
A GUIDE TO UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS



School Year 2011 - 2012



A Guide to University Admissions

Information Package for Students and Parents

2011/2012

International School of Phnom Penh

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INTRODUCTION

Selecting a suitable university or college that meets your academic, professional and personal needs is undoubtedly one of the most important decisions you will make during your life. At ISPP we expect most of our graduates to go on to further studies in universities around the world. Some may go back to their own country; others (in ever increasing proportions) will inevitably go elsewhere. Our 2011 graduates are attending universities in the USA, Canada, UK and Europe, Japan and Australia.

The academic programs offered at ISPP are recognized internationally for their overall excellence. This extends to their reputation as vehicles for entry to the best universities for those students who are most successful in the programme. It is probably true to say that some countries are more familiar with the International Baccalaureate than others, and some countries are more user-friendly with their application process than others. The US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the UK are certainly very familiar and welcoming of the IBDP.

When university guidebooks and websites describe the perfect applicant, they all describe more or less the same person. The ideal candidate has good grades, high test scores, involvement in a variety of extracurricular activities, fluency in several languages, unique hobbies, an array of awards, etc. When you read about this kind of "super-applicant", you might feel discouraged about your chances of being accepted at a reputable university. While it is true that there are a few ideal candidates who could be accepted at almost any university in the world, most institutions are looking for a diverse student body, which includes students who don't fit the ideal profile. Your counselor will help you learn ways in which you can stand out from the thousands of other students who are applying. Standing out may sound like an obvious strategy, but you'd be surprised at how few students actually manage to do it.

Applying to university or college should be a collaborative decision involving your parents, the school counselor, teachers, friends, and admissions personnel. For those returning to their home country, we ask that you familiarize yourself with current thinking and practice regarding university applications. This is so that any special arrangements can be met by the school.

There is no one "best" university for any individual; there are many very fine options. Conducting research into a variety of universities and becoming aware of both your potential and limitations will result in making an appropriate choice. ISPP has designed this guidebook to bring together the important information and websites you will need to complete this process successfully. We hope that you will use this guide, as well as consult with the counselor on a regular basis, to ensure that you are well prepared to embark on this next phase of your life.

PREFACE FOR PARENTS

Helping Out While Letting Go

There is absolutely no question that the last few years of high school and the initial university years are a time of transition for students and their parents. There is no way to move through such an important passage without some feelings of dislocation and loss. Parents have an extremely difficult and delicate role to play in the university decision-making process. There is no routinely 'right' way to handle all its challenges. Fortunately, there is information and advice to help families find their own answers in the university admissions experience.

First, parents must try to separate their own aspirations from those of their children. Naturally, we all want to live for our children, setting examples for them, supporting them and counseling them. However, we don't want to live through our children, directing them, insulating them and controlling them. Thus, if you hear yourself saying "we are applying to University X..." be aware that you are mixing up your own life with the goals of your son and daughter.

Second, parents need to remind themselves that the university search and application process should be a journey from adolescent dependence to adult independence. This means that parents have a dual responsibility; to educate their children about the realities of the admissions process, and to inform them about the responsibilities that come with the immense freedom they will enjoy from the moment they step onto a university campus as a first-year student.

Third, parents should look on the university admissions process as one of their last major opportunities to educate their children. Parents have a chance once again to teach their children about the things they value most and the importance of education to a useful life. They can show how much they trust their child to fashion his or her own values and to act reasonably and humanely in a complicated world. Parents also have a valuable opportunity to instill in their children a crucial sense of self-worth as they go through the university search process together. Thus, in advising them, supporting them, in letting them make mistakes and in letting them go, parents can give their children a healthy feeling of self-esteem. You are helping out while letting go.

Finally, it is important for parents to realize they are not alone in this process. You and other parents may be going through the "letting go" process for the first time or perhaps you have past experience with the process and can be helpful to those going through it for the first time. The point is, you are not alone. Parents can become a powerful support system for one another by talking with each other, the counselor and the teachers who want to share this experience with you.

At the International School of Phnom Penh, university counseling intensifies in the second half of the Grade 11 school year. Students will meet with the Counselor to review academic

progress, test scores and discuss post-graduate plans. Please feel free to contact me at any time during this process.

Regards

Karen Skelly, Counselor ISPP

GENERAL APPLICATION GUIDELINES

1. The application process varies tremendously from country to country (and from University to University within that country) and you need to investigate the required process and deadlines for the system to which you want to apply.
2. Plan ahead and act early. The sooner you apply during the September / October/ November semester of Grade 12 the better. Applications that are received before the deadline can give you an advantage, especially if the university has rolling admissions.
3. There is no need to apply to more than 6 universities. Applying to more than that will only create more stress for you, as the application process is quite time-consuming and costly, but ultimately it is your decision.
4. Make sure that you apply to at least one or two universities where you and the counselor are sure you will be accepted. **YOU MUST HAVE A "BACK-UP"**.
5. Don't worry about your school record from previous years. There is nothing you can do to change your past record. What you CAN do is work as hard as possible now and improve (or maintain) your school record.
6. You must request your transcript. The transcript can be requested through the counselor.
7. You must request recommendations, **BE SURE TO GIVE YOUR TEACHERS PLENTY OF TIME TO WRITE YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS — 4 WEEKS WOULD BE IDEAL**. Please give them a copy of your "Background Information Form" which can be found on the school Moodle system.
8. Think about your activities before you make a massive list on the application. Keep in mind that the quality of an activity is important, as well as your demonstrated involvement and commitment. Several years of sustained involvement in the same activity will strengthen your application.
9. Be honest—don't exaggerate.
10. To apply to North American Universities you will require all high school records from Grades 9 to 12. This is your responsibility!
11. SAT I and SAT II tests are required at most US universities. Make sure you know the requirements of each university and plan ahead to schedule your testing dates.

GRADE 11 TIMELINE

Throughout the school year you should attempt to:

- Put forth as much effort as possible in the work you do.
- Participate in community service activities that show leadership and involvement.
- Speak to the secondary counselor about your interests and goals.
- Consult university and college guidebooks to learn about admission requirements.
- Participate in activities that you like.

September / October / November

- Make sure you have chosen your classes carefully for the upcoming school year.
- Sign-up in early September to write the PSAT (if applicable).
- If you are applying to universities in the US, write the PSAT in October.
- Consider taking the January SAT if you are applying to universities in the US.
- Discuss your future plans with the counselor.
- Think about where you want to go to university.

December / January / February

- Take the SAT in January, if applicable.
- If English is not your native language, begin the process of registering for the TOEFL/IELTS.
- Register for the May or June SAT I or SAT II (SAT II tests cannot be taken at the same time as the SAT I).

March / April / May

- Begin thinking about which teachers you might ask to write letters of recommendation. Now is the time to ask those teachers who are leaving for recommendations.
- Make arrangements for university visits if possible during the June / July break.
- Meet with your counselor to explore university plans.

June / July / August

- Visit campuses, research universities that interest you, compose your resume, write drafts of required essays, attend a summer program, interview with recruiters.
- Write the TOEFL (if applicable).
- Request information and/or preview applications from universities.
- Begin thinking about essay topics.

GRADE 12 TIMELINE

Throughout the school year you should attempt to:

- Put forth as much effort as possible in the work you do.
- Participate in community service activities that show leadership and involvement.
- Speak to the counselor about universities of interest, test dates, etc.
- Participate in activities that you like.

September

- Make an appointment with the counselor to review your plans.
- Register for the SAT's you would like to take in October, November, or December—along with the TOEFL/IELTS if necessary.
- Have a clear idea of your university's requirements for SAT subject tests and register to take them.
- Explore admissions websites for application requirements.
- Oxford and Cambridge applicants, who wish to be considered for an interview *outside* of the UK, must submit all application materials by **September 15**.
- If possible, attend university fairs.
- Approach teachers and ask for letters of recommendation. **Make sure to give them a copy of your "Background Information" form.**
- Begin completing the applications, especially if an application is for Early Decision, Early Action, or if a university sends out decisions on a "rolling" basis.
- If necessary, download the financial certification form from each university website and ask your parents to start obtaining the required documents from their bank.

October

- Work on completing your university essays. Ask a teacher or counselor for feedback.
- If you will be applying to UK universities, submit your UCAS form (the Oxford and Cambridge deadline, as well as some professional programs, is **October 15th**).
- Take the October SAT (if applicable).
- Your first application should be completed and submitted to the counselor this month.
- Early Decision (ED) and Early Action (EA) applications should be finished this month and submitted at least two weeks before the university deadline. Normally, the university deadline for ED is **November 1st** and for EA is **December 1** but check to be sure.
- The deadline for receipt of all application materials to University of California schools (including Berkeley) is **November 30th**.
- Register and take the TOEFL/IELTS if needed.

November

- All applications with deadlines in December and January (primarily US) must be completed and submitted to the counseling office by **November 15th**. Any documents received after this date cannot be guaranteed to arrive at the university on time.
- Take the November SAT if necessary.
- Whether you are applying online or by paper, please fill out a “Transcript Request Form” (this can be found on the school information system ‘Moodle’) for each university so we will know which documents (e.g. transcripts, recommendations, etc.) to send and where to send them.
- Present any Mid-Year School Report forms to your counselor.

December

- Take the December SAT if needed.
- If you have not already done so, make certain you have the testing agency send your official SAT and/or TOEFL scores directly to the universities.
- If a university gave you a Mid-Year School Report form, please fill out your section and turn it in with your application.

January and February

- Go to the university’s web page to see if you can check the status of your application.
- Check that all supporting information (including SAT scores and first semester grades) has been received.
- If you do not receive confirmation that your application was received, contact the university.
- Complete the FAFSA (financial aid form) if you are a US citizen and will be requesting financial aid.

February, March, and April

- Letters of acceptance begin to arrive depending on the schedule used by each university. As you receive each decision, please notify the counselor.
- Normally, you have until about May 1 to make your final decision (except in the case of Early Decision applications).
- Send final “predicted IB scores” if applicable.
- If you are placed on a “waitlist” see your counselor to review your options.
- Once you’ve made your decision, notify all of the universities that accepted you whether you will be attending or not.
- Maintain good grades. Your acceptance is contingent upon you completing Grade 12 satisfactorily. If your grades drop significantly, your acceptance can and will be withdrawn.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

I. STUDYING IN THE USA

Institution Types

The structure of education in the United States differs notably from that of many other countries. As you may already know, the word 'college' is often used as an umbrella term (and will be throughout this section) to include all types of higher education institutes—including universities. The following definitions will assist you in identifying the differences between institution types:

Universities

Universities are academic institutions that include one or more undergraduate faculties, as well as any number of graduate and professional faculties (i.e., those offering study for a single profession, such as medicine or law). In other countries, many professions are studied immediately following secondary school, while in the United States (and Canada) they are studied only after two, three, or four years of university. Pharmacy, medicine, dentistry, law and veterinary medicine are examples. Very few professional faculties admit students from other countries directly into their degree programs.

Four-year Colleges

Four-year colleges are undergraduate institutions offering academic programs leading to a bachelor's degree. In addition to arts and sciences, many colleges offer degrees in business administration, education, nursing, and a variety of technological programs. There are approximately 1,800 undergraduate colleges in the United States.

Institutes of Technology

Institutes of technology, or polytechnic institutes, offer specialized programs in the sciences and engineering, in addition to basic sciences and liberal arts. These institutes, many of them highly regarded in the United States, usually offer undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Community Colleges

These institutions serve the general population of local communities in providing high school graduates, earners of the GED (high school equivalency exam), and other adults the opportunity to earn college credit toward a certificate or degree. Courses taken can generally be applied toward graduation requirements in a four-year college or university. Many technical and para-professional programs are offered which prepare students to enter the workforce directly. Community colleges generally do not provide on-campus housing, but are much lower cost than four-year colleges.

Junior Colleges

Junior colleges function in a similar way to four-year colleges in that they provide on-campus housing, but generally offer a two-year program, after which students may complete an Associate's Degree or transfer to a four-year institution.

