend; namely, that scores on AP tests are rising significantly in comparison to previous years. This means that more students than ever are receiving scores of 3 or above, entitling them to college course credit. In some respects, this is great. Earning college credit early is one of the main appeals of AP tests, and more students earning this credit helps them tremendously. In other respects, this has raised important questions about the validity of the scores. AP tests are supposedly based on rigor; trying to equal the difficulty of a college course. While AP courses are nothing like college, they still have a reputation for difficulty, and any loss of this may cause colleges to reevaluate when and how they grant credit for participation in them. So that's what's going on with the AP exams, but how will any of this impact you? These are interrelated issues, but we'll handle each in turn, since the impacts are likely to be somewhat varied. As long as there are high stakes examinations, there will be those who try to cheat on them. This is a quirk of human nature, and one which we see in all kinds of testing scenarios, not just the AP exam. It is also the nature of those giving the exams to try to prevent this cheating, and we are seeing that now in how College Board is responding to this latest AP cheating scandal. There has been a push to digitize these tests ever since Covid showed it was theoretically possible, and this latest leak is being used to further accelerate that timeline. It is true that digital tests do not have the same cheating and leaking vulnerabilities that physical tests do. This does not mean they are foolproof however. The vulnerability of digital data depends on how secure the systems it is stored on are. As we have seen through myriad data leaks in the past, even impacting financial institutions and tech companies, just because something is stored digitally does not automatically make it secure. Indeed, while digitizing the test makes some cheating methods more difficult, others become easier; it merely transforms the problem into a new form. The biggest issue they have is one they cannot address, and that is how the internet has made cheating a wide scale problem generally. Prior to the internet, a single test getting leaked would have a very small impact, limited to only those students who could somehow physically gain access to that test. Now a leaked test can go online in minutes, bouncing between different corners of the globe. It is this increase in the ease of distribution which has led to a rise in cheating incidents, rather than any particular flaw in the AP tests' delivery method. While some students turn to less than honest methods to secure high scores, students across the board are seeing their scores increase when compared to previous years of testing. The given reason for this is that the AP tests have changed how they grade the tests, moving away from human judges and towards algorithmic grading systems. Every test they have done this on has seen corresponding increases in scores. On its face, this is great news. Students stress all the time over these exams and their scores on them, and the additional chance to earn college credit will be very welcome for students. On the other hand, this may cause universities to question the validity of AP exams, and whether high scores are truly indicative of a student's ability to do college level coursework. While College Board claims their goal is not to merely increase the number of students scoring well, there are some who point to the growth of dual enrollment classes competing with AP classes as a possible reason for this change. While College Board is technically a nonprofit organization, they do act as a business in many ways, and competing with these classes for market share is something they are clearly concerned with. As this expands to more tests, and permeates through the AP system, we will see if colleges reevaluate which scores are counted for credit. There are already many colleges which limit credit to students scoring a 4 or 5 (or only a 5), and this may expand significantly if more colleges believe that the AP tests have diluted their grading standards substantially. While this may help students in the short term, the long term consequences remain to be seen. While these are very different stories, the root causes and motivations of the actors at work are the same. Namely, as college admissions becomes more competitive, any way to gain an advantage in the admissions process becomes increasingly sought after. This has impacted any number of areas, and we observe the stresses it creates in students. This does not justify cheating of course, but does explain the student's motivations and mindsets for doing so. You can empathize with an action without condoning it. This parallels what we see in other high stakes testing scenarios; some countries turn off their entire internet to prevent cheating on college qualifying exams; after all when a single exam defines your whole future, you have a lot of incentives to make sure you do as well as you can on it. The AP tests are not at this level yet of course. Nobody gets into college or is rejected based on the strength of their AP scores alone. But they are part of a larger trend, as the top colleges grow ever more competitive with their acceptance rates, and students become ever more stressed out about getting into one. There is no easy solution to this, especially because the College Board benefits indirectly from this. After all, they run the AP and SAT exams, they enable most applications through the Common App, and they even enable financial aid applications through the CSS Profile. While they may not like how stressful and overwhelming the college application process has become for students, they are intrinsically entwined with the process as a whole, and benefit from every aspect of it. It remains to be seen what the long term consequences of these news stories will be, but it's clear that it isn't getting any easier to apply to top colleges. The pressure on students to succeed is only increasing, which isn't good for anybody involved, least of all them. The AP tests have become a core component of high school for many students, and offer some significant advantages. For more on this, and advice on which tests you should consider taking, see our article here. The point of this article is to explain why they've made the news recently and why there may be some problems associated with them that are not commonly commented on. College applications are always going to be stressful, it's the first step to the rest of your life after all. They don't, however, have to be overwhelming or all consuming. If you feel overburdened by the prospect of applying to colleges, or are facing doubts about an upcoming AP test, then schedule a free consultation with us today to learn how we can help you. Applying to college is hard, yes, but you don't have to do it alone. