

UNIVERSITY HANDBOOK



aes

American Embassy School

*An
International
Community*

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is written for AES students to help guide your university search and assist you with your applications, with the idea that the more information you have going in, the easier the entire process will be.

This guide is meant to supplement the support you'll receive from your counselor at AES, not take the place of your counselor. Your counselor will work with you to select schools that seem a good fit for your talents, interests, abilities, and desires. Counselors hold essay-writing workshops, read drafts and offer suggestions. Counselors submit all the supporting documents that colleges and universities require. We are also available to give you guidance, help set deadlines, monitor your application progress, and generally "be there" for you when you need us. We'll provide you with important resources and teach you how to use those resources so that you can find the answers to the hundreds of questions you'll have as you go through the application process.

Parents are important stakeholders and another great resource: include them, seek their advice, and remember that they only want the best for you.

Our goal as counselors is that every student ends up with choices they feel good about. Our philosophy is that "college is a match to be made, not a trophy to be won." AES counselors focus on helping to identify colleges and universities that most closely fit each student's interests, needs, achievements, and potential.

[AES High School Counselors](#)

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Which University is Right for You?

The College Search Begins With You

Before you get started on the crucial task of researching universities, set aside time for self-reflection.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What subjects do I enjoy the most?
- What type of classroom setting brings out the best in me?
- How independent a learner am I?
- How effective are my organizational/time management skills?
- Do I know exactly what I want to study?
- Have I challenged myself in high school?
- What type of grades have I earned in high school?
- How important are co-curricular involvements, now and in the future?
- How important is geographic location?

Approximately 40% of AES students matriculate to the United States each year, 7% to the United Kingdom, and 16% to Korea. Annually, about 15% apply to more than one region

Researching Colleges That Fit

Are you 100% set on studying medicine? Do you know for certain that a career in business is in your future? Do you wonder if the United Kingdom is the place for you? Are you definitely headed to university in your home country? Are you like many students who do not know what or where they will study?

Surely you know or have heard of Harvard, Oxford, KAIST, and NUS, but what about the other 4,000 universities in the United States or the thousands in the United Kingdom, mainland Europe, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Canada, Japan, Australia, and elsewhere around the globe? It is doubtful that you want to limit yourself to only the universities you have heard of; after all they haven't heard of you either. Broaden your horizons, take charge, and have fun with this part of the process.

How Sure Are You About What You Want to Study?

Students who are sure about what program or course they wish to pursue often find a good fit at universities in the United Kingdom. Students applying to the UK must know the specific course they want to pursue and meet the specific entry requirements. The same is also true for many other European universities and those in Australia, Korea, and other parts of the world. In Canada, students generally apply to a faculty (such as the "Faculty of Science") rather than a specific course. In the United States, many universities do not require an applicant to have chosen a definitive course of study. Exceptions to this often include programs in engineering, business, nursing, performing and visual arts. A majority of students who apply to the United States have no specific program or course in mind and are applying to the university, not the program.



Campus Setting

In general, school location is broken down into three categories: urban, suburban, and rural.

Urban campuses offer the advantages of city living: access to public transportation, opportunities for internships and work, and a wide variety of cultural activities. Downsides of urban life might include crime, too many distractions, and high costs. In addition, urban campuses can sometimes not be campuses at all, but just a number of buildings randomly placed around a city.

The suburban or university town setting often offers the best of both worlds—easy access to the city, on a campus with clearly defined boundaries and a college feel. The vast majority of universities in suburban settings provide frequent and free or low-cost transportation to nearby cities or towns.

At a university in a rural setting, social life is centered around campus activities. Universities in these settings work hard to bring in culture and entertainment, with sports and clubs often taking on increased importance.

Women's universities include: Smith, Mount Holyoke, Bryn Mawr, Wellesley, Mills, Barnard.

Schools with religious affiliation include: Notre Dame, Gonzaga, Brigham Young, Georgetown.

Historically black colleges include: Morehouse, Fisk, Howard, Spellman

Art schools include: SCAD, Ringling, RISD, Pratt, Parsons

Geographical Setting

Please keep in mind that geography can impact your experience in many ways. Political climate, diversity, weather, access to public transportation and international airports are all factors to consider. Researching geography is an important part of the college search process.

United States

Within the United States, there are four distinct geographical areas one might consider. The Northeast is a major center of university activity and is best known for its myriad of highly selective universities and excellent small liberal arts colleges. The majority of the Northeast is easily accessible from overseas or within the states. Both travel between cities and within cities is excellent in the Northeast corridor. Probably the biggest downside to living in this area is the weather. With school starting in September and ending in mid-May, students are not in session for the majority of the good weather months and instead will find themselves in fairly cold and snowy conditions for a good portion of their school year (November-March)

The South has many fine schools, but they are definitely more spread out and reaching them can be costly and add hours to flights. Generally speaking, the population of the South is more homogeneous than in the Northeast, and perhaps more rural. Traditions are strong in the South. The South does boast several large cities, such as Atlanta and New Orleans, and offers the advantage of a fairly temperate climate.

The Midwest area, with Chicago at its heart, is home to many universities in small towns and rural areas. Getting to Chicago is easy, but one must take into account additional flights and cost to reach those schools in regions not near Chicago. The Chicago area is culturally and ethnically diverse, but smaller towns and cities in the region can be more homogeneous. As it is in the Northeast, winter can be a challenge.

The West covers considerable territory, with California the most sought after area by AES students considering the region. The west coast has many urban centers with good public transportation (excluding Los Angeles), a very agreeable climate, access to the ocean, mountains, and desert, and contains well traveled routes, especially for those coming from the Pacific Rim. Ethnic diversity is widespread in this region and many cities are major hubs for cultural activities.

Canada

Canada is another choice if North America is on your radar. Most universities and colleges in Canada are public, and the tuition is generally about a third to a half as expensive than it is in the United States. Schools are on the large side, for the most part, and can be found from the west coast, across the prairies and into the more populated centers of Ontario and Quebec. Perhaps one of the biggest draws for non-citizens is the policy of granting a three-year work visa to graduates with the possibility of immigrant status and citizenship. The weather in Canada is similar to that of the northern United States, with the west coast host to the most temperate climate.

Average high and low
temps for January

Boston - 36F and 22F

Atlanta - 52F and 32F

Chicago - 30F and 15F

London - 49F and 40F

Seoul - 35F and 16F

Melbourne - 77F and 57F

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom is another option for many students and houses a wide variety of programs and something to suit virtually everyone. Diversity is strong in the UK and transportation to and from is excellent, as is transportation within the country and within major cities. The weather in the UK is a bit tricky, with rain and cool temperatures year round.

Mainland Europe

Although many universities in each European nation instruct in the language of the host country, there are also many that instruct in English, as well as several branches of American universities. In many cases, the tuition costs for non-EU residents is quite low in comparison to that of the United States. Europe is generally accessible, and transportation both between countries and cities is outstanding. One consideration about Europe is the cost: from gasoline, to rent, to food, to transportation, Europe can be expensive.

Hong Kong and Singapore

Hong Kong and Singapore have several universities with English as the medium of instruction. As with other parts of the world, the tuition costs are significantly lower than in the U.S., even for non-citizens. Convenient location is a plus. Both cities offer vibrant cultural opportunities, have excellent public transportation, are diverse, and getting to and from them is relatively easy. Lectures predominate in Singaporean universities; Hong Kong offers a mix of liberal arts and course-specific instruction.

Australia

With a strong national university system, the choices in Australia are varied and offer good value. Because they are in the Southern Hemisphere, Australia traditionally starts their school year in March, so students pursuing college "Down Under," often take a gap semester prior to starting university.

Campus Life

Academic Culture

These are some factors you should consider as you research colleges and universities. You may want to investigate the answers to the following questions as you tour campuses and talk with current university students.

- Are students consumed by academics or do you get the sense that intellectual pursuits are balanced with sports, activities and service?
- Is the reputation of the school one of healthy/unhealthy competition?
- Do students appear to be engaged or disengaged?
- Are professors accessible or hard to find?
- Is there an Honor Code?
- Are there internship/research opportunities for undergraduate students?
- Is there an Honors program?
- Is there a Co-Op program?
- Can students double major?
- Is there a core curriculum or distribution requirements and what is involved?
- Is the academic calendar semester, quarter or trimester?
- What are the opportunities for study abroad?
- Is there a required senior thesis?
- What is the average class size for first-year students?
- What percentage of students graduate in four years?

Social Culture

The size and location of the college have a major impact on the social scene. Some factors to consider: What is the political climate on campus and how does it align with your values? Is it a diverse campus? Is it LGBTQ friendly?

Keep in mind that diversity can refer to many factors including nationality, gender, socioeconomic background, geography, religion, ethnic heritage, and sexual orientation.

- Is there a Greek system (sororities and fraternities) on campus and what percentage of students participate? In U.S. universities, Greek societies refer to social houses, usually divided by gender, to which students must compete for membership and then pay dues if selected.
- What do students do for fun?