The Application Process

In the US, each college sets their own criteria for determining who gets admitted. Each one designs its own application form, asks different questions, has a variety of deadlines, and sets its own policies. Generally speaking, most colleges will require the following documents to be submitted:

- A completed application form
- A personal statement/essay
- A high school transcript
- Letters of recommendations
- SAT I scores and sometimes SAT II or Subject Tests
- TOEFL results (the IB Organization is working with US colleges to waive this requirement for IB Diploma Holders)
- Mid-year grade report
- Documented proof that the family has sufficient funds for the student

Regular Decision

Most students complete what is called a "Regular Decision" application. This application often has a deadline in January and a standard date (usually around April 1) when applicants are notified of their acceptance. **At ISPP we require all application materials to be submitted through the counseling office by December 1.**

Rolling Admissions

Some colleges, primarily large state universities, don't admit their first year students (freshman) all at once. Instead they make admission decisions as the applications are submitted. Therefore if you apply in October, you might hear in November. Admissions officers keep accepting and rejecting students until the first year class (freshman class) is filled. Obviously, if a college uses this kind of "rolling admissions" you should get your application in early. The longer you wait, the harder it is to get admitted.

Applications for large state universities are usually fairly brief since they have thousands of applications to process. They also tend to emphasize the numbers (GPA and SAT's) in their decision process.

Early Decision

Early Decision (ED) is an application program under which a student indicates that a specific college is their absolute first choice. This plan is normally understood to involve a prior commitment by an applicant to accept a college's offer usually, but not always, before January 1st. The deadline for ED may be as early as November 1 or as late as December 1. Students who choose ED are usually notified about their acceptance around December 15. A student may only apply ED to one college. Upon acceptance to that one college, the understanding is that the student will immediately withdraw all other applications. You should only use the ED plan if you have an absolute first choice college. One of the major advantages is that admissions committees feel positive about a student who has clearly designated their college as the first choice. Because of this, at most colleges, students who apply ED have a slightly better chance of admission than those who apply under the regular decision program. The major disadvantage is that you will have less time to review all of your options and will have to commit to a college very early in Grade 12.

Early Action

Early Action (EA) is a plan some colleges use which allows students to apply early and receive an early notification, but they do not require you to withdraw your other applications. There is no obligation to enroll. Accepted students don't have to make a decision until the regular May 1 reply date.

On-Line Applications

Almost all of the major colleges provide students with the option of applying online. It is recommended that you use on-line applications if that option is available. With on-line applications you avoid the possibility that your application will be lost in the mail. On-line applications have the added advantage of allowing you to track your application status and check for missing items through your account on the college's admissions website. Options for on-line applications include applying directly on the college's home page or by using application software available on major applications websites.

"The Common Application"

Several years ago some colleges developed an application called "The Common Application". The original idea was to allow students to fill out one application form and use it to apply to several colleges at the same time. There are now 415 colleges that accept the Common Application. It may be completed online or downloaded as a "pdf" file at www.commonapp.org. All colleges accepting the Common Application must agree to consider it on an equal basis with their own institutional form. Many colleges require you to submit a supplementary form in addition to the Common Application.

Standardized Tests

Standardized tests are an important part of the admissions process in the US. The exact weight a college places on a test is somewhat difficult to determine. Some very large colleges use test scores in combination with other statistical factors to create an admissions index. Colleges that use this system place more weight on tests largely because they have too many applications to deal with on an individual basis. At very selective colleges scores may play a different role. Although these colleges have plenty of students with top marks, they are more likely to consider additional criteria including work experience, cultural background, community service, multilingual experience, athletic ability, artistic activities, etc. As an international student, you may have an advantage at such colleges because you add to the diversity of the student body. Low test scores, however, could serve as a red flag that admission officers can't ignore.

For specific test requirements at each, students should refer to university websites.

PSAT

The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) is a practice test for the SAT. It is normally written by Grade 11 students in October of each year. It can also be taken by students in Grade 10. The test consists of two - 25 minute critical reading sections, two 25-minute math sections, and a 30 minute writing skills section. Scores on this test range from 20 to 80 on both subtests and correlate with the 200 to 800 SAT scale. Most students normally earn lower scores than they will when they take the SAT. The scores from this test do not appear as part of your application to college. Colleges may purchase the names and addresses of students based upon certain information that the student has provided (e.g., scores in certain ranges, major interest, gender) so they can begin the process of identifying potential applicants and mail information to those students. If you do not want to participate in that process, you may indicate this on your registration form.

NMSQT

The National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is the same as the PSAT. Only the PSAT taken in Grade 11 may qualify as the NMSQT. The results of the PSAT are used to select entrants for the National Merit Scholarship, National Achievement Scholarship, and National Hispanic Scholarship program. You must be a US citizen to qualify for these scholarships. This is a highly competitive scholarship.

SAT-I

When people talk about the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) they are normally talking about the SAT-I Reasoning. Colleges and universities in the US require SAT-I scores because the results are the only common comparison they have between students coming from a variety of

schools and backgrounds. In combination with grades, SAT scores can help to predict who will be successful in college. For students going to the US, SAT's are required by nearly all colleges.

If you are planning to write the SAT, registration should be done online at www.collegeboard.com. The ISPP school code or (CEEB code) is **655025**. On the morning of the test you must bring your admission ticket, a photo ID, your calculator, and pencils.

You can take the SAT more than once. You decide which test date results to send to Universities but be aware that you may not have time to preview your scores before the University deadline in December.

You are permitted to use a calculator on the SAT-I math section.

SAT-II

SAT-II's are sometimes required by the more selective US colleges and the University of California schools. They are one-hour tests that cover subjects studied in high school. During any SAT test date, you can choose to take exams in one, two, or three subjects. You cannot take both the SAT-I and SAT-II on the same day. Most subjects are offered on each SAT test date. The notable exception is for the Foreign Language with Listening (November 5, 2011) and World History (December 3, 2011). These tests are offered only in certain test centres so check the SAT schedule. If Japanese, Korean or Mandarin is your native language, you probably will not be able to substitute this exam for a required SAT-II test since the test is designed for students who have completed three or four years of high school language study. Colleges do not find the scores earned by native speakers (which are invariably around 800) to be very helpful. On the morning of the test, bring your admission ticket, a photo ID, your calculator, and pencils.

If you think you need to take the SAT-II, you should plan to take it in May or June of the year you complete the highest level course in that subject area. Preparation for a final exam is also great preparation for the SAT-II. If necessary you can retake some of the subjects or select new subjects during the October or November test dates of Grade 12. If colleges ask for SAT-II's you should plan to take a Science, Math and a third test of your choice. Some colleges recommend but do not require SAT II's. If you're not sure where you'll be applying but you are strong in an academic area, you should consider taking a test in that subject at the end of Grade 11.

SAT Scores

The scores for all SAT exams are reported on a scale from 200 to 800. When students talk about their SAT score ("I scored 1150; how about you?"), they are referring to the combined verbal and math scores on the SAT-I (old version). With the revision of the test, there is now a total of three scores—each out of 800. Therefore, you will have a combined score out of 2400.

The easiest way to determine how you did on the test is to check your percentile score. A percentile score judges your performance relative to other students who took the test. If you earn an SAT score at the 50th percentile, it means you scored better than 50 out of 100 typical college-bound students who took the test. Be careful not to confuse percents with percentiles. They have very different meanings. SAT-II percentiles are ordinarily low because students taking the SAT-II's are generally a very strong group.

Nearly all colleges require an official copy of your SAT scores. **When you register for the SAT you have the option of sending your official scores automatically to four colleges at no additional charge.** Once the test is scored, ETS will send your new results to the colleges you list. You can have your official scores sent later.

Retaking the SAT

Students often ask how many times they should take the SAT. Generally, the answer is twice. Statistics indicate that most students show score improvement the second time they take the test—on average, 15-20 points on verbal and 15-20 points on math. Taking the SAT more than twice will rarely improve your scores much more. If you are in despair due to your low PSAT scores, remember that your SAT scores will probably be better, especially if you keep taking math courses, read a lot, and communicate in English as much as possible.

SAT Prep Programs

There are a bewildering array of books and computer programs available to help you prepare for the SAT-I. As long as they don't take time away from your homework or other activities, spending a little time using one makes sense. It is recommended that you take some time to look at the many preparatory courses available during the school year but admission officers say that your courses and grades are the most important factor they consider when making an admissions decision. Putting more time into a preparatory course should not detract from other more important activities such as homework and extracurriculars. Remember, a change in your SAT-I scores may help distinguish you from other applicants, but so may success in an especially rigorous set of courses, involvement in school or community activities, or demonstrating an outstanding talent.

The ACT

The American College Test is an alternate to the SAT as an admissions exam for many US universities will accept SAT scores in lieu of ACT scores so it is generally not necessary to take the ACT.

The TOEFL

Most colleges and universities in the US require applicants whose first language is not English to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Some universities will make exceptions if you score at least a 5 in English A1. Students are often unsure as to whether they should take the TOEFL since many learned to speak both English and another language simultaneously. Your native language is normally the factor that determines whether you must take the TOEFL. **Although the test is expensive it may be to your advantage to take it even if you are now at a native English level.** When an admissions officer reviews your application file, the TOEFL score will immediately remind him or her that you were raised speaking another language. That reminder can be an especially helpful “excuse” if your SAT verbal score was low. If you are uncertain whether you need to take the TOEFL, talk to the counselor to see what makes sense for you.

TOEFL switched to the Computer-Based Test (CBT) a few years ago. With the change came a new scale. The computer-based scale ranges from 40 to 300. On the new scale, a score of 250 equates to an old score of 600. A conversion table can be found in the TOEFL registration booklet. The test contains sections on Reading, Listening, Grammar, and Writing. For more detailed information, please speak to the counselor.

The new TOEFL-iBT (Internet-Based Test) has a few important differences from the TOEFL-CBT. It is four hours in length, will assess integrated skills, and will include a Speaking section. Subtests are each out of 30, and the overall score is out of 120. Most universities will require a minimum overall score between 80 and 90 points. Please visit university websites or contact university admissions officers for the most up-to-date requirements.

Sending your Official Scores

When you take the SAT or TOEFL exam, you are the person who receives and “owns” the scores. Although your counselor usually receives a copy of your results, most colleges do not consider these reports to be “official.” The vast majority of colleges require that you have the testing agency send your scores to them. You can do this at the time you register for the test or through www.collegeboard.com. Only you can send your official scores—the counselor cannot.

Choosing a Major

The majority of students who begin college in the US do not know what their major will be. There is a lot of latitude to try different courses in the first year or two and then choose a major later. Many students apply as an “undecided” student and wait until their second year (sophomore year) to declare a major. Except for certain majors—like engineering—nearly all students take a broad variety of courses during this time. General education or “core” requirements help to ensure that all students have a breadth of knowledge in addition to a specialized area when they graduate. The flexibility of changing majors also allows students to transfer between different colleges with a minimum amount of trouble.

Medical School—International Students

In the medical school application process, non-US Citizens holding permanent residency in the US are generally treated the same as citizens. They are usually able to claim a state of residence and are afforded the same state residency preference.

Opportunities for medical training in the US are not as open for international applicants (i.e., non-citizens, non-permanent residents). While a number of medical schools — approximately 50 (primarily private) out of 124 — admit international students, the number admitted is quite small. In the years 1994-1998, the number of foreign applicants to US medical schools ranged from 1,109 to 1,215. During that same period, the number accepted to at least one US medical school ranged from 170-194. Thus the acceptance rates for international applicants ranged from 14.0 to 16.4%. In 1999, there were 1,129 foreign applicants to US medical schools and 192 were accepted (17%). More recently, in 2004 there were 504 applicants, 92 of which were accepted. Almost all of those students who were admitted were reported to have had undergraduate experience at an American college.

Many American medical students finance their medical education, at least in part, through government loans and these loans are not available to international students. Therefore, international applicants must be prepared to provide detailed evidence of how they will finance their medical education and, in some cases, may be required to place a portion of the funds in an escrow account prior to enrollment.

Need Blind and Full Need Admissions for International Students

A few private universities in the US offer need blind/full need admissions to international students. This means the admissions committee gives full consideration to all students regardless of their ability to pay. Once admitted the university looks at financial need and will offer grants, scholarships and work/study to meet the full financial need.

These universities are:

1. MIT, Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Massachusetts
2. Harvard University in Massachusetts
3. Princeton University in New Jersey
4. Yale University in Connecticut
5. Dartmouth College in New Hampshire
6. Amherst College in Massachusetts

Many other universities offer grants and scholarships to international students but these are the only institutions at this time whose policy it is to meet the full financial need of the student.

US Citizens

For US citizens applying for financial aid, it is important to understand state residency requirements. Do not assume that because you used to live in a specific state or because your family owns a house that you are automatically a state resident for admissions and tuition purposes. Each state has its own regulations concerning residency. Often, one of the main criteria is whether state income tax has been paid in the years prior to matriculation. Please note that it is sometimes possible to change one's residency status after meeting the minimum time requirements for residing in a state.