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. April 20, 2025 International students are taking AP Calculus AB before the U.S. — and the leaks are already starting to surface. In 2024, the international version of the AP Calc AB exam leaked within hours of administration, with Telegram screenshots showing FRQ prompts, calculator section topics, and detailed solutions. This year, May 2025 is already showing similar signs — and we're monitoring it all in real time. If you're sitting the international version, now is the time to tune in. Here's what we're seeing so far. What's Being Discussed for AP Calc AB 2025 (Intl) Based on patterns, platform activity, and early drop points, these are the areas gaining attention: FRQ questions involving slope fields and logistic modeling Calculator-based volume of revolution and average value integrals Unit-based derivative applications (motion and optimization) Early "topic dump" lists circulating on Telegram (some credible, some not) We've already verified overlap between prep materials used abroad and what's now being shared online — and the pattern is clear. Want Access to What's Not Public? For students who want real-time updates on what topics are leaking, what's already confirmed, and what to study (or skip), we're providing private support. Here's how: Reach out directly via Telegram | Instagram | Email. We only respond to students prepping seriously. Expect delays during peak exam week. Study Smarter — Use the Edge International students often face tougher versions — but they also get early visibility. That can be your advantage. Whether it's identifying repeat FRQ types or confirming which calculator questions are active, we've got your eyes on the data — and we're sharing it one-on-one. AP Calculus AB 2025 (international) might be difficult — but if you know what's coming, it doesn't have to be. CHINA-UNITED STATES Amber Wang 11 July 2024 China has become embroiled in a fresh cheating scandal involving the international exams used for admissions to universities overseas after a large number of test-takers reported having their scores in the United States Advanced Placement (AP) exam cancelled because of alleged misconduct. Affected candidates are from different parts of China, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, as well as smaller, second-tier cities. Beijing and Shanghai together have the largest number of AP curriculum schools in the country. Although the exact number of students affected has not been revealed, study abroad experts note the issue has the potential to disrupt this year's recruitment from China by US universities, causing delays in take up of offers or offer cancellations. AP exam scores are released online in early to mid-July. As of 11 July, University World News had found more than 2,000 posts about the cancellation of AP scores made over the course of one week on the Little Red Book, a popular social media platform. Test-takers reacted with regret and disbelief. Some candidates have since appealed for a review of their results. However, many conceded there was a slim chance the decision would be reversed. "I'm feeling desperate," one student said. Candidates also fear prospective institutions may become aware of allegations of misconduct, although the College Board, the US administrator of AP and SAT exams, claims it does not notify colleges or universities of a student's plagiarism infraction. High stakes Although allegations of AP test leaks and plagiarism are reported almost every year, this year the allegations feel more "rampant", according to Xiao Jingdong, founder of Yixiao, a third-party independent evaluation agency for international education. "The benefits of fraud are huge, which leads some people to take the risks," Xiao told local media, while noting the penalties for misconduct prescribed by the College Board are somewhat "limited". Xiao said if cheating incidents occur frequently in a particular school, other students at the school or even in the country will come under suspicion, affecting the overall reputation and university admissions opportunities of future students. The AP score cancellations came amid a probe by the testing body of the International Baccalaureate (IB) into exam question leaks. Earlier this year the IB was exposed to time zone cheating for the first time in its 55-year history. The IB is typically taken by students at International Schools, an important source of high-quality students aiming to study abroad. "Comprehensive" investigation of AP Those prospective international students who had their scores cancelled following the May AP examination were informed by the College Board last week, in advance of the official release of results on 8 July. "The decision follows a comprehensive investigation where we determined that testing misconduct occurred," the 2 July email from the College Board reads. In its email, the College Board said the decision was made after "clear and overwhelming evidence" of misconduct was found. It also outlined examples of behaviour that may constitute cheating, such as analysis of answers that demonstrate copying or collusion or having applications running on the testing device other than its official testing application Bluebook. A wide range of subjects was involved, including popular subjects such as economics, calculus, psychology, statistics, biology, and chemistry. The 2024 exams were administered in schools and test centres from 6-10 May and 13-17 May. Social media speculation referred to widespread exam leaks as a reason behind the cancellations. In May, Chinese media reported that real AP exam questions could be purchased online on Little Red Book and another social media platform, Zhihu. In some extreme cases, answers were blatantly on sale at the entrance to the testing site. On 6 May, the AP chemistry exam was held on the first test day in China. Some candidates who illegally obtained test questions in advance, posted on social media that the first half of the free-response questions and many multiple-choice questions were "exactly the same". Such tips later became more widespread, raising suspicions the tests may have been leaked in advance. Exam