Residential Life

Aspects of residential life are important considerations, as your university campus will be your home for one or more years.

- What percentage of students live on campus? For how many years is housing guaranteed?
- Are there theme-housing options (i.e., substance-free dorms, Honors housing, international students)?
- What type of meal plans and dining halls are available?
- What are students saying about the variety and quality of the food on campus?
- Are the dorms singles, doubles or triples?
- With how many students will you be sharing a bathroom?
- Are the dorms single sex, single sex by floor or mixed?
- Are gym facilities on campus open to all students or reserved for athletes?
- Can students have a car on campus? Do students need a car?

Student Support Services

Factors to consider:

- Are there transitional programs (such as freshman seminar) for first-year students?
- What does the academic advising program look like?
- What types of career services does the college provide?
- What kind of health services are available on-campus?
- Is there a writing lab? EAL support? Math tutorial?
- Are there counseling services available?
- What does the school offer for international student orientation?
- Are international student services available to TCK's?

Co-Curricular Activities

Athletics: Are team sports important to you? In the U.S., athletics are divided into five categories. Divisions I and II are primarily reserved for recruited athletes. Division III, club, and intramural sports are generally open to all students who wish to try out. Elsewhere in the world, athletics may be university- or community-based.

Clubs/Service: Most colleges and universities offer a long list of clubs and activities in which you can participate. If something has been important to you in high school, find out if there is an active group on campus.

Cost

It is imperative that families sit down and have an honest conversation about funding available for college – before selecting colleges. See the section titled “Financing Your Education” for more information.

Selectivity: Can you get admitted?

It should go without saying that one of the most important factors in developing a list of colleges is selecting schools to which the student has a good chance of being offered admission.

Other factors you should consider when gauging your chances of admission:

- How strong are your standardized test scores?
- Did one of your parents attend the college for an undergraduate degree?

Admissions committees in the United States always consider, above all else, the rigor of the courses a student has taken and is currently taking, and the level of achievement in all classes.

Admissions decisions based on the IB Diploma as a qualification always consider, above all else, the subjects a student is currently taking and the predicted exams scores for each subject.

- Does the college require SAT Subject Tests? If so, how many?
- Have you demonstrated interest?
- Can you effectively articulate your fit for the college/course in a supplemental essay/personal statement?

Be wary of falling for the name-brand trap. It is untrue that you will be happy and successful only if you attend an Ivy League college or its equivalent. Think of friends, your parents, and all the other adults in your life—are they happy and successful? Do they enjoy their careers? Do they feel satisfied professionally and rewarded monetarily? The answer is probably “yes” to many, if not all of these questions. Then think about or ask how many actually went to name-brand schools. Probably very few. Yet they turned out pretty well! It is not the university as much as what the student does while in university that is important.

It is essential to acknowledge that admission to the most selective universities can never be guaranteed, even if an applicant meets or exceeds the profile of admitted students at that university. AES Counselors will support students in applying to their dream universities with the understanding that there will be a balance of selectivity in the final university list.

Research and Resources

Universities Visiting AES

Talking to admissions representatives who visit AES is a great way to gather information. In general, upwards of 200 schools visit AES each year. Representatives can answer questions about specific programs, majors, admission criteria, and much more. You have a live person in front of you who can answer your questions, ease your fears, and present you with an overall view of the school. It may very well be your first contact with a school and you want to make it count: be prepared, be polite, make eye contact, thank the person when finished, and definitely ask to complete a student interest card; you want your name on file as a student interested in attending X school.

Two to three university fairs come to AES each year. Individual or small group visits are often hosted on the breezeway during lunch. Students should plan in advance to take advantage of these visits. Ten minutes out of your lunch break or club meeting can make a real difference.

Campus Tours

If you are able to visit a university campus at anytime, you are strongly encouraged to do so. This may mean taking an afternoon away from your vacation, planning summer vacations in advance, researching when open days are scheduled, and registering for tours and information sessions. Having said that, many universities welcome drop-in visitors for campus tours and this information can be found on the website. To attend both an information session and tour, set aside at least two hours.

Things to do while on campus:

- Take a tour
- If something is important to you – ask about it.
- Attend the information session
- Talk to students
- Eat in the dining hall
- Attend a class (arrange in advance)
- Ask about admissions interviews
- Read the college newspaper
- Take notes and photos
- Stop by the Financial Aid Office



Sample questions to ask the colleges:

What is special about this university?

What do students like most about this university? least?

What do students do for fun?

What are some favorite campus traditions?

Can you describe a typical student on your campus?

Is on campus housing guaranteed?

If so, for how many years?

Is there an international orientation? Are ex-pat kids invited?

Tell me about your academic and career advising.

How is campus safety addressed?

Do you offer merit scholarships?

Tips for University Visits

- No more than two campus visits per day.
- Make sure you include a range of universities: both in selectivity and setting.
 - Let the student do the talking.
- If possible, student and parent join separate tour groups.
 - Say thank you, both in person and via email.
- Check out the surrounding area. Take yourself out to a nice meal. Have fun!

University Websites

It goes without saying that individual university websites are a primary source for information. They contain just about everything a prospective student needs to know and with current technology, the virtual tours, and student blogs add to the experience. The websites contain important information about testing requirements, deadlines, financial information, available scholarships, housing, programs, student contacts, health services and virtually any topic related to the college experience.

Maia Learning (2019–20)

Both students and parents have accounts on MaiaLearning which can be accessed either through the AES portal or link on the Counseling page of the website. AES's subscription to MaiaLearning provides families with access to the following modules:

- Career Exploration
- College Information
- Applications: link to Common Application, manage requests for teacher recommendations, track submission of school documents and admissions results.

The AES HS Counseling Blog

High school counselors update and maintain a comprehensive blog. Information for students, parents, and visiting college representatives can be found at this link:

<http://hscounseling.hsblogs.aes.ac.in/>

Timelines and Guidelines for Students in Grades 9-12

Grades 9 & 10

Philosophy: The philosophy of AES counselors is that the first two years in high school should be devoted to academic study, exploration of electives, developing skills, and exploring extra-curricular and volunteer activities. It is our opinion that the university process is best left until students are in grades 11 and 12 and that introducing the topic much sooner can create anxiety and stress in students who are not developmentally prepared for the process. Having said that, there are several things that students in grades 9 & 10 can do to improve their eligibility:

Course selection: Although options are more limited for students in grades 9 and 10, some opportunity for selection exists. Making good choices does not mean the same thing for every student: this is the time to foster academic interests, explore opportunities, opt for manageable rigor and develop strong time management skills, and consider whether or not they have interest in becoming IB Diploma candidates.

Involvement: Getting involved in a variety of extra-curricular activities early on is important: it allows for growth within a field and builds key social skills. Involvements need not be limited to school-based activities, and could include athletics, service, academic teams and clubs, employment, the arts or other interests. This is a time for students to find their interests and start to develop them; explore but also look for things to which you can commit—in the long run, a clear depth of interest is preferable to an uncommitted breadth of activities.

Academic Achievement: From the very start of high school, the semester grades that students earn become part of the portfolio they present to universities when they apply. While many universities look most closely at the rigor and grades of courses in Grades 11 and 12, the cumulative GPA builds from Grade 9 onwards. Indeed, for early applicants, the grades taken into consideration by colleges may only be those from Grades 9-11. Taking the time to adjust from middle school is important. Students who have a rocky start should redouble their efforts because an upward trend in grades from 9 through 12 demonstrates a student who has become more proficient and successful. The trick is always to find the balance between taking courses that offer the greatest rigor, yet afford the greatest success in terms of grades.

Make Summers Count: Summers are a fantastic opportunity for students to grow their interests and abilities. A huge variety of summer opportunities exist, and "doing something with your summer," does not have to mean shelling out a ton of cash for a fancy program or forfeiting all of your family time. A couple of weeks spent doing volunteer work, being immersed in a language program or a homestay overseas, playing with a sports team, or interning at an office that seems interesting, are all great ways to grow a student's awareness and abilities. The AES Counseling website has an extensive list of possible summer opportunities. And if you're near a university campus, why not take a quick visit?



GRADE 9

Summer Applications: Students who wish to apply to selective academic summer programs will often need to submit applications between December and March. Many of these programs require teacher and counselor recommendations: students who wish to apply should get to know their teachers and counselor throughout the first semester so that they can obtain the documents they need when the time comes.

University Fairs at AES and Visiting Representatives: The 150 visiting university representatives from around the world who are available on the AES campus year-round are here to talk to anyone who has interest. Grade 9 students are welcome to come to university fairs, chat with representatives at lunchtimes, and begin to explore what is on offer.

Hit the Books: Study after study shows, the students who achieve the most in both high school and university are those who read. Reading outside of the curriculum is key: but the subject matter can be reflective of the student's interests. If a student loves science he or she could read science magazines, blogs or websites. Politics? The more newspapers, the better. Science fiction? Great. Poetry? Fantastic. Getting reading time in is a great way to improve your child's comprehension, concentration and knowledge.