Most of the money that is available to finance college education in the United States for US citizens comes through financial aid. The aid awarded is dependent upon the demonstrated financial need of a student and the student's parents. If you are a US citizen you may complete the **Financial Aid Form (FAFSA)**, which is available online at www.studentaid.ed.gov. You cannot file the FAFSA before January 01 of the year for which you're seeking aid. The FAFSA is processed in the States, and any colleges to which you are applying will receive a copy should you so desire. Some colleges will meet 100% of the demonstrated financial need.

Some colleges and scholarship programs will require that you fill out the **CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE** to award their own nonfederal funds. PROFILE is administered through the College Board, though the College Board itself does not give out any need-based scholarships. You can register for PROFILE at www.collegeboard.com beginning October 01 of the year before you intend to start college.

Financial aid will come to students in the form of grants (out-right gifts from the college, not to be repaid), work-study (you'll be required to work 8-12 hours per week in a campus job), or loans which you will be required to pay back.

International Students

Need Blind and Full Need Admissions for International Students.

Please note that the IBDP is recognized by most colleges in the US. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to apply to additional colleges—some of which may offer different financial awards for international students.

Useful Websites

College Board Online
www.collegeboard.com

This site provides information about the SAT program, financial aid, scholarships, and the admissions process. Search the database of over 3000 colleges.

Common Application

www.commonapp.org

This site will allow you to apply online using a single application, which is accepted by 255 colleges. It includes information on application requirements for each participating college.

IB Scores and College Credit at US/Canadian Universities

www.ibo.org/ibo/index.cfm/en/ibo/services/universities

Search for colleges that accept IB scores for college credit. This site will even give you the contact person at the college.

Colleges and Universities

www.universities.com

This is a user-friendly site that allows you to type in a particular program and gain access to colleges offering that program.

Educational Testing Service--TOEFL

www.ets.org/toefl/

Register online to take the computer-based TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language).

FAFSA

www.studentaid.ed.gov/

If you are a US citizen, this site will allow you to file your free application for federal student aid online.

Princeton Review

www.princetonreview.com

Gain access to over 950 college applications, rankings, scholarship information, and test preparation. This is a great site to take an online practice SAT free of charge. Just take a few minutes to sign-up with this site.

CollegeNET

www.collegenet.com

Search from a database of over 2500 colleges. This site also contains information about online applications and scholarships.

Peterson's Education Center

www.petersons.com

This is another site with an extensive database. Search for a college or learn more about entrance tests, admissions essays, and scholarships. There is also a link for international students.

National College Athletic Association

www.ncaa.org

This site has some good information for student athletes seeking scholarships. There is a link for foreign students under “Student-Athlete Eligibility”.

International Education Financial Aid

www.iefaa.org

This site is designed specifically for those wishing to study in a country other than their own. It contains a database of over 1000 scholarships searched by country and/or field of study.

Fast Web

www.fastweb.monster.com/ib/finaid-23f

This site has access to over 275,000 scholarships, fellowships, loans, grants, etc.

National Association for College Admission Counseling

www.nacac.com/p&s_international.html

This is a link specifically for international students. It contains information on visas, student aid, test preparation, steps to college planning, and college rankings.

Virtual Campus Tours

www.virtualcampustours.com

Find a college in the US and take a virtual tour of the campus.

II. STUDYING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Institution Types

There are two major kinds of degree-awarding institutions in the UK offering higher education programs—universities and colleges/institutions. Undergraduate or first degrees generally take three years, although some institutions offer special four-year courses for international students whose high school qualifications do not meet university requirements. Courses such as medicine, dentistry, and architecture can take up to seven years to complete. After completing a first degree, some students continue their studies by taking a post-graduate course, which may involve the writing of a research thesis and completing further coursework.

Universities

Universities are traditionally regarded as the centres of academic learning offering a wide range of courses. The number of UK universities has greatly increased as the former polytechnics and some colleges of higher education have recently become universities. Universities in the UK now offer a much wider range of subjects at many more levels of study.

Colleges and Institutes of Higher Education

There are now nearly 600 institutions of "further education" in the UK, which offer a wide range of vocational, academic and leisure courses. These are generally smaller than universities and may concentrate on more specialized fields of study, such as education, art and design, music and drama. Some institutions also run courses leading to vocational and professional qualifications.

The Application Process

UCAS – The buzzword to use for UCAS is ISPP2012

All applications to UK colleges and universities are coordinated through an agency called the University and College Admissions Service (UCAS), although the universities themselves consider and accept/reject the applications. Universities in the UK are becoming more experienced with international admissions and may publish special requirements for international students. Please consult individual catalogues and calendars for details. There is a fee to register with UCAS. Registration can be done online (www.ucas.ac.uk), and candidates (when they have their password) are able to track the progress of their application online. Generally, registration and applications should be made by January 15th of the year in which the student will enter the university. **At ISPP we require all application materials to be submitted through the counseling office no later than December 1st.** Students who are unable to meet this deadline will be asked to submit applications independent of the counseling office and staff. Applications for places in popular courses at some universities and colleges will not be considered if the application is received late. You should check with individual universities and colleges if you are not sure.

Applicants who include Oxford or Cambridge among their choices must apply before October 15th. This same deadline applies for courses in Medicine, Dentistry, and Veterinary Medicine/Science.

The applicant may apply to as many as five universities or colleges (four for medicine). UCAS forwards all applications, forms, certificates and references to the universities. A university may offer an *unconditional* place or, more usually, a *conditional* place – this means the candidate is offered a place at the university dependent upon his/her exam results. These offers, for IB students, usually specify a points total plus other conditions (e.g., a student may be accepted to study Economics at Leeds University so long as they score a minimum of 33 points, with at least a 5 in Economics). The IB Diploma is recognized by all institutions of further education in the UK. Eventually, students must accept two offers (one firm, one insurance). The IB Organization can forward results automatically to the student's chosen universities. **All requests for IBDP scores must be made through the IB Coordinator before May 1st.**

Art and Design

Those applying for courses in Art and Design applicants will have either **January 15th** or **March 24th** as deadline dates and all other applications are considered simultaneously. Because of the need for portfolio inspection, students are advised to apply by mid-November. To find out what arrangements can be made for sending your portfolio, and whether or not you will be interviewed, contact the universities and colleges directly. You should do this before you complete your application form.

Medicine

Students interested in applying to medical programs may select up to four universities. The deadline for applications is **October 15th**.

The Bio-Medical Admissions Test (BMAT) is used by some universities as an additional means of assessing an applicant's potential for studying Medicine or Veterinary Medicine. For more information regarding this test, please refer to the sub-section entitled ***Standardized Tests***.

Applicants interested in studying medicine at the institutions listed below should register for the BMAT before submitting their application form. More information about how and when to register for the BMAT can be found on the BMAT website. It is the student's own responsibility to ensure they are registered for this test by the closing date (normally around September 30).

At present, universities requiring the BMAT include:

- University of Oxford - Medicine; Physiological Sciences
- University College London (UCL) - Medicine
- Royal Veterinary College - Veterinary Medicine
- University of Bristol Veterinary School - Veterinary Medicine
- University of Cambridge – Medicine; Veterinary Medicine

Universities which do not require an entrance exam for Medicine include Belfast, Bristol, Birmingham, and Liverpool.

Other tests which may be used by some universities include TSA (Thinking Skills Assessment), UKCAT (UK Clinical Aptitude Test), STEP (Sixth Term Examination Papers in Mathematics), and MLAT (Modern Languages Assessment Test). Beginning in 2008, some universities will be utilizing a test that measures empathy. Please refer to the admissions criteria for each individual university well in advance of completing the application.

Please note that there are very few positions available for non-EU applicants wishing to study medicine in the UK.

Higher Level Chemistry is normally required for IB applicants. Biology is often recommended,

and some universities require Physics (Manchester and Belfast). If you have not taken the required prerequisites you may apply as a “Pre-Med” applicant through UCAS (Year “0”).

UK Recommendations

Since you normally apply for a particular course or a combined course when applying to UK universities, the academic reference is written differently for UCAS than it would be for North American universities. The reference page should specifically concentrate on whether you would be successful in the proposed course of study. Predicted exam results are also critical. The UCAS instructions are quite specific in telling the referee to write about whether or not the candidate would be successful if admitted to the particular course of study.

Personal Statement

As a part of the UCAS process, you will be required to complete a 'Personal Statement'. This is the only opportunity to select and draw attention to points about yourself that you feel will strengthen your application. It's your chance to really show them why they want you, so it's important to stress why you're perfect for the course, your academic strengths, and your enthusiasm for studying this subject at the degree level. When trying to sell yourself, remember to be honest and specific.

In your personal statement you should try to include the following:

- Why you have chosen the course. Was there anything in particular that inspired you?
- What do you enjoy about the subject and why?
- Do you possess certain skills needed for the course? Which ones?
- Any jobs or placements you have had, and any skills you gained from the experience.
- Any non-accredited qualifications. What did you learn or gain from the experience?
- Your long-term career goals.
- Social, sports, or leisure interests.
- Anything about your application that is unusual or different. For example, if you have plans to take a gap year, explain why.

When you write your personal statement remember the following:

- Organize your material so it is an informative and interesting read.
- Write clearly and try not to pack in too much information.
- Only write things that you are prepared to talk about at an interview.
- Don't repeat material already on the application form.
- Think about the impression you want to give.
- Don't ramble or fill in space with irrelevant information.
- Don't say that you prefer one university to another.

Ask your counselor for some tips on how to write a great personal statement.

Offers of Admission

Each time a UK university makes a decision on one of your applications, UCAS will send you a formal decision letter with the details of your offer. You don't need to deal with any of these letters until you get your last one. Included with the last decision letter will be a form you will use to notify UCAS of which university you want to attend. You will be asked to code all of your offers (you could have as many as five) as "Firm," "Insurance," or "Decline." At this time you must choose one firm and one insurance offer, and all others must be declined. Since most offers are conditional upon you getting certain examination scores, this can be a difficult decision. If you are confused about any of your offers, check before you complete your reply form. Once you fill out the reply slip, you have made a commitment to particular courses and cannot change your mind. Ask your counselor for advice regarding which offers are best to hold.

UCAS asks you to reply promptly after receiving your reply slip. The deadline to reply will vary from applicant to applicant depending on when you receive your final offer. Most offers will have been received by April, and therefore you will need to respond by early May. However, for some applicants, you will not need to respond until the beginning of June.

Students who score higher on final grades than what was predicted have a one week period where they may reconsider their choice and "trade-up".

Students who fail to meet the standards of their chosen universities may still be successful in getting into a college or university by entering the UCAS Clearing Scheme – this matches courses which are under-subscribed with students who haven't yet been accepted into a course.

If applicants have any queries about the application process, UCAS provides a help-line service in the UK at: 0044-1242-227788.

Standardized Tests

Standardized tests are becoming increasingly important as part of the admissions process in the UK. There are a growing number of universities making use of specialized entrance exams to professional programs.

LNAT

The National Admission Test for Law (LNAT) is designed to provide an assessment of an applicant's potential for law degree courses. It will be used to assess general intellectual skills of comprehension, analysis, logic and judgment. It is intended to improve the selection process and to make it fairer to all applicants—notably for those whose educational or social background may not have provided equal opportunities for preparation.

The test will be of two hours' duration and will have two sections. The first, of 80 minutes, will be multiple-choice questions assessing candidates' ability to read, understand, analyze, and make logical deductions from passages of text in formal English. The second, of 40 minutes, will be an essay chosen from a list of titles. Since these are not tests of knowledge but of fundamental intellectual skills, no prior legal study will be necessary. It is believed that the test will be relatively impervious to coaching. A sample version of a test similar to the proposed LNAT is available on the LNAT website (www.lnat.ac.uk/sampletest.html).

BMAT

The Bio-Medical Admissions Test (BMAT) is used by some universities as an additional means of assessing an applicant's potential for studying Medicine or Veterinary Medicine. It tests fundamental understanding and scientific aptitude, rather than factual knowledge.

The BMAT tests an applicant's ability and does not require additional teaching or preparation; although applicants will find it useful to familiarize themselves with a specimen paper beforehand. You can find a sample test paper via the UCL website (www.ucl.ac.uk/lapt/bmat). More information about the BMAT is available from the BMAT website (www.bmat.org.uk).

Please refer to the sub-section entitled "***Medicine***" for more information.

IELTS

As an international student whose first language is not English, it is likely that you will have to write an English proficiency test. You may, however, be exempt from this requirement if you are enrolled in Higher Level English A1 or A2. Students with English as a second language should check the language requirements for each institution to which you are applying.