oversight problems According to study abroad experts, the leaks may be due to oversight problems. In the past, the AP programme was supervised by the National Education Examinations Authority under the Ministry of Education in Beijing, with a relatively rigorous examination management process, and few leaks were reported. However, since September 2020 the ministry no longer oversees the AP, and the College Board has partnered with US test administration agency Prometric to manage overall AP exam registration and administration in China. The agency delegates management responsibilities to schools and training institutions, resulting in numerous supervisory loopholes, according to Fu Ying, a senior AP examiner. "In particular, subjects such as mathematics, economics, and calculus are at high risk of leaks, and they are also the subjects that people are more willing to spend money on," Fu told Chinese media in May. Time zone cheating On 1 May, about half-an-hour after students in Asia completed the "Mathematics P1" exam of the International Baccalaureate (IB), the test content and answers appeared on the social networking platform Reddit, triggering a large number of downloads by students in the European time zone who had not yet started the exam. Test contents for more subjects were leaked after the examinations on 2 May. In a notice on its official website, the International Baccalaureate Organisation said it had been made aware that aspects of the May exam content were shared online by students. However, it did not acknowledge that the cheating could be widespread, and said it was confident that such occurrence remains "at the fringes of what is otherwise a standard exam session". More than 190,000 IB candidates who sat the exam in May around the world received their results in early July. However, the IB organisation would not reveal how many candidates were penalised due to time zone cheating. It has pledged to review time zone arrangements for subsequent tests. "The IB is already part way through innovations to minimise the impact of any such behaviour by students, for example imposing formal start times for exams in each country and moving to having three exam zones across the world. We will of course review these after analysis of behaviours we see this year," it stated. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. On July 2nd, many high school students in Beijing, Shanghai, and the United States received an email from College Board claiming their Advanced Placement (AP) scores from tests taken in May were cancelled due to misconduct. In other words: cheating. Screenshot of email from College Board In the email from College Board, the testing company stated the decision "follows a comprehensive investigation where [test security]determined that testing misconduct occurred. These determinations are made only when there's clear and overwhelming evidence of misconduct such as: - Analysis of answers that conclusively demonstrate copying or collusion. - If testing digitally, having any applications running on your device other than the Bluebook testing application, - Direct observation of the test security violation by testing staff, - Or a combination of these and other pieces of evidence." AP is a set of standardized subject tests that form the basis of the high school curriculum of many American college preparatory schools, as well as many international schools in China. Students scoring high on AP tests use this as a testimony to the rigor of their high school studies for their college applications. Typically, students take four to eight AP courses across their sophomore, junior, and first part of senior year. In Beijing, the exams take place annually at international schools that offer AP courses or at commercial testing centers during the first two weeks of May and are only offered once a year. China has the highest number of AP test takers outside of the United States. This year, subjects like Economics, Calculus, Psychology, Statistics, Biology, Physics, Environmental Science, and Chemistry all have canceled scores, affecting what could be up to tens of thousands of students in multiple countries. One week before the AP exams occurred in May of this year, rumors of leaked questions were rampant on Chinese social media. Outside testing centers, some tutoring institutions openly advertised no-fee "secret question prep clubs" to prove to students that they had access to real-time AP test questions. Rumors of time zone cheating, in which those who take the test first give answers to people taking the test in a later time zone, stirred up more stress and anxiety. One test taker saw other students selling and buying answers just outside the walls of a commercial test center. A few hours later, three subject exams were canceled immediately, even before scoring College Board uses screening techniques that detect similar answers from test-takers in the same testing center. It is often difficult to pinpoint exactly who is responsible for the cheating, so oftentimes everyone who took the same exam in the same testing center pays the price. The AP is only offered once a year, so canceled scores can significantly hinder the college application process, leading to panic amongst agencies, tutors, parents, and schools. For those who did not cheat but whose scores were canceled anyway, the next step is to appeal to College Board. Many students appeal with their semester transcripts to prove their academic integrity. Others seek a Plan B, such as asking for explanations of the mass cancellation from school counselors and teachers who write their recommendation letters. In lieu of that, the only thing to do is wait for next year's test or decide to skip the tests entirely. However, some suspect the notifications could be a scam and suggest test-takers check College Board's website on July 8, the official date of the AP results, to see if their scores are reported. Many dub College Board's decision unfair, as it often punishes the innocent as well as the guilty indiscriminately. What do you think? Did you or your children take the AP Exam this year? Let us know below! Images: Pexels Last week, high school students around the world received an email telling them their Advanced Placement exam scores were under review for potential academic integrity violations—and, if corroborated, they could be canceled. Many students thought it was a phishing scam at first. In incredulous Reddit posts and panicked Tik Tok comments, they questioned the legitimacy of the email's domain and fretted about how the message might