MAP Testing: MAP Testing is another way that students and families receive feedback on skills that are areas of strength, as well as those that may need some additional support. Using the feedback from MAP testing as one way to gauge a student's achievement and needs can help families pinpoint where academic efforts need support and where students are already showing great promise.

Course Selection for Grade 10: At the beginning of the second semester, Grade 9 students will receive information about all the courses available for the next academic year. This is a great opportunity for students to think carefully about their interests and begin to make choices that affect their future.

GRADE 10

PSAT: Each year in October AES administers, free of charge, the PSAT/NMSQT or Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test to all students in Grades 10 & 11. This test is preparation for the SAT and measures areas of critical reading, math problem-solving and writing skills. The scores on this test are measured between 20 and 80 in each of the three subtests. The test results come with electronic access to resources, which provides detailed feedback on areas of strength and those in need of strengthening, practice questions, and much more. Counselors also offer a pre-session helping students and parents understand what to expect.

University Planning Night

In February Grade 10, counselors hold a 9th and 10th Grade University Planning Session for students and parents. The purpose of this session is to provide some basic information on the university selection process, the application route, and the associated tasks.

Maia Learning, our new student data management system will be introduced with full implementation during the 2019-20 school year.

Summer Vacation

The summer between grades 10 and 11 is a perfect time to begin to explore university campuses. If you have the time and means to visit some campuses during the summer, you are encouraged to do so. Stop and see a large university, a medium sized school and perhaps a small liberal arts school. It is also recommended that students are able to see the campus of a highly selective school, but also those of schools which are less selective.

University Fairs at AES and Visiting Representatives: The over 150 visiting university representatives from around the world who are available on the AES campus year-round are here to talk to anyone who has interest. Grade 9–10 students are encouraged to come to college fairs, chat with representatives at lunchtimes, and begin to explore what is on offer.

Selecting Your Course of Study for Grades 11 and 12

Grade 10 is the time when students must make a decision regarding the IB. The IB diploma program is the most rigorous course of study the school offers, but the IB isn't for everyone. Students need to be thinking about which countries they will apply to for university when considering whether or not to pursue the Diploma program. Many programs (although not all) in Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Australia and Europe require an IB Diploma for direct entry. In January IB Information seminars will be offered to students and parents and the bulk of the choices available will be outlined. February of grade 10 is the perfect time to discuss your academic plans with your counselor and your teachers and begin to outline the academic pathway that is a good fit for you.

GRADES 11 & 12

U.S. university tours and info sessions are usually offered twice daily during the summer months; reservations aren't generally needed, but always check the school's website first.

Grades 11 & 12 are crucial in the university application process. Families can help by having frank and honest discussions about finances and expectations, and keeping the channels of communication open and the pressure low.

Grade 11 is probably the most important year in terms of academics, leadership, and research. It is also when students typically start taking standardized tests, compiling university lists and finding ways to shine in and outside of the classroom.

Grade 12 is when the applications actually begin, and many students struggle with maintaining grades, involvements, Internal Assessments and managing application and testing deadlines. It is important to stay focused, not procrastinate, and find a way to give yourself some downtime. Your counselor is here to guide you through the process—whether your destination is “home” or someplace you’ve never been. Make as many appointments as you need with your counselor—we are here to help.

GRADE 11

August:

- Begin the year strong; adopt a routine
- Sign up for leadership opportunities
- Use your study periods well

September:

- Linden College Fair
- University Prep session: An introduction to worldwide higher education
- PSAT Prep session

October:

- CIS College Fair
- PSAT information session for parents
- PSAT

November:

- Start studying for final exams
- Begin prep for SAT Reasoning
- Grade 11 University Night

December:

- Register for January SAT

January:

- PSAT results distributed
- SAT Reasoning test with writing
- Begin planning your summer: college visits, internships, programs

February:

- Set up a family meeting with your counselor
- Course selection for Grade 12

March:

- Linden Tour
- Register for ACT with writing
- Discuss finances and expectations with your family
- Start constructing a university list
- Identify two teachers who might write recommendations and discuss with your counselor

April:

- ACT test
- Register for the SAT
- Register for TOEFL/IELTS
- Request all recommendations for EA/ED/Oxbridge

May:

- SAT Reasoning or Subject Tests
- IB, AP and final exams
- Register for the SAT
- You're a senior!

June/July:

- Take TOEFL if your passport is from a country where the first language is not English
- Begin drafting your essay
- Investigate colleges and universities
- Visit colleges and universities when possible
- Prior to school, list 10-15 colleges in Maia Learning-the replacement for Naviance will be active in fall 2019.
- If applying outside the US, concentrate on identifying your exact course of study
- Finish the draft of your Extended Essay

GRADE 12

August:

- Grade 12 University Planning Session
- Continue with university research
- Continue working on university essay
- In conjunction with your counselor, confirm recommendations with two teachers and follow up through Maia Learning.
- Have a great start to the semester. These grades count!!Register for September ACT
- Grade 12 Senior Retreat

September:

- Linden College Fair
- University Prep sessions: UK applications/US Common App/Essays
- ACT Test
- Work with your counselor and begin to narrow down college list
- Continue working on university essay
- Make a decision and declare to counselor - am I applying Early Decision/Action?
- Make a decision and declare to your counselor- am I applying to Cambridge or Oxford or to a medical or veterinary course in the UK?
- Complete Counselor Interview Survey in Maia Learning and schedule meeting with counselor
- Register for October SAT

October:

- CIS College Fair
- Oxbridge and medical applications to UK due
- SAT Test
- Finalize college application list with 10 colleges/universities listed in Maia Learning under "Colleges Applying."
- Make list of required supplemental essays for your universities
- If applying Early, complete application by deadline and ensure recs are completed - inform counselor when application is sent
- Counselors send supporting docs for Early app
- If applying Early, student requests to appropriate testing organization sending of SAT or ACT and/or TOEFL scores directly to university
- Register for November SAT/CSS Profile & FAFSA opens for US Citizens

November:

- EA/ED Applications due with financial forms
- UC applications due
- SAT test
- Register for December SAT
- Work on applications-including supplemental essays
- Begin gathering financial documents to send to universities

December:

- Complete University List in Maia Learning
- SAT Test Dec? Internal deadline?
- ACT Test
- Register for January SAT
- Send standardized test scores to colleges
- Goal - complete all applications prior to start of vacation
- Keep counselors apprised of application status and update Maia Learning
- December 15th (+/-) Early Decisions are received- rejoice if admitted and notify any other colleges you have applied to that you withdraw your application.
- Early Decision deferrals - meet with counselor to plan next steps

January:

- SAT
- All UK Applications due
- Most US Applications due
- Send Thank Yous to everyone who wrote you a recommendation

February:

- Most Canadian Applications due
- FAFSA Financial documents for US due/check individual college websites

March:

- Most US regular application decisions arrive
- As results come in from colleges, update your counselor and login to Naviance to record decisions (accepted, denied, waitlisted)

April:

- Grade 12 Parent Transition Night
- For U.S.-bound students, make a decision on which college you will attend and send deposit by May 1st

May:

- Grade 12 Transition to University Session
- Universal reply date for US colleges: May 1
- IB, AP and final exams
- Graduation!

Types of Universities in The United States

UNIVERSITY: An academic institution that enrolls undergraduates and graduate students and grants BA/BS, MA, and PhD degrees. It offers a vast array of majors, minors and concentrations. Research is a major focus of these institutions. Often, colleges are housed within the university. Size can vary from a few thousand to more than 60,000 students.

COLLEGE: An academic institution that offers primarily four-year undergraduate and possibly some graduate programs. In the United States, the terms college and university are used interchangeably. The size of a college can range from a few hundred to a few thousand.

LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES COLLEGES: An academic institution with four-year programs including humanities, sciences, languages, and in some instances, engineering. Research is integral to these institutions, and the primary focus of professors is teaching undergraduate students. Students are exposed to a broad distribution of academic subjects and are often required to declare a major at the end of their second year of studies.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE: An academic institution offering general education courses and technical programs culminating in a two-year Associate's Degree. Community colleges often serve as feeder schools to state colleges and universities.

ENGINEERING COLLEGE: An academic institution that provides four-year programs in specific areas related to STEM subjects (science and/or engineering).

ART COLLEGE/CONSERVATORY: An institution that focuses on specific talent-based programs in the visual and/or performing arts. Admission is often based primarily on portfolio and/or audition. Students graduate with a Bachelor's of Fine Arts (BFA) Degree.

MILITARY COLLEGE: An institution that prepares students for service in the U.S. military while gaining a four-year degree. These schools are tuition-free and highly competitive. Upon graduation, the student's commitment is four to six years of military service. These schools include: West Point (U.S. Army), U.S. Naval Academy (Navy and Marines), the Air Force Academy, and the Coast Guard Academy.

Public V. Private

Public: Public universities offer relatively low cost tuition to in-state residents, and can charge significantly more for out-of-state and international students.