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is designed to assess the language ability of those who need to study or work where English is the language of communication. All institutions in the UK and Australia recognize the IELTS, and some universities in the US and Canada do as well.

The exam profiles English proficiency in four different areas:

1. Listening (30 minutes, 4 sections, 40 questions)
2. Reading (60 minutes, 3 reading passages, 40 questions)
3. Writing (60 minutes, 2 writing tasks, 150 and 250 words)
4. Speaking (11-14 minutes, mandatory, face-to-face interview)

You are scored on a scale from 0 to 9 for each of the four sections. Both the IELTS Writing and Speaking tests are marked in whole band scores - no half scores - but the Listening and Reading tests do include half scores. The importance of half scores can be appreciated by understanding that the overall IELTS Band Score, which is the average of all 4 Sub-test band

scores, is rounded up or down to the nearest whole or half Band Score. An overall Band Score of 0 simply means you registered for the test, but didn't show up on the day! An Overall Band Score of 9 means you are just about at the same level as a native speaker, but English is not your first language. It is very difficult to score 9, but not impossible.

IELTS tests are administered at centres around the world. Students who write the test will receive one copy of their results. Additional copies may be sent by the test centre directly to universities and colleges at the request of the candidate. For more information and registration, visit the IELTS website at www.ielts.org

TOEFL

Some, but not all, UK institutions will accept the American TOEFL test. For a complete description of the TOEFL, please refer to “Standardized Tests” in the US section of this handbook.

Choosing a Course of Study

Decisions regarding what to study in the UK are based upon your choice of courses (synonymous with “major” in the US and Canada). A course of study must be declared at the time of application; however, it may be possible to change courses once admitted. This is more easily done if the new course falls within the same discipline. Within some courses, students have the option of taking modules from disciplines outside their own.

A student may opt to study a single course (e.g., Chemistry), two similar courses (e.g., Chemistry and Physics), two completely different courses combined (e.g., Chemistry and Philosophy), one course involving three or four subjects (e.g., Combined Sciences), or a sandwich course involving periods of industrial training (e.g., Industrial Chemistry).

Fees

As an international student applying to universities in the UK, you will be classified as an applicant who pays either “home fees” or “overseas fees”. Students with home fee status pay fees at the standard rate for undergraduate courses, although universities now have the autonomy to set fees as they like. Generally speaking, in order to qualify for home fees you must either be a permanent resident in the UK or a EU national, and have been resident in the UK for three years prior to enrolling in a university. If, however, you can demonstrate that you have not been ordinarily resident in the UK or EU only because you, your parent or spouse, were **temporarily working abroad** for all or part of the 3-year period, you may qualify for home fees. For more detailed information, please refer to www.ukcosa.org.uk/images/fees.pdf.

If you graduate with an IB Diploma you are eligible for a scholarship at the following UK universities/colleges:

Richmond- The American International University, London

University of Bath
University of Reading
University of Sheffield

Please note that the IBDP is recognized by all universities in the UK. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to apply to other universities—some of which may offer different financial awards for international students.

Useful Websites

British Council

www.britishcouncil.org

This is probably the best starting point for those wishing to study in the UK. It includes detailed information for international students. Just type the country from which you are applying and gain access to all the necessary application procedures.

www.educationuk.org

This site is part of the British Council. It includes a search engine for finding universities and programs, scholarship information, as well as several links for living in the UK.

Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)

www.ucas.ac.uk

All applications to UK colleges and universities are coordinated through this agency. There is a direct link (www.ucas.ac.uk/studyuk/index.html) for international students applying to universities and colleges in the UK. It contains information about the application process, living in the UK, immigration requirements, as well as information about universities and colleges. It's a great starting point.

www.direct.gov.uk

This site provides information on applying for a government student loan (applicable only for EU applicants).

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

www.qaa.ac.uk

This is a great site if you're looking for very specific information about universities and/or programs in the UK. It will provide you with program evaluations, audit information, and university rankings. Just click on "Student Choices" and follow the links.

The International English Language Testing System

www.ielts.org

Download application forms, find a test centre, review sample questions, etc.

Higher Education and Research Opportunities in the United Kingdom

www.hero.ac.uk

This site contains a wealth of information on every aspect of higher education. Search the database of online prospectuses for undergraduates, postgraduates, and international students.

The Council for International Education

www.ukcosa.org.uk

This is a great site for international students. It provides information on financial assistance, immigration, and employment opportunities.

Hotcourses-Student Money

www.studentmoney.org

This is probably the UK's largest and most comprehensive database of funding opportunities for higher education. Sources are from the academic, charity, and commercial sectors.

Open Days

www.opendays.com

Find out all you need to know about open days (including dates) at universities and colleges in the UK.

Course Finder

www.ukcoursefinder.com

www.thecoursefinder.co.uk

These two sites are great for finding a specific course/program in the UK. The database contains over 50,000 courses across the UK.

Higher Education Funding Council for England

www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2004/HEinUK/

Download a pdf file that contains general information and addresses pertaining to study in the UK. This document also contains demographic information about student populations.

Student Loans Company Ltd.

www.slc.co.uk

This site provides access to information and questions you might have about applying for a student loan in the UK. Residency requirements are discussed.

International Education Financial Aid

www.iefaf.org

This site is designed specifically for those wishing to study in a country other than their own. It contains a database of over 1000 scholarships searched by country and/or field of study.

III. STUDYING IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Institution Types

Higher education in Australia and New Zealand is broadly divided into two domains: vocational institutes and universities. The largest universities are in the larger cities and may have over 20,000 students. Relative to the overall population, there is a very large university population.

Vocational Institutions

Vocational institutions are designed to prepare students to work in fields of industry. They offer programs that are highly practical and skills-based. A Diploma is awarded after three years of full-time study, whereas an Associate Diploma is awarded after two years of full-time study. Colleges of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) offer both of these diplomas after the respective programs are completed. TAFE are government funded institutions. Many courses provide advanced standing into university degrees.

Universities

Universities in Australia and New Zealand offer the highest level of study. There are currently 39 universities in Australia (37 public and 2 private) and 8 in New Zealand (all public). Universities offer undergraduate study leading to a Bachelor's degree, as well as postgraduate study, which may lead to a Graduate Certificate, Diploma, Masters, or PhD.

There are four main groupings of Australian universities. These have been formed to bring together universities that have similar styles and foci in order to promote mutual objectives. Please be advised that there are universities that are not part of any of these groupings that have their own set of strengths and foci. Currently, the four main groupings are:

- Group of Eight (go8)
- Australian Technology Network (ATN)
- Innovative Research Universities Australia (IRU Australia)
- New Generation Universities (NGU)

Group of Eight

The Group of Eight markets itself as the group of 'Australia's Leading Universities'. They support this claim by referring to statistics relating to variables such as research outputs, industry links, graduate outcomes, and the qualifications of their academic staff. The Group of Eight member universities are:

- The University of Adelaide
- The Australian National University
- The University of Melbourne
- Monash University
- The University of New South Wales

- The University of Queensland
- The University of Sydney
- The University of Western Australia

Australian Technology Network (ATN)

The Australian Technology Network (ATN) is a group of five Australian universities that share a common focus on the practical application of studies and research. These universities share a common background in that they were technical colleges before becoming accredited universities. It is from this background that the universities have been able to develop a framework of flexibility and innovation that continues to deliver practical results. The result is graduates and research that are closely aligned with the needs of industry and the wider society. The member universities of this network are:

- Curtin University of Technology
- University of South Australia
- RMIT University
- University of Technology Sydney
- Queensland University of Technology

Innovative Research Universities Australia (IRU)

Innovative Research Universities Australia (IRU Australia) is a group of six universities that share a common background having been founded in the 1960s and 1970s as research universities. Most importantly, the group believes that they will be able to establish research concentrations and investment across the universities. There will also be opportunities to benchmark against each other along with collaborating in professional development initiatives, e-learning and new information and communications technology, income generation, and industrial issues. The member universities of IRU Australia are:

- Flinders University
- Griffith University
- La Trobe University
- Macquarie University
- Murdoch University
- University of Newcastle

New Generation Universities (NGU)

In broad terms, membership of the New Generation Universities (NGU) grouping is limited to institutions that have received university accreditation since 1970. However, NGU members also share a number of features including a flexible and dynamic program offering and an ability to operate in response to and in close cooperation with community, business and government. The member universities of the NGU grouping are:

- Australian Catholic University
- Central Queensland University
- Edith Cowan University
- Southern Cross University
- Victoria University
- University of Ballarat
- University of Canberra
- University of Southern Queensland
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- University of Western Sydney

Application Process

With the high demand for spaces at universities in Australia and New Zealand, the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBDP) is highly recommended. In fact, some of the more prestigious universities will only look at the IBDP or examination-based programs like the British 'A' Levels. Completion of the IBDP will exempt students from the "Foundation Year" at Australian and New Zealand universities.

Your overall IB score (out of 45) is translated into a University Admission Index (UAI). This is a score between 15 and 100. In order to gain admission to programs such as law or medicine, you will 'normally' need an overall IB score of at least 40. This translates to a UAI of 99.15. For less competitive programs like Humanities, you will likely need a score of at least 27, which translates into a UAI of 85.20.

If your qualifications are not sufficient to gain admission to an undergraduate degree program, you may take a six-month to year long **Foundation Year**. Succeeding in this program will usually gain you entry into a university. Many courses in Australia are three years long, so taking the Foundation Year will still give you the same four-year experience as you would have had in other countries. Universities offering Foundation Studies Programs (or equivalent) include:

The University of Adelaide- Bradford and Eynesbury Colleges
 The University of Sydney
 The University of Melbourne- Trinity College
 The University of Queensland
 The University of Western Australia- Tuart and Canning Colleges
 The Australian National University
 The University of New South Wales
 Monash University- Taylors College
 The University of Newcastle
 James Cook University (UniGateway Program)
 University of Auckland (New Zealand)

The regular entry date for undergraduate and Foundation Year programs is late February or

early March. This means that applications should be completed and submitted by the end of September in the preceding year. However, there are now several universities that will allow first year students to begin in the July semester. As a guide, closing dates for admission applications are normally in March for the July intake. Please note that application deadlines may be much earlier for professional degrees, and could vary between universities. Each state has its own system of education and there are important differences in the philosophy, administration, and admissions policies. Students should consult individual catalogues and/or websites for more information.

Australia

If you are a citizen or permanent resident of Australia, you will need to apply through the central application centre for the state in which your university is located. For example, if you are applying to universities in the state of New South Wales, you will need to apply through the website <http://www.uac.edu.au/>. The admission requirements and fees are different than those for international students.

If you are not a citizen of Australia, the Australian Government has transferred responsibility for the marketing and promotion of Australian international education to IDP. IDP now has the overall responsibility of international marketing and promotion of Australian education and training.

See your counselor and she can put you in touch with the right person and organization.

www.cambodia.idp.com

New Zealand

If you are applying to universities in New Zealand, you should contact the university directly. Below is a list of universities in New Zealand:

University of Auckland
Auckland University of Technology
University of Waikato
Massey University
Victoria University of Wellington
University of Canterbury
Lincoln University
University of Otago

Standardized Tests

IELTS

As an international student whose first language is not English, it is likely that you will have to write an English proficiency test. You may, however, be exempt from this requirement if you are enrolled in Higher Level English A1 or A2. Students with English as a second language should check the language requirements for each university to which they are applying.

In Australia and New Zealand, the most widely accepted English proficiency test is the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). For more information about IELTS, please refer to “Standardized Tests” in the UK section of this handbook.

UMAT

The Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Admission Test (UMAT) has been developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) on behalf of the UMAT Consortium universities. UMAT is used specifically to assist in the selection of students into medicine and some health science degree programs at the undergraduate level. At the present time, there is only one sitting per year, usually in late July. For registration information, please visit the following site: www.acer.edu.au/tests/university/umat/intro.html

GAMSAT

The Graduate Australian Medical Schools Admissions Test (GAMSAT) has been developed by ACER in conjunction with the Consortium of Graduate Medical Schools to assist in the selection of students intending to participate in the graduate-entry medical programs. The following six medical schools - Australian National University, Flinders University, Griffith University, Notre Dame University, the University of Queensland and the University of Sydney - admit graduates into a four-year medical degree program.