impact their college acceptances. But on July 8, when AP results were released, it became clear the initial emails were not fake; students received a follow-up message saying their scores, across a variety of subject areas, were canceled. While the College Board, which owns and administers the AP subject tests, declined to cite the specific number of cancellations this year, the organization confirmed that it was higher than normal. "We have canceled more AP Exams than usual after identifying students who participated in unethical conduct," Holly Stepp, the College Board's executive director of media relations, wrote in an email to Inside Higher Ed. She added that "the total number remains a fraction of 1 percent of exams." The "unethical conduct" was a leak of test materials in May that made its way onto the international black market. Those materials managed to reach an unusually large number of students this year in a globe-spanning cash-for-questions operation—though Stepp said that "none of the materials were so widely shared that we needed to cancel entire exam subjects or scores from whole countries." Still, the security compromise was significant enough that the College Board is re-evaluating its timeline for digitizing the AP exams, which it hopes will make them less vulnerable to leaks and other traditional modes of cheating. "Based on these challenges, we are reexamining the delivery of our exams to thwart theft and cheating and thereby avoid more widespread cancellations in the future," Stepp wrote. "Digitally administered AP Exams are much more secure than shipping paper exams in boxes to thousands of locations weeks in advance." A Technological 'Arms Race' Christian Moriarty, professor of ethics and law at St. Petersburg College in Florida, where he chairs the Applied Ethics Institute, said that in recent years a combination of technological developments, the internationalization of the assessment industry and heightened competition in selective college admissions have exacerbated a perennial problem for high-stakes exams like the AP. "Cheating has always been around and more rife than most people probably realize, since the days when people wrote answers on their arms," he said. "Over the years, though, this kind of cheating"—accessing test materials before the exam—"has become much more common and much easier to get away with." An email informing a student that their AP test scores were under review for possible cancellation, confirmed as legitimate to Inside Higher Ed by the College Board. The means of cheating are changing as the tests themselves change. This past March the College Board introduced its new, completely digital SAT, which the nonprofit says is more secure due to its adaptive nature: students receive different questions later in the test depending on how well they do early on. After the latest security compromise, Stepp wrote that the College Board is looking to "accelerate our current road map" to do the same for AP tests. Whether that will significantly reduce the likelihood of similar cheating tactics in the future is unclear. Timothy Gallen, director of college counseling at the Solebury School in New Hope, Pennsylvania, said that in his experience, paper tests weren't the issue this year. "The irony is that the one student in my school who has had a score withheld for security reasons had taken a digital exam," he wrote in an email to Inside Higher Ed. "None of our paper testers have had their scores withheld." Steve Addicott, chief operating officer of the nearly 20-year-old assessment-security firm Caveon, said that while "truly adaptive" digital tests are typically more secure than static paper ones, new threats have evolved alongside the new technology, including the proxy test-taker market, which boomed during the pandemic. "Bad actors are leveraging technology the same way assessment companies are," Addicott said. "It's an arms race." A Sea of 'Test Pirates' While students' use of leaked materials was more widespread than usual this year, these operations are not uncommon. Addicott called it a "huge industry." "Nearly all high-stakes testing organizations are dealing not just with cheaters but with rings of test pirates, who are not trying to increase their scores but harvesting items illegally to sell online so that other people can gain unfair advantage," he said. "It's these groups that are incredibly sophisticated, organized, and make bundles of money ... They're parasites." Addicott said the cheating rings primarily work in one of three ways. In some cases there's a leak on the inside, from a test writer or proctor, who funnels answer sheets to an outside criminal group. In others, he said, the enterprises employ a kind of secret agent to take an early test, equipped with recording tools that sound like something out of a James Bond movie—"high-definition cameras built into glasses, buttons, jewelry ... contact lenses"—and sell the pictures. The third and most common type uses multiple student test takers, each of whom memorizes a small portion of the test and reports back their assigned questions, recreating a complete test that they can then distribute to eager buyers. This year's big AP leak appears to have originated on encrypted social media channels in China, including Xian Yu and Taobao, but students in classrooms across the U.S. also reported on social media that their scores had been canceled. Many of them proclaimed their innocence. Rob Lamb, a high school counselor at the Sage Ridge School in Reno, Nev., said that while he hadn't heard of any of his students receiving the cancellation email, they'd been tittering about the possibility since hearing news of the exam leaks in China in May. Stepp said the College Board takes pains to ensure its antichecking measures don't inhibit "access to our exams for the vast majority of students who play by the rules." Addicott said that while there are ways to do that—"dishonest test takers leave a trail of breadcrumbs"—it's not always easy. Moriarty compared the increasingly strict security net to the Transportation Security Administration after the Sept. 11 attacks: "security theater" that can be frustrating for many but is ultimately an effective deterrent. "Anytime you increase security, you inevitably are going to have a gradient effect where students who didn't cheat get caught in the crosshairs," he said. "But you also need to maintain trust in these exams or they have no value to any student ... It's a hard balance to strike." (This story has been updated to correct the spelling of Steve Addicott's name.)