First-year classes at these generally large institutions are often held in lecture halls with minimal contact with professors. Students must be proactive and independent. Prestigious public institutions may have statistics indicating a relatively high admit rate, but these schools admit in-state residents first and the number of spots available for an out-of-state/international applicant, can be quite small.

Private: Tuition at private colleges is the same for everyone and generally higher than at public institutions. Private colleges vary greatly in size, but about 80% have enrollments under 2,500. In general, private colleges have smaller class sizes and greater accessibility to professors.

Applying to U.S. Colleges and Universities

There are over 4,000 colleges and universities in the United States. AES limits students to applying to no more than ten. More than 750 of these institutions accept the Common Application. Some states have their own “common” application, notably California and Texas. Although the application process takes time and energy, admissions committees also spend a great deal of time evaluating each application. In addition to evaluating grades and test scores, many applications take into account information about student interests, extra-curricular activities, family histories, and personal experiences.

Application Plans

Part of the process students must think about when they apply to the United States is how and when to apply. As you narrow your choices, you will need to consider which types of applications each college offers, and which you'll pursue. In considering application timelines, it is important to evaluate which fits you best. In short, Early Decision is not for everyone. Application pathways are determined by the colleges themselves, and are defined below:

Early Decision (ED): An early application that is binding. A student may only apply to ONE college Early Decision. The deadline for EDI is most often November 1st or 15th; for EDII it can be December 1st or as late as the Regular Decision deadline. If students apply ED, they make a commitment to attend if admitted and withdraw all other applications. Applying Early Decision is for the student who has thoroughly done his or her research and knows this college, above and beyond others, is THE COLLEGE.

Early Decision

Advantages

Results for EDI released mid-December

Smaller applicant pool

Admit rate may be higher

If admitted, you are done after just one application

Disadvantages

If admitted, cannot change your mind

Cannot compare financial aid awards

Higher admit rate can be misleading as ED applicant pools include athletic recruits, legacy, and other special interests

You must be prepared in advance

Early Action or Priority - Similar to Early Decision, but non-binding. Applying by the Priority deadline may qualify students for scholarship consideration. The application is often due the 1st or 15th of November. In other words, if admitted to a college Early Action or Priority, the student does not have to attend and may apply to additional colleges. Students are not limited to one Early Action or Priority application. However, a few institutions offer Restricted Early Action (REA) or Single Choice Early Action (SCEA), meaning that students may not apply to anywhere else EA or ED.



Early Action or Priority

Advantages

- Results released mid-December
- Able to compare financial aid awards
- If admitted, you still can still explore other options

Disadvantages

- Applicant pool may be stronger than in Regular Decision
- You must be prepared in advance
- REA and SCEA limit early application options

Regular Decision - The route that most students take; there are no conditions attached to this type of application. Most applications are due by 1st or 15th of January and decisions are released late March/early April.

Rolling Admissions - Process by which applications are read by colleges and universities as they arrive and decisions are made when files are complete. The student generally receives the non-binding admission committee decision in about six to eight weeks.

Decision Deadlines *

Early Decision	1st to 15th November
Early Action/Priority	1st to 15th November
Regular	Generally 1st or 15th January
Rolling	Varies

Results Received

Mid-December
Mid-December
End of March/early April
6+/- weeks after app received

*Always check each college's website for specific deadlines and requirements.

Parts of the Application

Although there are many parts to the U.S. application, they do not all carry equal weight.

Below is an outline of the application elements most often considered:

- Transcripts:** Always the most important part of an application, colleges are most interested in seeing achievement and rigor—students who take the most rigorous courses they can manage and excel in those courses.
- Test Scores:** Not every college requires standardized tests, but those that do usually consider them very carefully and look to see scores that corroborate the grades a student has earned in school (or exceed them). Whether or not a college requires SATs or ACTs is an indication of its philosophy, not its quality.
- Extracurricular and Volunteer Activities or Employment:** Commitment, passion, development of skills, movement toward leadership, awareness of global issues: all of these can be illustrated through meaningful involvement in extracurricular activities. Don't worry about joining everything; do things you love and commit to them!

- Teacher Recommendations: The letters teachers write about students are always positive, but they are not all equal. Get to know your teachers and give them plenty of things to say about you—your curiosity in the classroom, your willingness to take risks, to go beyond what is required, to help others, to seek help and take criticism with grace, to get creative on assignments.
- Counselor Recommendations: The counselor letter helps to fill in the gaps and paint a fuller picture of students. Get to know your counselor and make sure that you have given him/her an opportunity to understand the winding road you that took to AES, the meaningful experiences that have shaped your choices in and outside of the classroom, your academic choices, and what you're looking for in a college.
- Essays: Your chance to show who you are to admissions committees, the essay can have a huge impact on your application. For U.S. applications, the essay is not an academic piece but rather a chance to demonstrate your personality and values. You want to be likeable and interesting, and most importantly, yourself. For more on essays, see the section below.
- Demonstrated Interest: Students can demonstrate interest in colleges by visiting, connecting with college representatives on the AES campus, exhibiting meaningful knowledge of a college through supplemental essays, and showing how they are a good fit for the institutions to which they are applying. Colleges know that AES students are each limited to a maximum of ten U.S. applications, which serves as an additional indicator that they are serious applicants with demonstrated interest.
- Interviews: Many colleges do not offer interviews, but if the offer is made, take it! Most interviewers for colleges in the U.S. are more interested in getting to know the applicant than quizzing about academics; be yourself and have some good questions of your own.

The Common Application (www.commonapp.org)

Over 750 colleges and universities in the United States use the Common Application. The great advantage of this free service is that by completing one application, a student may apply to many schools. More than 80% of all AES applications to the U.S. are to Common App schools.

To register, students create a username and password to which only they have access (AES counselors do not have access to a student's Common Application). However, when students link their Common Application account to their Naviance account, AES counselors are able to send all school documents (transcripts, school profile, teacher recommendations and counselor recommendations) directly to each college.

The Common Application is comprised of approximately eight pages of information related to the student, family history, interests, academic and extracurricular involvements, test history and other generalities and specifics. This is the easy part of the application; the hardest part is always the essay. In addition to the common essay used in the Common App, many colleges require additional essays, some short and some long, called "supplements."

The Common Application opens on August 1st each year.

The Essay

Students using the Common Application pick one essay topic from a selection of seven, and are limited to 250-650 words. This essay is the primary way in which students can demonstrate individuality and show who they are beyond a GPA and standardized test scores. The expectation of colleges and universities is that the essay will be the student's work and not that of an adult, and the hope is that the student's voice and personality will come through loud and clear. While spelling, punctuation, and grammar are important, colleges mostly want to be able to "get" who you are when they have finished reading. Would you make a great roommate for the other student they just admitted? Are you going to be an amazing addition to the Archeological Society?

The best advice for writing a strong essay is very similar to the best advice for writing a great story: in other words, "show, don't tell." Colleges are not looking for people who are finished products: they want you to be teachable; they want to see how you think. Small moments often work best to illustrate this: describing one event and how you processed it and reacted to it (including the mistakes) is more illustrative than a long dissertation on who you are. Remember that it is impossible to sum yourself up in 650 words—one little piece that is clearly you is much better than a generalized overview with which your reader will struggle to connect. Keep your words clear, concise, direct, and without slang or "thesaurus-y" words that seem like they sound smart but really just sound out of place. Students are encouraged to begin a draft of their primary essay during the summer between grades 11 and 12: check with your counselor if you'd like some feedback on ideas before you get started or once you have a completed draft

Tips on Writing Essays from the College Board

DO

- Keep your focus narrow and personal
- Use vivid, compelling details (show, don't tell)
- Write simply
- Provide specific evidence (facts, events, quotations, examples) to support your main idea
- Don't repeat information that is found elsewhere in the application
- Write about something unique and different
- Structure your writing in a way that allows the reader to draw his or her own conclusions

DON'T

- Tell them what you think they want to hear
- Write a resume
- Use 50 words when 5 will do
- Forget to proofread

"2019-2020 Common Application Essay prompts"

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

Supplemental Essay(s)

In addition to the main essay on the Common Application, many colleges will have one or more Supplemental Essays. These essays are school-specific and illustrate what is important to the college.

Most supplemental questions fall into one of three categories:

a) Why Us? The "Why Us?" question is probing for demonstrated interest and how well the student (especially students who have not had the opportunity to visit) actually knows the college, beyond mere reputation. Colleges are looking for fit, and the best way to answer this question well is to combine your knowledge of their programs and amenities with a description of your interests and passions.

In the allocated space (usually about 200 words), you should clearly state what attracts you to the school, including some hard facts about a particular program, professor, degree, or initiative that interests you. Do your research and make sure to connect it back to yourself—if they have a great dance program but you rarely get off the couch, it's not a good reason to apply.

b) Why You? Often an extension of the Common App essay, this question is usually framed as a request for you to expand upon something important to you or an extracurricular activity that has been meaningful. Its open-ended nature is designed to give you room to share something personal; make it specific and evocative and don't fall into the trap of making big generalizations.

c) The Creative Question. What kind of a vegetable would you be and why? Write page 318 of your 500-page biography. If you could design any kind of course, what would it look like? If you could have dinner with anyone alive or dead, who would it be and why? These questions can be vast and varied, and the quirrier they are, the quirrier the college often is and expects its students to be. Be bold; be creative and have fun.