For more information, please visit the following site:
http://www.acer.edu.au/tests/university/gamsat/intro_gamsat.html

ALSET

The Australian Law Schools Entrance Test (ALSET) is used by a number of Australian Law Schools as part of their admissions procedures for special categories of applicants to tertiary studies in law. It is a two-hour multiple-choice test. Deakin University refers to this test as DULSAT (Deakin University Law School Admissions Test). At the present time, there is only one sitting per year, which normally takes place in mid-October. Applications should arrive at ACER at least **five weeks prior** to the test date.

For the most up-to-date information and application materials, visit the following website:
www.acer.edu.au/tests/university/alset/intro.html.

Choosing a Course of Study

Decisions regarding what to study in Australia or New Zealand are based upon your choices of courses (synonymous with “major” in the US and Canada). A course of study must be declared at the time of application.

Fees

The tuition fees for international students studying in Australia or New Zealand can range between \$14,000 and \$50,000 (AUD) per year depending on the university and program. Please consult university viewbooks and/or websites for specific figures. Financial Aid may be offered to those with exceptional high school grades.

Useful Websites

Australian Education Network

www.edna.edu.au

www.australian-universities.com

These two sites are good starting points for those wanting to study in Australia. Click on the link for international education to find out about courses and programs, degree and qualification recognition, living in Australia, accommodations, scholarships, and exchange programs. There is also information on university rankings (see second link listed above).

International Development Program (IDP)

www.idp.com

This site is designed specifically for international students interested in studying in Australia. Essentially, this site will provide you with all of the necessary details for completing university applications to Australian universities. It also has information pertaining to housing, cost of living, applying for a student visa, health insurance, safety, employment, and English testing.

Education New Zealand

www.educationnz.org.nz

This is a good starting point for those wishing to study at a university in New Zealand. It contains links to each of the 8 universities, a search engine for finding a course, as well as information about living in New Zealand.

Study in Australia

www.studyinaustralia.gov.au

This is the official Australian government website for advice on studying in Australia.

The International English Language Testing System

www.ielts.org

Download application forms, find a test centre, review sample questions, etc.

Studies in Australia

www.studiesinaustralia.com

This site requires that you sign-up for a free membership. It has a search engine for finding institutions and course information, researching scholarships, registering for updates, sending inquiries to institutions, etc.

Study Australia

www.studyaustralia.com.au

The Study Australia website is a comprehensive resource for international students wishing to study in Australia or New Zealand. This site is owned and managed by two Australians who have studied overseas as international students, and then graduated from Australian universities.

Medical Schools and Nursing Colleges

www.medical-colleges.net/

If you are interested in becoming a nurse or medical doctor in Australia or new Zealand, this site will provide you with information regarding programs, application procedures, requirements, specializations, etc.

International Education Financial Aid

www.iefaf.org

This site is designed specifically for those wishing to study in a country other than their own. It contains a database of over 1000 scholarships searched by country and/or field of study.

IV. STUDYING IN CANADA

Institution Types

There are now 93 universities and 175 community colleges in Canada. Depending on the university, students can take their classes in English, French, or in both languages. Unlike the US, in Canada the terms “college” and “university” are not used interchangeably. A section within a Canadian university (such as arts, science or commerce) is called a faculty or a college, similar to the system in US and UK universities. The following information will assist you in identifying the differences between institution types:

Universities

In Canada, institutions granting bachelor’s degrees and beyond are called universities. Undergraduate programs in the humanities, social sciences, and physical and applied sciences are available at most universities in Canada. However, professional programs such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, law, architecture, engineering and journalism are not

available in all provinces. Degrees conferred from Canadian universities include the Bachelor's, Master's and Ph.D.

Colleges

Canada also has community colleges which are non-degree granting institutions offering technical or vocational post-secondary courses or courses for transfer to a university. In the province of Quebec, CEGEP serves as the first level of higher education offering both general and vocational college programs.

Application Process

The application process in Canada varies somewhat from province to province. The universities in Ontario use a centralized application process much like the UK, called the Ontario Universities Application Centre (OUAC). This is normally, but not always, required if you are applying to more than one university in Ontario. Students submit a single application to OUAC, which then forwards the information to students' chosen universities. The OUAC application should be filed no later than the December 1 in order to ensure that your application reaches the university in plenty of time for them to request supporting documentation. After you apply, each university will send you an email or letter acknowledging receipt of your application and requesting that you send transcripts and other documents to them. If you are applying to only one university in the province of Ontario, then you can apply directly to that one university or through the OUAC. The same applies to medical faculties and other health care degree programs in Ontario.

In the province of British Columbia there is now a centralized internet application center called the Post-Secondary Application Service of BC (PASBC). Some universities/colleges will require that you apply through this site (www.pas.bc.ca), while others will accept a direct application. Please consult university websites for specific details.

In all other provinces, students apply directly to the university. Although the deadlines for international students are often in the spring, it is best to submit all application materials with the regular pool of students in December of the preceding year.

Note that each university sets its own admission standards and assesses the qualification of each applicant. Each university has a general minimum admission standard based upon Canadian grading standards. These minimum GPA and course requirements vary from faculty to faculty. While a university may say that the minimum GPA to apply is 85%, a student applying to that school's engineering program may need a 92% average to be considered. Your grades will be recalculated using their scale. Some faculties may require letters of reference and/or a personal essay. Please consult individual calendars for specific admissions criteria.

Standardized Tests

The SAT

Some universities in Canada may 'request' that you submit SAT scores. In many cases it is required by students attending international schools that follow an American curriculum. Because ISPP follows an international curriculum, and not American, it may only be recommended. It is best to write the SAT and then submit test scores only if they strengthen your application. Always check the university catalogs for up-to-date information on admissions procedures.

The TOEFL

Most colleges and universities in Canada require applicants whose first language is not English to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Most universities will also accept the IELTS. If you are applying as a Canadian citizen, it is not necessary for you to take the TOEFL. For a complete description of the TOEFL, please refer to the US section of this handbook. For a description of IELTS, please refer to the UK section.

Choosing a Major

Decisions regarding what to study in Canada are based upon your choice(s) of major(s). Normally, students have the option of choosing a single major, a double major, or a major and a minor. These terms apply to general areas of study and may determine the degree granted. These combinations may or may not be within the same faculty.

Although a major is initially declared at the time of application, it is relatively easy (assuming you meet the minimum requirements and are not enrolled in a highly specialized field) to change majors in your first or second year. In your first year of university, you will most likely be required to take subjects from various faculties. Note that this is sometimes not the case if you are in a professional program (e.g., Engineering).

For most professional programs (Engineering, Optometry, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Law, and Dentistry) at least two years of undergraduate study are required before you may be admitted. For medicine and dentistry you must have completed an undergraduate degree by the time of admission. There is a great deal of competition for these spaces, and most universities have limits or quotas on the number of qualified applicants admitted each year. Quotas are normally based on the population of the province or region. Check the university calendar to identify tests such as LSAT (Law), DAT (Dentistry), MCAT (Medicine) that may also be required.

Fees

Students may spend between \$15,000 and \$25,000 Canadian dollars (including tuition fees and living expenses) per year. This may be higher for postgraduate and professional programs. Each university calendar lists the individual fees, often separated by area of study and

scholarships available. Eight provinces in Canada charge higher fees for international students than Canadian students. With the exception of some professional programs, Manitoba and Newfoundland charge the same fees for international students as they do for Canadian students. Please see the table below for specific data.

If you graduate with an IB Diploma you are eligible for an IB scholarship at the following Canadian universities/colleges. Please note that the IBDP is recognized by most colleges and universities in Canada. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to apply to other universities—some of which may offer different financial awards for international students.

DeVry Institute of Technology, Alberta
Memorial University of Newfoundland, Newfoundland
University of Alberta, Alberta
University of Calgary, Alberta
Red Deer College, Alberta
Simon Fraser University, British Columbia
University of British Columbia, British Columbia
University of Manitoba, Manitoba
University of Toronto, Ontario
University of Winnipeg, Manitoba
York University, Ontario

Useful Websites

Study Canada

www.studycanada.ca

This is a comprehensive resource guide to studying in Canada. Find out about studying at universities, community colleges, technical institutes, career colleges, or language schools in Canada. Learn about the education system in Canada, university requirements, costs, climate, cost of living, accommodations, and Canadian history. There is also information on getting a visa or the type of study permit needed to study at a university/college in Canada. Study Canada is published in 12 different languages and is linked to the 17 Canadian Education Centres worldwide.

Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

www.aucc.ca/

This is a user-friendly site with a search engine for finding programs and universities/colleges in Canada.

Study in Canada

www.studyincanada.com

This site contains a user-friendly search engine to find a program/university, visa information, international fees, and links to virtual tours.

UC411

www.uc411.com

This is known as “Canada’s Ultimate University and College Info-Site”. It has a great search engine—searchable by school name, location, and/or program.

Scholarships Canada

www.scholarshipscanada.com

This site contains a comprehensive list of scholarships for which students can apply. It requires you to sign-up for a “free” membership. Note, although international students might be eligible for many of these awards, this site has been established for *all* individuals studying in Canada.

Canadian Universities Net

www.canadian-universities.net

This site contains information about universities in Canada broken down by province.

IB Scores and College Credit at US/Canadian Universities

www.ibo.org/ibo/index.cfm/en/ibo/services/universities

This site allows you to search for universities that accept IB scores for advanced credit. This site will even give you the contact person at the university.

Ontario Universities Application Centre

www.ouac.on.ca/

This site allows you to apply to universities in Ontario using the online application.

Educational Testing Service--TOEFL

www.ets.org/toefl/

This site is where you can register online to take the computer-based TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language).

Department of Citizenship and Immigration

www.cic.gc.ca

This is a direct link to the Canadian government. It provides information and applications for student visas.

The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials

www.cicic.ca

This site contains information pertaining to international credential evaluation, post-secondary education in Canada, financial assistance, and trends in international mobility.

CanLearn

www.canlearn.ca

This site includes a search engine for finding universities and programs, financing information, and details about living in Canada.

Maclean's Magazine

www.macleans.ca/universities

This is a site with Canadian university and college rankings.

International Education Financial Aid

www.iefaf.org

This site is designed for those wishing to study in a country other than their own. It contains a database of over 1000 scholarships searched by country and/or field of study.

VI. STUDYING IN JAPAN

The majority of universities in Japan deliver course instruction in Japanese (including the University of Tokyo). International Christian University (ICU), Waseda University, and Sophia University are the major universities in Japan with programs designed specifically for international/English-speaking students. These universities will even have an option to commence studies in the fall, whereas most other Japanese universities have an April entry date. Temple University in the US (Philadelphia) has a Tokyo campus offering several undergraduate programs.

As is the case with Japanese universities in general, admissions decisions are based primarily on examination results. SAT-I scores and TOEFL results are required for all international students applying to any of these four universities.

International Christian University (ICU)

All applicants to International Christian University are classified in one of two ways:

An "English-Speaking or September Applicant" is defined as one who is able to take university level courses in English and who has been attending school outside of the regular Japanese educational system for at least the last two years prior to application. Nationality and citizenship are not relevant, nor is the individual's original schooling, which may not have been in English.

Those who do not fall under the "English-Speaking Applicants" category are required to take the General Admission Tests conducted on the campus in February for admission in April. The screening they undergo is rigorous, being determined by national regulations and ICU's own

admission policies.

ICU requires students to take the SAT-I and three specified SAT-II exams (the SAT-II Japanese is not acceptable). Adding all five of these scores together, the successful applicant has in the past been required to have a minimum of 2,500 to 2,600 total points. **Students graduating with a full IB Diploma are not required to submit SAT scores; however, they are required to show evidence of English language proficiency either by submitting a TOEFL score or SAT-II score (ELPT subject test).**

ICU requires a completed application form, transcript, official SAT (if applicable) and TOEFL scores, three letters of recommendation, health form, and application fee of ¥22,000 (approximately 280 to 300 USD, - conversion done August 2011). All materials must be received by ICU between March 1 and April 15 to be considered for fall admission (English speaking applicants only). Decisions are mailed in late May.

A limited number of Japanese students are granted a tuition waiver allowing them to pay 1/3 or less of the annual tuition through selection based on academic performance and financial need. Non-Japanese students who enroll at ICU for degrees can apply for a scholarship, starting in their second year after matriculation. Criteria for the selection are high academic performance and severe financial need. The amount of each grant is decided on a case-by-case basis.

For more detailed information, please contact the university directly at:

International Christian University
10-2 Osawa 3-chome
Mitaka-shi, Tokyo, Japan 181-8585
Tel: +81-422-33-3038 (Admissions: +81-422-33-3058)
E-mail: admissions-office@icu.ac.jp
Web Address: www.icu.ac.jp

Waseda University

Waseda University offers undergraduate programs for international students in Law, Arts and Sciences, Education, Commerce, Social Sciences, and Science & Engineering. The only undergraduate institute where classes are conducted in English is the School of International Liberal Studies. Prospective students should request application forms from the Center for International Education.