University of California

The University of California (UC) system consists of nine public undergraduate campuses and 700+ academic programs. Application to the UCs is done through the University of California Application System (its own common application), and follows different guidelines than many U.S. colleges.

The University of California limits its out of State and international enrollment to no more than 18% of the Student body except for Berkeley, UCLA, San Diego and Irvine which have capped at current levels as of May, 2107. UC accepts applications from November 1-30 only, and its clear regulations for applicants are partially outlined below:

Not accepted as part of the application:

- Letters of recommendation
- Transcripts or academic records

Accepted as part of the application:

- Student self-report of grades (verification from school required upon acceptance)
- List of Honors/Awards
- List of Extracurricular and Volunteer Activities
- Description of any Employment
- Personal Insight Questions (students choose 4 out of 8 prompts and write up to 350 words on each)
- Always confirm with the individual admissions website for any additional requirements.

GPA Requirement: 3.40 Weighted

Examination Requirement: ACT Plus Writing or SAT Reasoning with Essay

UC Subject Requirements

Years

a. History/Social Sciences	2 years
b. English	4 years
c. Mathematics	3 years
d. Laboratory Science	2 years
e. Language other than English	2 years
f. Visual & Performing Arts	1 year
g. College-Preparatory Elective	1 year

Applications to Other Colleges and Universities

For colleges that are not part of the UC or Common Application systems, students will need to complete each application via the individual school's website. The vast majority of these schools require at least one essay, but very often the topics match those of the Common Application, and students can often use or easily adjust an essay for one school to fit for another. Never do this for a "Why Us?" question; if you can easily adjust one of these essays to a different school, it is a likely indicator that you were not specific enough in your original answer.

Lesser-Known Factors in Selective Admissions

Disciplinary Issues

Colleges and universities are invested in the integrity of the students they accept, and therefore often ask for a history of disciplinary issues. When asked directly by a college about suspensions or disciplinary probation history, students must answer truthfully and are given the opportunity to briefly explain the circumstances and give a longer explanation of what was learned from the experience.

Counselors are also asked to relate disciplinary history when filing student documents. The Common Application Secondary School Report asks: "Has the applicant ever been found responsible for a disciplinary violation at your school from the 9th grade (or the international equivalent) forward, whether related to academic misconduct or behavioral misconduct, that resulted in a disciplinary action? These actions could include, but are not limited to: probation, suspension, removal, dismissal, or expulsion from your institution." Counselors may also write an explanation of circumstances.

Should a student be placed on probation or suspension after applications have been sent, the student should contact the college and give a brief statement regarding the circumstances; counselors will also contact the student's colleges to provide updated information.

In many cases, having been placed on probation or suspended is not a deal-breaker for colleges. Colleges are understanding of youthful mistakes and consider the seriousness of the infraction, the frequency, how recently it occurred, and explanations of events. Honesty is always the best policy.

Senioritis

Senioritis refers to the "condition" of decreased motivation, performance, or regard for the rules that some seniors experience as they approach the end of their high school career. Senioritis is often the result of a readiness to move on and the misapprehension that senior grades and behaviors don't matter to colleges, but can be very detrimental to applicants. In the worst cases, senioritis can result in fewer offers, probationary status for accepted applicants, embarrassing demands for explanations, lesser financial aid packages or even rescinded admissions offers.

As colleges see it, students are essentially under obligation to remain the students they were when considered and admitted. If a student is earning top grades when accepted, it is reasonable for the college to expect that the same student will earn top grades until he or she graduates from high school. Sadly, every year some students find themselves in the uncomfortable situation of dealing with the after-effects of senioritis; understanding the possible consequences should keep you motivated.

Online Presence

More and more colleges say that they look online for information about applicants. Clearly, students should take care to clean up their online presence and make sure there is nothing visible that a college (or an employer!) might find objectionable when considering an applicant. But additionally, students can create online profiles that when viewed by colleges can add value to their applications. Writers, artists, musicians, inventors, activists: consider a blog or a site that might show you to your best advantage. You never know who's looking.

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Today, the cost of education in the United States is very high. Although costs do vary, with free or low tuition offered by a few schools, most private US colleges and universities' tuition, room and board, books and health insurance will run somewhere between \$50,000-\$80,000 USD per year.

State colleges and universities generally have lower tuition fees, but those reduced rates are only applicable to state residents. Note: most state universities have very stringent guidelines on determining in-state residency so please check details on each school's website. Unlike in the past, there are very few loopholes to gain residency if certain conditions are not met.

Before tackling the two major types of financial aid at US universities, it is important to first discuss some terms which often are misunderstood by applicants.

Need Blind- The college or university does not take into consideration the financial need of the applicant when reviewing the application. In other words, the student is accepted or denied solely based on his/her merits, with the need for money having no part in the admissions decision.

Need Blind-Full Need- These institutions are not only need blind, but the school will meet the demonstrated financial need of any admitted student.

Note: Meeting demonstrated need does NOT necessarily mean they are handing out free money/grants to cover the entire cost of attendance. Many of these schools offer loans which do need to be paid back. Read the fine print of each university's financial aid website as some sites can be misleading.

Need Aware/Need Sensitive

Schools in this category are unable to offer need blind admissions, but instead must take into account the student's financial needs when making a decision on admittance to the college or university.

Be sure to check the school's financial aid/admissions policy. If it states they are "need aware", then you know right up front that the admissions decision will be at least partly based on whether they think your family can afford the total cost of attendance.

Two major types of financial aid available in the United States.

Merit Based Scholarships

Many schools have money set aside for students with special talents or skills in fields as varied as athletics, the arts, community service participation or leadership. Merit based scholarships can also be available to students with very high academic achievement. Merit based scholarships are available to international students at some colleges and universities. Please note that the Ivy League universities offer no merit scholarships, thus offering only need-based aid. In addition, be aware that many universities offer merit scholarships which also consider your family's demonstrated financial need (based on results from the FAFSA and/or Profile financial aid forms).



To get the process started, take the PSAT as a grade 11 student in order to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship (only available to U.S. citizens). Final determination of semi-finalists is based on composite PSAT score tied to the statistics for students in international schools. It is not determined by whether you are a resident of a particular US state. Check the National Merit website for specific details.

Most importantly, contact the financial aid offices of colleges to find out what types of merit scholarships are available. Many students get the largest share of assistance from university endowments through tuition discounts, sibling discounts, and similar specialized categories.

Need-Based Financial Aid

While Merit Scholarships are based on talents, skills, and compelling achievement, Need-Based Financial Aid is based on the ability of the family to pay for a student's college education. In order to qualify for federal need-based aid the student/parent will need to complete certain forms. For students with US passports (even if the parents do not hold US passports) and Permanent Residents, completing the FAFSA (www.fafsa.ed.gov) is an important first step in applying for aid. The FAFSA becomes available each year on 1 October and is completed during the student's senior year and every year thereafter while the student is still enrolled in college. Again, it is prudent to read each university's financial aid website quite carefully.

Another source of financial aid comes from a university's own endowment funds. Usually families have to complete the CSS Profile application which can be found on www.collegeboard.org. The data required for this financial aid tool is much more detailed than what is required on the FAFSA but can be very rewarding to the student so please have patience with their financial questions.

It is incumbent upon parents to track this information, as much of the details are specific to the family's financial status. Meeting deadlines required by each individual university is imperative if you want priority consideration.

Financial Aid for International Students

As already mentioned, international students can qualify for merit based scholarships at many universities in the United States. However, finding Need Based Financial Aid is more problematic. For interested international students (non-US passport holders) there are just a small handful of schools in the United States which are "need blind" (the need for financial aid is NOT considered when looking at the student's application). As this list changes from year to year, please Google the terms "need blind universities for international students" to see the latest list. This list of less than 10 schools usually are amongst the most competitive universities in the United States so a student's academic profile needs to be very strong. All other schools in the US either do NOT offer financial aid to international students or they are "need aware." Keep in mind, all international students (non-US) are also required to submit financial documents to enable the issuance of a student visa for study in the United States.

The Financial Aid Package

If a student/parent has submitted the necessary documents to the financial aid office of the college and has done so within the established timelines, college financial aid offices are usually able to provide the financial aid package sometime during March or April.

Naturally it is important that parents read the package offer carefully to ascertain if they fully understand exactly what is being offered and what they will be responsible for in terms of payments. It is common that questions will arise and parents are definitely encouraged to contact the financial aid office directly, either by phone or email, to have clarity and to resolve any issues. Please consult your child's counselor for guidance on the approach to take with your questions. Most universities do not like to hear the words "negotiate" during these conversations. It is not unheard of for the financial package to not fully meet the family's demonstrated financial need. In other words, there is a difference between the cost of attendance and total aid package awarded by the school. In college lingo, this is known as gapping. Should this occur, it is recommended that you contact the financial aid office to ascertain if there are missing papers or factors not taken into account in the review.

If you have received several offers of admission and thus multiple financial aid packages, carefully review each to see exactly what is being offered and try to compare them side by side. If the student finds him or herself in the position of her top choice school offering less money than a secondary choice, the first choice college can be contacted and it might be possible to obtain a matching financial offer. Again, avoid the word "negotiation". You want to know if you can "appeal" the offer.

Websites for Financial Aid Information

www.fastweb.com Resource for private scholarship information.

www.finaid.org Excellent resource for both international and U.S. citizens.

<http://www.edupass.org/> For international students, contains information not only on financial aid, but also a resource regarding visas, living in the United States and more

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/> Official U.S. Government website for federal student aid

<https://www.edvisors.com/> Most comprehensive resource on all aspects of federal aid, updated yearly.

Print Resources for Financial Aid Information

Getting Financial Aid Handbook and International Student Handbook, excellent resources updated yearly by College Board (www.collegeboard.org) available on Amazon.

Applying to The United Kingdom

UCAS (University and College Admissions Service) is the centralized application website for applying to universities in the UK (<http://ucas.com/>). A student may apply to a maximum of five universities or a combination of various courses in a couple of universities.

Most of the information below pertains to students applying to the UK with their anticipated IB Diploma as their qualification for admission. However, it is possible to apply (and be admitted to) a UK university without the IB Diploma. In general, universities will consider applications from students earning an American high school diploma with the addition of two or three AP exam scores of 4 or 5, plus the SAT. Students considering the UK who are not IB Diploma candidates, are encouraged to contact universities directly to find out what is required to apply for a specific course of interest.

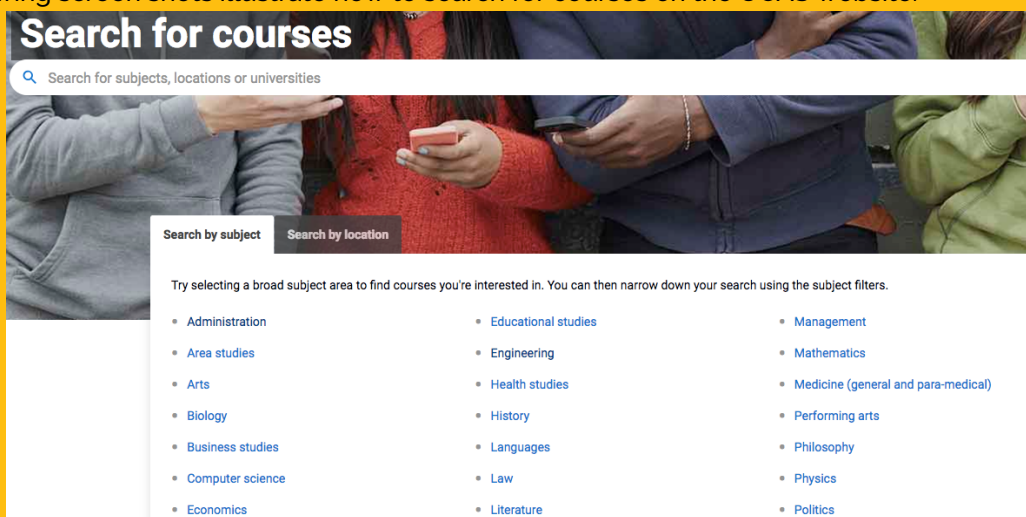
Students without the IB Diploma or AP and SAT scores may still apply to the UK. These students may be required to take a Foundation Year prior to entering a three-year university course. Foundation Year programs are most often associated with a specific university. After successful completion of the Foundation Year, students may matriculate into their desired course at the same university or transfer to another three-year institution.

Choosing a Course

Taking time to carefully research courses, find out which universities offer the course you are looking for, and review specific entry requirements is an essential process.

The UCAS website is easy to navigate and contains all of the information needed to complete your application to the UK. It is highly recommended that students planning to apply to the UK begin this research as early as grade ten and certainly no later than the spring of grade eleven.

The following screen shots illustrate how to search for courses on the UCAS website:



Sort by

University or college (A to Z) ▾

Filters [Clear filters](#)

Economics ×

Study year

2018 - 2019

2019 - 2020

Course vacancies

Show all courses

Only show courses with vacancies

Viewing providers
1,254 courses from 112 providers



EXPAND ALL COLLAPSE ALL



University of Aberdeen

21 courses

- Economics**
Master of Arts (with Honours) - MA (Hons)
- Accountancy and Economics**
Master of Arts (with Honours) - MA (Hons)
- Economics and Finance**
Master of Arts (with Honours) - MA (Hons)

[Show more courses](#)

Once you have found a university that offers your desired course, carefully review the “Summary” which provides details about the course content and structure as well as the “Entry Requirements” for International Baccalaureate students applying to the course:

Qualification requirements

A level	BBB	For First Year Entry a minimum of 3 A Levels at BBB or 4 AS at AABB. For Second Year Entry a minimum of an A in the subject selected for Single Honours plus BB, or AB in the subjects selected for Joint Honours plus a further B. In addition GCSE Maths is required, as well as GCSE in English or English Language is also required.
Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma (first teaching from September 2016)	DDM	Minimum entry requirement: DDM in related subjects.
Scottish Higher	A A B B	Minimum of 4 Highers at AABB obtained at a single sitting or 3 Advanced Highers at BBB. Those seeking to qualify over two sittings will be expected to exceed this minimum. In addition Standard Grade/National 5 Maths is required. Also required: English at Standard Grade 1, 2 or 3 or National 5 at Grades A, B or C.
International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme	32 points	For entry into First Year, a minimum of 32 points required, including at least 5,5 at HL. For entry into Second Year, a minimum of 36 points, including at 6, 6, 6 at Higher level in subject(s) selected. English and Maths at a minimum of Standard level required.

The UCAS Application

The deadline for most courses in the UK is January 15th however students are strongly encouraged to complete their application no later than December 1. The application deadline for applying to Oxford, Cambridge and all courses in Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine or Veterinary Science, is October 15th.

In setting up a UCAS application account, student will be prompted to include their high school and enter the Buzzword associated with their school. This enables the student's UCAS application to be viewable by the counselor, who will send it to UCAS when all sections are complete and carefully reviewed for accuracy.

The UCAS application itself is relatively simple; students enter their personal and academic information, indicate their five course choices, and submit a personal statement. The goal of the personal statement is to convey that you would be a great student in the course. Note that the same personal statement is for all courses, so avoid mentioning universities by name.

In addition to the UCAS application, some universities or courses will require an interview, an audition, a portfolio, or that applicants take a standardized test. Most commonly, additional testing is required for students applying to Law, Medicine, and Mathematics.

Academic Reference

Students must request an academic reference from a teacher that has taught the student in a course that is aligned with the intended course of study at university. Once the student has completed their part of the UCAS application and paid the application fee, counselors will then add the reference letter and then submit the completed application to UCAS. All teacher recommendations are confidential and therefore not shared with the student.

Predicted IB Scores

Counselors and the IB Coordinator will collect predicted IB scores from teachers and this information will be shared with students applying to the UK. Using their predicted IB scores, students are able to select courses for which they will likely meet the entry requirements and thus maximize their chances of getting multiple offers of admission.

Once the student has completed their part of the UCAS application and paid the application fee, counselors will then enter predicted IB scores and then submit the completed application to UCAS.

Applying to “Oxbridge”

The competition for admission to Oxford and Cambridge is extreme and students are not permitted to apply to both institutions. In addition to the earlier application deadline of October 15th, there are additional application requirements depending on desired course and citizenship of the applicant. For example, anyone applying to Cambridge University from outside the EU must complete the Cambridge Online Preliminary Application (COPA) by the application deadline.

Applying to Medical Courses

The UCAS application deadline for all medical courses is October 15th. Students applying to study medicine in the UK may apply to a maximum of four courses in Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine or Veterinary Science; their fifth application must be to an alternate course choice. In addition to the application, sitting for the BMAT (BioMedical Admissions Test) or UKCAT (UK Clinical Aptitude Test) is often an additional application requirement. The BMAT is a 2-hour, pen-and-paper test to assess the skills and knowledge that applicants to Medicine and Veterinary courses are expected to have already. The British Council Office in Delhi administers the BMAT. The UKCAT is a 2-hour computer-based test to assess the skills and knowledge that applicants to Medicine and Dentistry courses are expected to have already. In Delhi, the UKCAT is administered by Pearson test center. Check with your counselors to see which exams are offered at AES.

Decisions

Many students hear back from one or more of their universities within a few weeks of submitting their UCAS application. As mentioned earlier, applying in advance of the deadline (ie. submitting before winter break for January 15 applications) is a plus. Students will receive all decisions by mid-March. Students can use Track to find out the status of their applications.

Nearly all offers of admission are “conditional” which means that they are based on the student achieving specific IB scores. Less frequently, an applicant has met or surpassed the entrance requirements and will receive an “unconditional” offer.