International Student Admission Office (Undergraduate Section)
Center for International Education, Waseda University
1-7-14-404 Nishi-Waseda, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 169-0051, Japan
Tel: 81-3-3203-9806 / Fax:81-3-3202-8638
E-mail: cie@list.waseda.jp

Website: www.waseda.jp

For most programs, you will be required to submit the following documents:

- Application Form / Profile, Academic Honors, Volunteer and Personal Activities
- Statement of Reason for Applying
- Certificate of Graduation or Certificate of Prospective Graduation
- Certificate of Transcripts (from all High Schools you have attended)
- Standardized College Entrance Examinations; SAT, GCE, IB, or ACT
- English Proficiency Test; TOEFL, TOEIC or IELTS

Students whose native tongue is not English must submit formal test results indicating their proficiency in English.

For those applying for April admission, the application period begins as early as mid-August of the year before the intended year of entry (e.g., School of Science and Engineering). There are now some schools (School of International Liberal Studies) offering September entry. Application deadlines can be as early as mid January for these programs. Please consult individual departments for specific admission procedures.

Although there are some scholarships available for international students with high academic qualifications, these cannot be applied for until studies have commenced at Waseda University. All applicants are expected to have sufficient funds to cover all expenses for study in Japan prior to enrollment.

The admission fee for the selected 105 independent international students is fully covered by Waseda University. In the academic year 2003, 21 undergraduate students received 6,090,000 yen and 84 graduate students received 21,840,000 yen. The Azusa Ono Memorial Scholarship Program provides financial support to approximately 100 undergraduate and graduate international students every year. The annual stipend is approximately 300,000 yen per annum. There are also some tuition reductions available with the emphasis on academic records.

Sophia University

In the past few years, Sophia University has admitted students from international schools if they earned a minimum SAT Verbal score of 430, and a minimum SAT Math score of 570. Although the SAT-I scores are the primary factor in determining admission, students must also submit an application, official transcript, three letters of recommendation, a 500 word essay, and the ¥35,000 application fee.

Students applying for the fall semester have the choice of applying during the first or second application periods. The first application period runs from late November through to mid-December, with decisions mailed in early February. The second application period runs

from mid-May through to early June, with decisions mailed in late June.

Scholarships may be offered to new degree students having financial difficulties but who show excellent academic potential at matriculation. The application must be submitted at the time of application for admission, and grantees will be notified upon acceptance to the university. Applicants who apply for, but do not receive, this scholarship will be eligible to apply for other scholarships after entrance to Sophia. For detailed information, please inquire at the Office of Student Affairs.

Tel: +81-3-3238-3523 or contact the Admissions Section at:

Admissions Section
Sophia University
7-1 Kioi-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-8554 Japan
Tel: +81-3-3238-4018 Fax: +81-3-3238-3262
Email: admission-u@cl.sophia.ac.jp
Web Address: www.sophia.ac.jp

Temple University Japan (TUJ)

There are now several branch campuses of American universities that are located in Japan. Temple University Japan (TUJ) is one of the most popular of this kind and has been in operation since 1982. TUJ caters primarily to students seeking to improve their English abilities so that they can go on to the university's main campus in subsequent years. However, they may provide a good option for students who wish to stay in Japan for the full four years.

TUJ offers undergraduate programs in Art, American Studies, Communications, History, International Affairs, English, Political Science, Religion, Psychological Studies, Tourism and Hospitality Management, General Studies, Economics and Business, and Asian Studies. The university also offers minors in Geography, Urban Studies, and Business Administration.

A minimum score of 5.5 on the IELTS is required to begin mainstream undergraduate courses.

For more information, please contact TUJ directly at the address below.

Temple University Japan
2-8-12 Minami Azabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106
Phone: 03-5441-9800 Fax: 03-5441-9811
e-mail: tujinfo@tuj.ac.jp
Homepage: <http://www.temple.edu/TUJ>

Useful Websites

For a comprehensive list of universities and colleges (with corresponding websites) in Japan, please visit www.campusprogram.com/universities/Japan.html

VII. STUDYING IN SOUTH KOREA

Universities in South Korea operate under strict admissions quotas. Consequently, each academic year produces a large number of repeat applicants who add to the intensity of competition for university admission. The admissions quota for most foreign residents is normally between 2% and 7% depending on the institution. For example, in 2004 the ratio of foreign residents and local residents at Seoul National University was 7:1.

Currently, the Korean Ministry of Education does not recognize the IB Diploma as having equivalent status to the national examination system. All Korean students studying within Korea must take the national entrance examination in order to apply to any Korean university. In order to qualify as a foreign resident, students must have lived and studied outside of South Korea for either three consecutive years or four non-consecutive years.

The entrance criteria for universities in South Korea vary from university to university. Generally speaking, foreign residents will be required to write three nationwide qualifying examinations—English, Mathematics, and Korean. The combined score from these exams accounts for one third of the overall admissions decision. The remaining two thirds is determined by recommendations, personal statement, high school grades (including IB results), TOEFL, and in some cases the SAT. Please note that commencing in 2008, the entrance exams will only account for one fifth of the overall weighting. More specifically, students will receive a total exam score out of 50, and another score out of 200 based on all other admissions criteria.

Students may apply to as many universities as they like provided the exams are on different dates. Some universities do recognize the IB Diploma. Seoul National University and Yonsei University are two such universities.

Seoul National University (SNU)

Korean IB Diploma students who have lived abroad for at least three consecutive years and have completed the whole high school curriculum abroad may apply to the “Talented Students Admission Program” at SNU *without* having to take the national entrance exam (except for applicants for Veterinary Science or Medicine). A strong Diploma score (usually over 35) will be considered for possible entry, as will certificate scores of 6 or 7 for some courses. **Korean students currently studying abroad in a Diploma school are advised to complete their studies normally and apply to the university as IB Diploma graduates**, and not focus on

preparing for specific written tests.

Korean nationals who have received their entire primary and secondary education outside of Korea are considered as international students on application.

Further enquiries regarding application and scholarships should be sent to snuadmit@snu.ac.kr.

Useful Websites

For a complete list of Korean universities and corresponding websites, please visit either www.duke.edu/~myhan/c_blkku.html or www.henny-savenije.pe.kr/links4a.htm.

APPLICATION ESSAYS

Many universities and colleges require at least one essay as part of the application process. In many ways, the essay can be used to strengthen your application. In fact, your essay can be the strongest part, presenting you as a thoughtful, sincere, interesting applicant.

The following guidelines are intended primarily for North American universities. If you are writing a personal statement for UCAS, please refer to the UK section of this handbook for specific guidelines.

General Guidelines

Choosing a Topic

Before you write, think about how you are different from all other applicants. What unique background do you bring to the university? What interests, activities, travel, struggles, or situations are unique to you? Sometimes it helps to ask other people what they think is unique about you. Universities genuinely want to know who you are. They do not have an “ideal student” in mind. They want a variety of students. They want to know what kind of person you are, what aspirations you have, what struggles you have gone through, what is important to you. They ask you to write an essay about yourself because they want more personal information.

Write about something you really care about - the motorcycle you built from scratch, the day you taught your little brother to tie his shoes. The good topic is the one you want to write about, not the one you think you ought to write about – while always keeping in mind who your audience is. The way to approach finding a topic is first to ask yourself what to write and then to ask yourself whether an admissions officer will want to read it.

Be Specific

You can make yourself stand out from the crowd and stress your individuality by being specific. Remember that the admissions board is reading thousands of applications and you must make yours memorable. Specifics make a piece of writing memorable.

If you are called upon to write about your extracurricular activities, don't write an essay about activities in general: “Extracurricular activities are important to me because they enable me to expand my horizons,” etc. Instead, narrow your focus. Write about something particular that happened to you in a particular activity. It's the details that stick in a reader's mind. If you're writing about your trip to Europe, don't give your itinerary. Focus on an interesting detail: a fascinating old man, the time you got lost in Florence, the day you helped a Parisian fix his car.

One good way to avoid generalities is to write about people. Instead of writing about “a good liberal arts education,” write about a person you admire who went to the same university.

Instead of writing about how well your high school education prepared you for university, write about a teacher who made a big impression on you. The more specific you are, the more readable your essay will be.

Provide Evidence

You need to know and apply the writing principle of “Show. Don’t Tell.” The rule is that you should give the reader such convincing evidence that they draw the conclusions you want them to draw. You don’t want to state “I am a wonderful student, diligent, hard working, good natured, an asset to any classroom, interested in real learning, thrifty, trustworthy, and brave.” If you give the university all the evidence of your virtues, you never need to list them. Besides, the university will be much more convinced that the virtues are real if you give examples rather than a list of glorious adjectives about yourself. For example, you might be embarrassed to say, “I’m extremely responsible.” Instead you could say, “Last summer, I was put in charge of 12 ten-year-old girls for a three-day hike.” When the admissions board reads your example, they will come to the conclusion, “Ah, some adult must have felt this applicant could be responsible for a dozen children’s health and safety for several days. This sounds like a responsible person”. Give them the evidence and examples, and they will reach the right conclusion

Describe the Significance

Significant events can be hidden in ordinary events, depending on how you understand and use the experiences. You don’t need a long list of flashy experiences. What you have experienced is not as important as what you have done with the experience. Real maturity depends on how you understand what has happened to you and whether you let your experiences change your perceptions.

Universities want to know how you have reacted to your experiences. Even if you write about something exotic like a trip to Egypt, you must say what you learned, how it changed you. When you are explaining what you learned, do not say, “I learned a lot.” Be specific. Tell exactly what you learned. You want to show universities that you will change and grow in a degree program.

Don’t Repeat Information

An application doesn’t give you much room to make your case. Don’t waste space by repeating yourself. For example, an application may ask you on one page to list your extracurricular activities and on another to write a brief essay describing what your activities mean to you. Don’t use the essay simply to repeat the list in expanded form. Instead of repeating yourself, take advantage of the opportunity to expand on information you’ve already provided. Write about something interesting that you did or that happened to you in one of your activities. If your list of activities includes something exceptional that won’t be immediately obvious to an admissions officers, use this essay to make sure it is expressed.

Be Humorous If You Can, But Be Careful

A student who can make an admissions officer laugh never gets lost in the shuffle. The joke is read aloud, everyone smiles, nobody can bear to throw you into the reject pile. But beware. Most people think they're funny, but only a few really are. Most attempts at humor in university applications are counterproductive. Humor can help you, but you must use it carefully and sparingly. In general, you will be better off if you strive to make your reader smile, not laugh.

The closer you stick to your own life and your own experiences, the more successful you will be. Most of us are more successful at recounting humorous incidents from our lives than at making up jokes from scratch. Don't write, "A funny thing happened...". If it really is funny, you don't need to label it.

Maintain the Proper Tone

Your essay should be informal without being sloppy, witty without being childish, memorable without being outrageous. If read aloud, your essay should sound like good conversation. You want to warm your reader, not overwhelm him or her. You want to be casual without being chatty or cutesy.

Don't Make Excuses

Don't use an essay to explain bad grades, low SAT scores, suspensions, or any other black marks in your record. Explanations usually just make these sound worse. They certainly draw attention to your weaknesses. If there is something about your grades that should be explained, the counselor/teacher should do it.

Some applications will allow you to explain peculiarities in your record that you think need explaining. You may do so if you feel you must, but be careful here. Explaining a difficulty often does little more than draw attention to it, which makes it seem worse. If an application asks you right out, as some do, whether you have ever been suspended and why, you'll have to answer truthfully. But unless you have a very good reason for doing so, you shouldn't answer this question unless it is asked.

Risky Essay Topics

The following is a list of topics which are generally not advisable as topics for your application essay:

- Your relationship with your girlfriend or your boyfriend.
- Your religious beliefs. This is not appropriate unless you're applying to a university with a strong religious orientation/affiliation.
- Your political views.
- The evils of drugs. Essays on this subject tend to sound contrived.