Replying to Offers

When decisions are in, the student can only accept one offer firmly. If it is a conditional offer, the student may then accept a second offer as “insurance,” in the event they do not meet the scores needed for their first choice. IB exam results are released in the first week of July. If accepting an unconditional offer, the student is committed to that school and may not make a second choice. Students who are declined offers for all five of their choices can use Extra to apply to other universities that have openings.

Applying to Other Countries

Because Australia is in the southern hemisphere, the school year begins in February except for a small mid-year intake in July at some of the universities.

Non-Australian citizens – Applications are made through individual universities, much like in the United States. Since non-Australian applicants are full fee paying students, the admissions standards are usually a bit lower than for Australian citizens.

Australian Citizens – should contact The Central Admissions organization of the state to which you are applying. One sample center is Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) <http://www.uac.edu.au/>.

Overview: The easiest route to entrance into an Australian university is through the IB diploma. Students not taking the diploma should take the most rigorous course load possible consistent with high success and would be advised to take as many AP (Advanced Placement) or IB Certificates as possible. In addition, for students without the IB diploma, taking the SAT is highly recommended.

Canada

The application procedures for Canada are varied, depending on university and province. There is a central application center for Ontario which can be found at <http://www.ouac.on.ca/>. For other Canadian universities, applications are made via the individual university website.

Since you are applying from an American school, you should always check the requirements for students educated in this system regardless of your citizenship.

In Canada, there is a very real distinction between a university and a college. Institutions granting bachelors and advanced degrees are universities. Colleges typically focus on technical training but do offer a “bridge” to programs at universities so they can be used to gain access to the more selective schools if one's high school grades are not initially up to the standard required by the university. For IB diploma candidates, the diploma itself, along with a transcript is usually sufficient documentation for the application. Occasionally, a school will ask for the SAT and Subject Tests, but those are generally only needed by students who do not possess the IB diploma. Teacher recommendations may or may not be required, but it is prudent that those thinking of applying to Canada gather at least one teacher recommendation in the early fall. It is imperative that students/parents check the detailed charts on each school's website for confirmation on what are the minimum requirements for each of their majors. The most selective Canadian universities usually do not offer much flexibility with their admission requirements.



Japan

For entrance into Japanese universities, Japanese students studying at AES would be classified as “returning students” or kikokushijo.

February and March are generally the admissions months. However, universities such as Sophia, International Christian (ICU), and Keio all accept students for matriculation in September. Please note that Japanese universities are changing many of their policies as they attempt to attract more students from outside the country so please check their websites for the latest admission guidelines/deadlines.

Sophia University and ICU are the major universities in Japan designed specifically for English-speaking students from international schools. Waseda also has an international program that attracts students from outside of Japan. For Japanese students applying to Japanese universities, admissions decisions are primarily based on exam results.

For the traditional universities, students must travel to Japan to take university exams scheduled in October, November or December. In addition to the above schools, the Japanese government selected 13 universities to be members of its “Global 30” initiative that is designed to provide international students the opportunity to obtain degrees from prestigious Japanese universities by taking programs taught in English. Details can be found at www.uni.international.mext.go.jp.

The Netherlands

The application procedures and admission requirements for The Netherlands are varied, depending on the university and the chosen course.

Specific information can be found on each university website. In addition, most applications require students to register with studielink.nl

Korea

Korean families know applying to college in Korea can be a complex and time-consuming process. The Counselors at AES are here to support our Korean students, whether they have been out of country for twelve years, three years, or anywhere in between. We are also available to assist students who are returning to Korea to complete high school and need official documents. As many families need school documents to be notarized at the Korean Embassy before they leave, it is imperative that the AES deadlines are factored into travel plans.

Standardized Testing

Most colleges and universities around the globe require some standardized testing results in order to deem an application for admission complete for review. However, the testing requirements will vary greatly institution to institution and will depend on the applicant's high school curriculum and native language as well as the region of the world in which the institution is located. It is essential to plan ahead and meet with your counselor in grade ten to map out a testing timeline specific to your goals.

To be sure, there is a vast array of test prep resources available. Some are low or no cost and can be found in libraries, bookshops, and online. Other options – private tutors and classes - are quite expensive as well as a big investment of a student's time. While prepping for standardized tests in some fashion will familiarize the student with the test format and strategies, preparing for standardized tests should not divert a student's attention away from high school coursework; grades earned over time during high school are the most important factor in selective college admissions and should not be sacrificed for a desired score on the SAT or ACT. Further, a growing number of colleges in the U.S. do not require standardized testing. Students applying to these institutions, get to choose whether test scores will be part of their application file. It is important that students carefully check testing requirements for each institution. For a complete list of schools that are test optional, check out The National Center for Fair and Open Testing (FairTest) website (<http://fairtest.org/>).

PSAT

This is the practice test for the SAT and is administered one time a year during the month of October. Students in grades ten and eleven take the PSAT each October.

SAT Reasoning Test

The SAT is a standardized assessment of the critical reading, mathematical reasoning, and writing skills a student has developed over time. This test takes about three hours for completion and consists of two sections: reading and math. With the essay, the test lasts over 4 hours.



ACT

The ACT is a curriculum-based test. Questions on the ACT are directly related to what students have learned in high school courses in English, mathematics, and science. Some universities will accept the ACT in lieu of SAT and SAT Subject Tests. Please refer to individual college/university websites for specific standardized testing policy.

The ACT is divided into five sections:

- English – measures student's ability to understand and manipulate the language
- Math – covers math through Advanced Algebra
- Reading – assesses reading comprehension skills
- Science – assesses knowledge in biology, chemistry, physics and other physical sciences (advanced knowledge in these areas is not necessary)
- Writing – (optional but always recommended) students complete a writing sample in response to a prompt

The student's Composite Score and each subject score (English, math, reading, science) range from 1 (low) to 36 (high). The Composite Score is the average of the four test scores, rounded to the nearest whole number.

The ACT is "score select;" a student who has taken the test more than once, does not need to send all test date scores, just the one that is the best. The SAT is also "score select." What cannot be done, however, with either test, is to send, for example, the math score from one test date and the reading score from a different test date. And just to complicate things even more, for the SAT Subject Tests, a student can, for example, select to send her French score but not her Chemistry score, even though both tests were taken on same date. (Full Disclosure-some highly selective colleges do not allow score choice and students must send all scores- check the websites of schools closely) But a further word of advice-college and university reps tell us that there is no real disadvantage to sending two SAT or ACT results; schools look at the subtests and select the highest scores in each area-which goes back to the adage-"the better you look-the better we look."

SAT v. ACT - Which test to take?

Colleges and universities will accept either test equally. It is important for students and families to research the difference between these two tests and make a decision on which test is best suited for your student. Students may take both exams and send only the stronger score to colleges. Take time to review the test dates below as well as links to the websites of their respective organizations.

Registering for the SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and ACT

Students must first create an account on the test company website (College Board or ACT). After providing the information requested, a student can register for a test by following the instructions provided on the screen. Payment must be made by valid credit card.

To register for the ACT, please register online directly with ACT. AES is no longer a testing center for ACT.

To register for SAT, register directly with College Board. Test center code is 63200 and CEEB code is 671800. AES is a private SAT test center.

SAT Subject Tests

These are subject-specific, multiple-choice tests that are one hour in length. There are twenty subject areas to choose from and students are encouraged to play to their strengths to the extent possible. Subject areas fall into five general subject areas: English, History and Social Studies, Mathematics, Science and Languages. A student may take up to three Subject Tests in one sitting, but a student may not take the Reasoning Test and a Subject Test on the same testing date. SAT Subject Tests are only required at a small number of highly selective U.S. colleges. Most of the colleges requiring SAT Subject Tests require scores in two subject areas and a very small number request three subject scores. Once again, it is very important to plan ahead and to meet with your counselor to discuss a testing timeline that is specific to your goals.

Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Exams

Both IB and AP exams are administered during the month of May. Registration for these exams is through the IB/AP Coordinator at AES. Scores on the AP range from 1 to 5 while IB results range from 1 to 7.

At many US colleges and universities, credit or advanced standing is granted for IB Higher Level subject scores of 5, 6 or 7 and scores of 4 or 5 on AP exams.

English Proficiency Tests: TOEFL and IELTS

Reaching a particular score on an English proficiency test is often required when an applicant is a citizen of a non-English speaking country. However, colleges may waive this requirement if a student has scored well on the Critical Reading section of the SAT Reasoning Test, has been enrolled in an English medium high school, and/or is taking IB English. However it is important to note that each admissions office has its own requirements so be sure to carefully check the websites of each college to which you are applying.

In general, it is recommended that students who are non-native English speakers and/or citizens of non-English speaking countries, take an English proficiency exam in the summer before senior year to fulfill that application requirement well in advance of the deadline.

The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is an American-based test and most often taken by students planning to attend college in the United States. There are four sections to the test: Reading (60-80 minutes), Listening (60-90 minutes), Speaking (20 minutes), and Writing (50 minutes). Each section of the TOEFL is scored on a 0-30 scale with a total score out of 120. The TOEFL testing center in Delhi administers the internet-based (iBT) version of the test on two to three Saturdays each month at the Prometic test center in Gurgaon.