- The pleasure of drugs—for obvious reasons.
- Sex.
- The first time you got drunk, or any other time you got drunk.
- A classmate who was killed in a car accident. Student essays about the death of a friend or parent are sometimes extraordinarily moving. More often, though, they sound either contrived or overly emotional.
- How much you love yourself. You'll make a better impression if you write about something that makes you seem like a great person rather than simply coming out and claiming to be great.
- The importance of a university education.
- Your personal philosophy, particularly if it involves any form of selfishness.
- Your SAT scores. Never mention your SAT scores, no matter how good or how bad they are.
- How much you like to party.
- Any topic that doesn't appeal to you but that you think will appeal to an admissions officer, such as how you have recently discovered the importance of studying hard.
- Anything that will make a reader blush or feel embarrassed.
- Your plan for how to make the world live together in peace.
- Trendy topics, such as apartheid, the threat of nuclear war, or anything involving current events. These essays, no matter what the intentions of the writer, tend to be predictable and boring.
- Anything that makes it sound as though the only reason you want to go to university is so you can make a whole lot of money when you get out.
- How much psychotherapy has changed your life. You don't want admissions officers to worry that there is a danger of you going crazy while in university.
- How glad you are to be a National Merit semifinalist or how pleased you were to be named valedictorian of your class. This is like writing about your SAT scores.
- "The Best Game of My Life".

What Do Admissions Officers Have To Say?

The following recommendations were taken from the National Association of College Admissions Counseling Digest. Included are comments by university/college representatives.

- "Show, don't tell. Don't tell me about Aunt Sally's death. Tell me about how Aunt Sally's death affected you. Don't tell me about the action, tell me about the reaction to it. This holds true for the class trip to France, the 3-day solo on Outward Bound, the death of a grandparent, the loss (or win) in the championship game, etc. Don't simply write that you are a leader. Show us how you lobbied the administration to change the study hall policy. Essays should show who you are, not simply what you've done".
- "The person writing the essay should be the only person in the world who could ever possibly write it. Tell a story only you could possibly tell".

- “Be narrow in focus. This always makes a better essay. You don’t want to tell your life story. Choose a specific incident or story to write about and through that give a sense of who you are or a certain aspect of you.”
- “Have a stranger read your essay and write three adjectives that describe the person who wrote it. Do they put curious, compassionate, and eager? Or do they put boring, stilted, and full of themselves? Which one do you want to be known as?”
- “Write about something personal that you can be passionate about. Write from the heart.”
- “The best essays take me out of my office for 5 minutes.”
- “If it’s the first time you thought about it, don’t write your essay about it.”
- “Don’t give me a travelogue. Give me an interior monologue.”
- “The goal line means nothing. I want to know how you got there.”
- “Don’t write what you think others want to hear. Answer the question honestly.”

Say the Magic Words

According to Liz Ford (Guardian Unlimited, UK, October 11, 2005) there are two rules that are generally observed when it comes to applying to university - highlight your good points and brush over those less flattering aspects of life. However, according to researchers at the University of Hertfordshire, whether you are successful depends upon the specific words and phrases used in your essay or application form.

The university published the top 10 words it believes will lead to success. The list was compiled by psychologists and admissions experts at the university, and includes the words achievement, evidence, experience and impact. The researchers also identified the words that should be avoided on any application. The words "always" and "never" should not be used as they suggest the applicant is exaggerating their abilities. And instead of the word "mistake", applicants should admit to "learning a valuable lesson". Claiming that "someone was at fault" should be replaced with an admission that there were "differences of opinion that were overcome".

Karen Pine, a development psychologist at the university, said: "Every recruiter and admissions office will have to assess hundreds, if not thousands, of personal statements from hopeful applicants and will make their decision based on what they can see on paper. Choosing the right words is, therefore, vitally important if your application is to stand out from the rest."

The top 10 words to include on an application form are:

Achievement	Active
Developed	Evidence
Experience	Impact
Individual	Involved
Planning	Transferable skills

The 10 words to avoid:

Always	Awful
Bad	Fault
Hate	Mistake
Never	Nothing
Panic	Problems

Grammar Guidelines—By The Princeton Review

1. Don't use 'big' words.

One of the worst things young writers do is 'beef up' their compositions by substituting long, difficult words for short, easy ones. Some students write a rough draft in their own words and then use a thesaurus to plug-in big, impressive words. Doing this is always obvious, and it is never impressive. A good writer can spot a 'thesaurusized' composition a mile away. There are few precise synonyms in English. Most of the big words in a thesaurus have meanings that are different from the meanings of the shorter words they replace.

2. Good writing is writing that is easily understood.

You want to get your points across, not to bury them in words. Flowery writing is not good writing. Your prose should be clear and direct. You will be in trouble if an admissions officer has to struggle to figure out what you are trying to say.

3. Avoid adjectives and adverbs.

As you re-read your essays, stop at every adjective or adverb and ask yourself if it is necessary. Too many adjectives and adverbs make writing seem weak. Concentrate on nouns and verbs.

4. Avoid the word 'however'.

Most people use it incorrectly or put it in places where it isn't needed. Few people know how to put punctuation around it.

5. Avoid using quotes.

One of the worst things a student essay can contain is a lot of sentences that begin, "As Shakespeare said..." or, "I am reminded of Tennyson's words..." Admissions officers will know you found these lines in a book of quotations. They won't think you pulled them out of your memory. Quotations make essays seem phony, not sophisticated.

5. Don't put quotation marks around words that aren't quotations.

Don't put quotation marks around words just because it isn't quite the "right" word for what you want to say. If the word doesn't seem "right" without quotation marks around it, find one that does.

7. Don't say what you're going to say, or say what you've already said. Instead, simply say it.

Most student compositions have tedious introductions and conclusions that first announce and then repeat whatever is said between them. Most good writers don't write this way. Even if they did, you wouldn't have room to do it on your application. You want to make sure a reader understands what you're talking about, but you also want to be concise. You don't want to bore an already bored admissions officer with a boring introductory paragraph that does little more than repeat the question.

8. Have a good writer critique your essay. Have a good speller proofread it.

Admissions officers take it for granted that applicants get help with their essays. In fact, if you submit an essay that is filled with misspellings and grammatical errors, admissions officers will conclude not only that you do not know how to write, but also that you aren't shrewd enough to get help. Ask your English teacher, a parent, the counselor, or a friend to read your essay and comment on it. Be especially careful about punctuation. Many high school students don't know where to put commas. Find someone who knows. You should also critique your own essay after letting it sit for at least a few days. The longer it sits, the more mistakes you'll be able to find. Asking for help isn't cheating.

9. Don't use exclamation points !!!!!!!

10. Put a lid on it.

Unless they specifically tell you otherwise, admissions officers would prefer that you confine your responses to the space provided. Longer is not better. Don't add extra

pages because you think length is impressive. It isn't. Your essay will be the zillionth essay exactly like it that most of its readers have read. Do them a favor and be brief.

Sample Essay Questions

The following essay questions were taken from previous years applications. They will have likely changed for the year in which you apply.

Common Application

- Evaluate a significant experience or achievement that has special meaning to you.
- Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you and describe that influence.
- Discuss some issues of personal, local, national, or international concern and its importance to you.
- Describe a character in fiction, a historical figure, or a creative work (as in art, music, sciences, etc.) that has had an influence on you, and explain that influence.

Cornell University

We hope you'll use your essay to help us understand your thoughts and feelings about something that's important to you. Pick one of the following topics, and write a one-page essay on a sheet of paper.

- A conclusion you have reached about a question with no provable answer.
- An idea, value, or cause to which you have lost your heart and head.
- An experience that changed your view of life in a deep and significant way.

Harvard University

Please answer one of the following questions. (250 words or less)

- Which book or books have affected you most and why?
- Discuss the academic experience (course, project, paper, event) that has meant the most to you.

Johns Hopkins University

- If you could have any question answered, what would it be and why?
- If you were elected president of the United States, what would you change first and why?

New York University

- Identity and culture are clearly intertwined. How has your experience of culture influenced the development of your own personal identity?
- Describe a situation where your values and beliefs were challenged. How did you react?

University of Pennsylvania

- If you were given the opportunity to spend an evening with any one person, living or deceased, or fictional, whom would you choose and why?
- You have just completed your 300-page autobiography. Please submit page 217.
- Please cite and discuss a quotation, phrase, or statement which has had an influence on your life.

THE INTERVIEW

Relatively few universities and colleges worldwide require a personal interview to be considered for admission. Some, however, do. In fact, some universities have rather elaborate networks of alumni (graduates of the university/college) who interview applicants. Some UK universities - notably Oxford and Cambridge, all medical programs, and some art programs - require you to have an interview. If you are on a college/university campus during the summer and an interview is offered, take advantage of it.

If you are going to an interview there are a few guidelines you should follow:

Be Prepared

- Try to anticipate the obvious questions that will be asked and have answers prepared. Some of these questions are: Why do you want to go here? What do you want to major in and why? What do you want to do with your life? If you can come up with an intelligent and convincing reason why you want to attend the university, your interview *should* fall into place.
- Don't ask questions that are answered in the college/university brochure or can easily be found on the website. Review this information on the day of the interview and go to the interview prepared.
- Don't ask a question if you have no interest in the answer.
- Know, by heart, the things you wrote on your application form/personal statement.
- Try to research as much as you can about the institution and faculty you are applying to.
- **Learn** the names of the people who will be interviewing you.
- Prepare a list of questions that you would like to have answers to during (or at the end

of) the interview.

- Make sure that your travel arrangements will allow you to arrive comfortably in time for the interview.
- Have at least one practice interview.

How to Look and Act

- Dress as the neatest, nicest version of “you.”
- Arrive punctually.
- Use a firm handshake.
- Don’t chew gum.
- Brush your teeth.
- Make eye contact with the interviewers and use their names (and correct titles)
- Listen attentively. This may be obvious but is no less important for that. Try to resist the temptation to analyze conversations from earlier parts of the interview.
- Poise, politeness and friendliness have little to do with how good a student you are but a lot to do with how your interview goes.
- You want to appear bright, interested, mature, and at ease.
- The more comfortable the interviewer feels at your interview, the better impression you’ll make.
- If the conversation lags, ask a question.
- Don’t try to stretch out the end of your interview by suddenly asking a lot of questions you don’t care about.
- Thank the interviewers at the end for their time and consideration.

The Interview Questions

The interview will likely be structured so that the interviewer gets as much information about you as possible – both in terms of your academic prowess as well as your opinions, ambitions, fears, personal qualities, etc. The interview will probably be structured in such a way that the interviewer:

- Asks you some easy introductory questions in order to ‘settle you down’.
- Asks you some more searching questions, based on your letter of application/personal statement. This means you need to know exactly what you wrote on this, and why exactly you used the sentence constructions that you did.
- Asks you questions which give you the chance to show your knowledge of a subject, above and beyond that which appears in the curriculum.
- May try to *push* you a little into ‘grey’ areas at the limits of your knowledge or experience. It’s important to know here what your limits are – don’t be tempted to bluff in a conversation with a University professor on a subject that you know nothing about but which (s)he is a world expert on! Don’t be afraid to give the answer “I don’t know”. Remember – there are many ways of giving such an answer whilst still ‘saving face’ (“*That’s a really interesting question, Professor Davis, and it’s because I **can’t** yet*”).

answer it adequately that I want to study this subject at University...”).

- Will try to ascertain just how serious and committed you are in your application. It is vitally important that you realize this, especially when applying to the more competitive institutions. Whatever you do, don't give glib or blasé answers that might lead the interviewer into believing that you are only there for the practice or the fun.
- Will try to find out something about you from the questions you ask. This means you must have some ready. They should be 'genuine', in that you really want to know the answers, and at least one should be *searching*.

Try to answer each question with clarity and brevity. Avoid rambling. Avoid offering a response that fizzles out. Avoid trying to answer a *different* question – it is understandable that you may be afraid that the 'best' questions may not come up, so that you somehow have to steer the conversation around to your strengths. Up to a point you **can** do this, but the safest way is through linking your responses to questions or posing some of your own.

What the Interviewer Wants to See

The interviewer wants to see (and see evidence of) a candidate who:

- Is honest and open.
- Is confident* without being brash or arrogant.
- Can speak at length, with *some* conviction and authority, on subjects related to the course/major they intend to study. You **aren't** expected to be an expert.
- Is genuinely interested and motivated by their subject choice.
- Genuinely and clearly wants to join the institution they are being interviewed for.
- Will contribute in a positive way to the institution.

* Some people believe themselves to be lacking in confidence. Ponder this – the very fact that you have been granted an interview is already an indication that the university holds you in high regard.

Leave Your Parents Somewhere

If you are having an interview on/off campus, don't let your parents try to accompany you. Parents can only hurt; they never help in an interview setting. Admission officers don't like having your mom or dad in the room with you any better than you do. Most will tell parents to wait in the waiting room (if there is one). But you don't even want this problem to come up. You won't look good if your first contact with your interviewer involves him or her telling your parents to get lost. This only applies to an interview. It is perfectly acceptable for your parents to accompany you on the campus tour or listen to any group presentation.

Save the Best for Last

If you think you will have more than one interview, try to schedule them so that your first interviews are at the schools you care about least or feel you are least likely to get into. You'll find you'll get better as you go along.

Follow-up

It is unlikely that you will get much feedback from the interviewers themselves (though you **can** ask!). However, you should still be in a position to learn concrete things from the interview which will help you in future interviews. Make notes, as soon afterwards as possible, about the questions that were asked. Which did you find difficult? Why were they difficult? Did they reveal gaps in your knowledge, or was it that you had a hard time expressing yourself? What would you do differently? Will you need another practice interview?

Sending a thank-you note/e-mail is always a good idea. Your note can be short, but it should sound personal. As with any good thank-you note, mention a specific.

A Sample From Cambridge

The following is an excerpt from an invitation to interview with a representative from Cambridge University. The guidelines/recommendations can easily be applied to other interviews you may have.

“First of all, any description of Cambridge interviews must simply acknowledge how much they matter. All the candidates whom we see should be capable of achieving the high A-level grades (or equivalent qualifications) that we require in our conditional offers. For us, therefore, interviews are by far the most important means of distinguishing between highly qualified applicants who are strongly supported by their schools or colleges. So it is very much in our interest to get the best out of candidates in these interviews. (Contrary to popular myth, we do not set out to make interviewees feel uncomfortable, or to play tricks on them.) We hope that some of the following remarks might help you give of your best in interviews, and therefore help us too.”

“We expect our interviewers to ask testing, thought-provoking questions: questions whose answers are not immediately obvious, questions that you will not be asked in a public exam. Clearly, interviews have to be challenging. However, you should realize that, when you begin an interview, those who ask you these questions will be hoping that you will do well. You should also realize that 'doing well' does not mean merely unloading information or arguments that you might have learned in advance.”

“The questions you will be asked will be testing because they will invite you to speculate, to think on your feet, to discuss problems to which there are often no easy or neat solutions. We are interested in your ability to think for yourself, not in how polished or well coached your delivery might be. For this reason, we will try to put you at your ease. We know that candidates are nervous, and make allowances for this. We want you to feel confident enough to express your own views and talk about your own interests. The whole point of interviews is to give the interviewers a sense of the individuality and potential of each student - something that no

exam paper can reflect.”

“Remember, an interview is not a test of smoothness. You are not penalized for hesitating or changing your mind during an interview (indeed, both of these are often a sign that a candidate is actually thinking hard about the questions that he or she is being asked). We want to find out about you: your views, your abilities, your enthusiasms. Try to think out loud; let us know what is going on inside your head! That way we get to see how your mind is working. You should not try to present a fictitious self. (So dress smartly, by all means, but don't wear clothes that make you feel stiff or awkward.) Tell us what you think, rather than what you guess we might want to hear. We will try to give you the chance to do this, and actually to enjoy being interviewed.”

GLOSSARY OF UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE TERMS

Accreditation - Regional, State, or National agencies certify that the institution has met certain standards.

Admission – The process by which a student applies, and is approved, for entry to a university.

Alumni – The group of individuals who have attended and graduated from a particular university.

American College Test (ACT) - A standardized examination, offered by the American College Testing Program, required for admission to some U.S. colleges. The three-hour test measures general educational development in English, math, social studies, and natural sciences.

Arts and Science (also called Liberal Arts) – A broad term that encompasses most traditional courses of study including the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, and foreign languages. A liberal arts college is also a college of arts and sciences

Associate Degree - The degree awarded for successful completion of a two-year program usually offered at two-year junior or community colleges.

Bachelor's Degree - The degree awarded upon successful completion of an undergraduate college or university program that normally takes four years of full-time study.

Class Rank - The student's position relative to other fellow students in a graduating class.

College Work Study (CWS) - Provides jobs for students with financial need who must earn part of their educational expenses. Foreign students should check visa regulations before assuming that this is available to them. In some countries visa rules may allow foreign students to take advantage of work options both on and off campus.

Common Application - A form produced by a consortium of over 250 colleges/universities in the US (mainly selective liberal arts colleges) that may be filled out and sent to member colleges in lieu of each school's individual application.

Cooperative Education Program (Co-op) - A program where a student alternates between periods of full-time study and full-time employment in related work. In most such programs it takes five years to complete a bachelor's degree.

Co-requisite – A course which should be taken in the same semester as another, unless it has previously been satisfactorily completed.

Consortium - A group of institutions which have joint educational programs and which have joined together to promote their institutions.

Credit Hours - A unit of measurement usually awarded on the basis of one credit per hour of class per week. A course worth 3 credits will generally meet 3 hours a week, hence the term, 3 credit hours.

Deferred Admission - Some colleges allow a student to defer entrance for up to one academic year in order to pursue other interests. Each college or university makes its own rules on this but those who have deferred entrance programs usually grant permission for a student to travel, work, do volunteer service, or engage in special study opportunities not usually offered by the university (overseas language or cultural studies, for example).

Education Testing Service (ETS) - The centre in Princeton, NJ that handles all of the registration and score reports for the College Board tests.

Early Decision (ED) - Early Decision is an application program under which a student indicates that a specific university/college is their absolute first choice. This plan is normally understood to involve a prior commitment by an applicant to accept a school's offer. The deadline for ED may be as early as November 1. A student may only apply ED to one college. Upon acceptance to that one college, the understanding is that the student will immediately withdraw all other applications.

Early Action (EA) - Early Action is a plan some colleges use which allows students to apply early and receive an early notification, but they do not require you to withdraw your other applications. There is no obligation to enroll. Accepted students don't have to make a decision until the regular May 1 reply date.

Electives – A defined set of courses from a diploma or degree from which a student may make a choice.

Family Contribution - The amount that you and your family should reasonably be able to contribute to the cost of your higher education. This is determined by such factors as your parents' income, assets, and debts; your earnings and savings; and the number of children in your family currently in university.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)- This is the College Scholarship Service form that requires information about an applicant's family income, assets, expenses and liabilities.

Financial Need - The difference between the cost of education at a university/college and the

student's expected family contribution.

Foreign Student – This is a student who is not a citizen or permanent resident of the country where they are applying to study. If you have a passport of a country, then you cannot be a foreign student.

Grade Point Average (GPA) - A system of evaluating overall student achievement.

Graduate and Professional Schools - Refers to colleges/universities offering master's and doctorate degrees, and to such faculties as law, medicine, etc.

Grant - A financial award, also known as scholarship, which does not have to be repaid.

Humanities – Subjects in which the primary focus is on human culture. Examples include history, philosophy, language, and literature.

Individualized Major - A program that allows students to design their field of specialization based on individual interests.

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)- This is a test designed to assess the language ability of those who need to study or work where English is the language of communication.

Institutional Aid Forms - The university's own financial aid application form which must be submitted in addition to the F.A.F.S.A.

Interdisciplinary Major – A major (synonymous with “course” in the UK and Australia) that combines two complementary subjects from different fields (i.e., biology and psychology). Students completing these majors take courses in each area as well as courses that explicitly join the two.

International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBDP) - The IBDP is a program of study taken in the last two years of high school, which covers a broad liberal arts spectrum. Students who earn the full diploma will be able to present their credentials for admission to most of the national university systems around the world. Students who choose to take IB courses and sit for the IB examinations will often be able to get college or university credit at U.S. and Canadian universities, depending on the outcome of the exam.

Internship - An employment opportunity, usually in an area related to academic or career interests, which students may pursue either on or off campus. Some internships are paid positions, but most are opportunities for students to gain valuable experience as unpaid volunteers.

Intramurals – Athletic leagues informally organized within a university or college. Students do not have to try out. They play with and against fellow classmates.

Legacy – An applicant for admission whose mother or father is an alumna or alumnus of that particular college/university. Students with legacy status are often given preferential treatment in admissions.

Liberal Arts - Academic work in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, as opposed to technical or professional subjects such as engineering or business.

Major - A student's area of specialization. Generally, major course requirements make up one-quarter to one-half of a student's undergraduate program and are combined with other general education requirements.

Merit Scholarship – A financial grant usually awarded for academic achievement or special skill in an extracurricular activity and not based upon need.

Minor - A student's subordinate specialization.

Matriculate - To enroll.

Proprietary School - A private trade, technical, business or nursing school which offers programs usually shorter in duration and more job-oriented than those given by 2- or 4-year colleges/universities.

Prerequisite – A requirement that must be met before commencement of study for a particular course or programme.

Public, Private, Church-Related, State-Related - Refers to the "control" of the institution. "Public" means government owned, usually by the state or county. Tuitions are usually different for residents and non-residents. "Private" means not government owned. "Church-Related" means that the institution may have a close relationship with the denomination specified, but often such a religious affiliation is more relevant to the institution's background than to its current program. "State Related" refers to a private institution that has different in-state and out-of-state tuition rates.

Quarter - A unit measuring the academic year. Under this system, there are four quarters, or terms, each year.

Rolling Admissions - Applications are considered as soon as all required materials (application form, fees, transcript, recommendations, test scores) are received by the university. Students are notified as soon as the decisions are made.

Room and board - Fees that cover room and meal expenses.

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT-I) - A standardized examination, offered by the College Board through the Educational Testing Service, required for admission to many U.S. colleges. The test was designed to measure verbal and mathematical skills.

SAT-II Subject Tests – The Educational Testing Service offers fourteen subjects for the College Board. Each test is timed for one hour and a student may take up to three per testing. These examinations are designed to measure a student's knowledge of a specific subject, such as history, math, or a foreign language.

Social Sciences – Subjects that deal systematically with institutions of human society—most notably economics and political sciences. The behavioral sciences, which include psychology, sociology, and anthropology, are often included in this group as well.

Social Security Number - Identification number assigned to American citizens by the U.S. government. Universities may assign a similar number to be used as a university identification number.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) – A three-and-one-half hour multiple-choice examination designed to measure a student's English language proficiency.

Transcript - A copy of your academic record showing subjects taken, grades earned, and attendance.

Tuition - The fees that cover academic expenses.

Undergraduate - A bachelor's or associate degree candidate. Once students have earned a bachelor's degree, they are eligible for entry to graduate programs at the master's and doctoral levels.

Waiting list - A list of students who were not initially accepted by a university but who will be accepted at a later date if space becomes available.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Counselor/School	Student	Parent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain accurate transcripts <input type="checkbox"/> Manage the sending of all school documentation to the colleges and universities: Transcripts, profile, school reports, letters of recommendations <input type="checkbox"/> Assist students on request for college information <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor overall process and help students compile all the pieces of the application <input type="checkbox"/> Remind students of upcoming deadlines <input type="checkbox"/> Provide information about college and university reps visiting your school <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate teacher's letter of recommendations <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a file of admission actions <input type="checkbox"/> Publish school profile <input type="checkbox"/> Problem solve for any external agencies such as TOEFL, SAT, ACT (We have no real responsibilities with these folks) <input type="checkbox"/> Write reports or recommendations when so requested by the student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Research colleges/universities <input type="checkbox"/> Read your email daily <input type="checkbox"/> Ask teachers for letter of recommendation <input type="checkbox"/> Check transcript with your counselor <input type="checkbox"/> Sign up for appropriate tests <input type="checkbox"/> Talk with University reps <input type="checkbox"/> Fill out applications <input type="checkbox"/> <u>WATCH Deadlines</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Give appropriate forms to your counselor: Secondary school report (or Counselor's report), Mid- year reports, Teacher rec. forms <input type="checkbox"/> Keep photocopies of all forms and applications mailed <input type="checkbox"/> Keep accurate records of when things are mailed <input type="checkbox"/> Inform your counselor of all admission decisions ASAP. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep your Naviance Account updated <input type="checkbox"/> <u>WATCH Deadlines</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss openly financial restrictions and funding for colleges <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare financial forms as required: FAFSA, Foreign Student Fin. Aid Forms, Certification of Finances or bank letters <input type="checkbox"/> Provide application fees as needed (keep a copy!) <input type="checkbox"/> Assist students in management of deadlines <input type="checkbox"/> Proof reading applications and essays <input type="checkbox"/> Assist in gathering of information if needed (especially important if dealing with embassies) <input type="checkbox"/> Balance the pressure you put on your teen—they need some push, but keep in mind this is their responsibility! <input type="checkbox"/> Keep your own expectations in check.