The IELTS is scored on a 1-9 scale. There are four sections to the test: Listening (30 minutes), Reading (60 minutes), Writing (60 minutes), and Speaking (11-14 minutes). This test is administered four times a month (three Saturdays and one Thursday) at the British Council office in Delhi.

Other tests of English language proficiency which may be accepted by universities include

IELTS (<https://www.ielts.org>)

Duolingo (<http://www.duolingo.com>)

Check with each university website for what scores they accept.

Results are in!

PAY IT FORWARD: The counseling office strives to maintain the most accurate and complete records possible on college admissions. We can only do this if students faithfully update MaiaLearning. This is important as student applications are sent and counselors follow up by submitting supporting documents, but also of equal importance when the results come in. Updating MaiaLearning with acceptances and denials is how we track our students, compile statistics, and counsel students about matching the profile of previously admitted students.

Regardless of your GPA, standardized test scores or extracurricular commitments and accomplishments, it is indeed likely that if you really applied to a range of options, you will be denied admission to at least one school. It is natural to feel disappointed by the denials, but remember to rejoice in your acceptances! At the same time, be aware and considerate of others; hearing bad news never feels good and being sensitive to your peers is important.

What Are The Possible Results?

US Applicants:

•Early Decision or Action Applicants can be Accepted, Deferred, or Denied. With a denial decision, the student is out of the running. Between denied and accepted is deferred. Deferral means that the college is unready to make a decision about your application and has put you in their Regular Application pool. If an ED student is deferred, he or she is released from the obligation to attend if accepted later. Best of all, of course, is to receive word that you have been accepted. An acceptance for an ED student means withdrawing all other applications and attending the admitting college. Early Action students do nothing but wait for other offers before making a final decision by May 1st. Note: Offers of admission are contingent upon successful graduation from high school. Colleges can withdraw offers.



•Regular Applicants can be Accepted, Waitlisted, or Denied. Being waitlisted indicates that you are qualified for admission, but there isn't enough space for you in the class. Students should consult with their counselor for next steps if waitlisted at a school. In May and June it is possible that the final number of students committing to the school is lower than expected, and the school will go into the wait pool and will make additional offers. Which colleges will go to their waitlist and how many students will be offered admission is impossible to know and changes each year. The number on the waitlist can vary from five to a hundred or more, again depending on the school. Some schools have special interest waitlists for musicians, athletes, or legacy and other special categories of students. Some schools rank their waitlist and some do not. It is perfectly acceptable to call the school to which you've been waitlisted and inquire as to the status of this year's waitlist. The waitlist is another one of those "unknowables" in the application process. If you are interested in pursuing a spot from a waitlist, be sure to follow procedure – sometimes it's simply clicking "yes" or "no" to the waitlist and in some cases a letter of interest is required.

•Students applying Rolling will receive one of two results: Denied or Accepted.

U.K. Applicants:

Conditional Offers: Most offers to the UK are conditional—that is, dependent on final results that are detailed in the offer. The conditions may exceed the predicted grades or they may be below

Positive Actions to Take If You Are Waitlisted

- 1- See your counselor and formulate plans (often includes writing a letter to admissions restating your desire to attend and highlighting any recent achievements)
- 2- Avoid calling the admissions office in order to lobby for your selection
- 3- Decline offers from colleges you do not want to attend
- 4- Make your deposit to a college you do want to attend
- 5- Continue to achieve at the highest level possible

Students may receive conditional offers from all five universities but once they have gotten their offers must narrow down to two choices—one Firm and one Conditional. Generally speaking, the Firm choice has the higher conditions; if a student meets those conditions they will be accepted fully and agree to attend. The Conditional choice generally has lower conditions—if students do not meet the scores required by their Firm choice but meet those of their Conditional choice, they will be accepted fully and attend their Conditional choice university. Once a student has narrowed down to two choices, the other offers are no longer available.

Firm Offers: If students already have their scores, they can be made Firm offers by UK universities. Generally this occurs if they apply after a gap year and have all of their scores already in hand.

The Clearing: If students do not meet the conditions of either their firm or conditional offers, they are eligible for the Clearing; a posting of all courses that still have openings after the results have come in. The Clearing generally doesn't open until August, after UK A-Level scores have been released, and the courses that have space are simply those for whom applicants have not met their offers, and are in no way lesser. Students who need to take advantage of the Clearing must quickly research courses with entry requirements that they meet in between when their IB scores are released (in July) and when the Clearing opens in August.

Canada Applicants:

- Students who apply with U.S. transcripts and SAT scores are made offers that are Firm as long as they maintain their grades (much like U.S. universities).
- Students who apply with predicted IB scores usually are made conditional offers based on achievement on the IB exams. However, most Canadian universities will honor an offer as long as a student comes close to their conditions—at least in the university, if not in the course of choice.

When Do Results Arrive?

US Applicants:

- Early Decision or Action Applicants usually hear back from colleges on or around the 15th of December
- Regular Applicants tend to start hearing back in March and usually have all responses by April 1st

UK Applicants:

- Conditional offers can come within a few weeks of the submission of your application or months afterwards. Until all five of your universities have responded you are not required to narrow down your choices.

Canada Applicants:

- Offers are often made within a month or two of submission.

Choosing A College

Many students end up with multiple offers from places they would be happy attending, and have the tough decision of selecting the one college to commit to.

Factors that may go into making that final decision include which college:

- Is offering the most money?
- Has offered advanced standing, honors programs or other special entrance incentives?
- Has made you feel most wanted, most comfortable with the prospect of attending?

To help with the decision, student may consult with counselors anytime during the process, and can also access college students currently enrolled in the universities to which they've been accepted, Facebook pages, and review sites. This may be the first of many difficult choices you will make in life—not knowing for certain how different each pathway would be. Use the resources around you and think carefully before cementing your choice.

Deposits

US Applicants:

- Applicants to the U.S. may only deposit at one institution. Double-depositing is a breach of ethics and may result in all offers being rescinded. Almost all U.S. colleges require a deposit by May 1st.
- Waitlisted students: "Getting off the waitlist" generally can't happen until a college is sure it will need additional numbers to complete the class, which probably won't occur until mid-May.

If you decide to stay on a waitlist, in the meantime, you will send a deposit to the other college of your choice. Should you receive good news and are offered a spot at your waitlisted college, you will immediately send them a deposit to secure your space. **THIS IS THE ONLY INSTANCE IN WHICH STUDENTS ARE PERMITTED TO DOUBLE-DEPOSIT.** It is polite and ethically correct to inform the college that you won't be attending by letting them know you have been removed from the waitlist of College X and will matriculate there; but don't expect to receive a refund from the college to which you originally deposited.

Final Documents

Once students have chosen where they wish to attend, it is imperative that they complete the final steps needed for their acceptance to be cemented and the final AES school documents to be sent.

- Final Transcripts (needed for US, Canada, and several other destinations) are sent when students mark the "attending" college in Naviance in May.
- Destinations for IB Scores are collected by the IB Coordinator. UCAS is a destination in itself— if you are worried that you will potentially need to enter the Clearing because of scores, this is a way to ensure that your IB scores can be sent to any UK university. U.S. and Canadian universities that considered predicted IB scores as part of a student's application file will want to receive final results as well.

U.S. Student Visa

For most international students matriculating to a school in the United States, a student visa will need to be obtained prior to the start of college. Once you submit the deposit, the college will begin the process of sending you documents. In April a representative from the Visa Section of the U.S. Consulate will give a presentation on the visa process, explaining the procedures, the I-20 and F-1 visa. This is an important meeting for students and parents to attend, although the PowerPoint from the presentation is uploaded to the AES website.

Senioritis

Once you've accomplished your goal or you see light at the end of the tunnel, you may have a tendency to begin to slow down and coast. This is the dreaded condition that can affect second semester seniors- SENIORITIS. But don't take our word for it. The paragraph on the following page comes directly from Michigan State University

Why Students Should Avoid Senioritis

There is often an overwhelming urge for 12th-graders to cease being dedicated to their studies after receiving collegiate offers of admissions. However, senioritis can result in outcomes ranging from poor performance in a student's freshman year of college, to having an offer of admission rescinded during the summer.

During early summer a committee in our office will review students' final transcripts to ensure students have performed to the academic level expected of them. Every year, there are students who leave our office no reasonable choice but to revoke their offers of admission due to poor performance in their senior year courses. This is a process which our staff does not enjoy, but is part of the offer of admission extended to students. Please advise students to avoid senioritis in the coming weeks, or to deal with any related behaviors that may have developed up to this point. We're excited about the possibilities fall semester will bring our incoming class, but want to ensure that students are also fully prepared for the academic challenges of the new experience.

Taking a Gap Year

Some students need a break before heading off for three or four more years of education. Others students, while ready to move to college, are undecided about their futures and want to take a year to think

life over. This period between high school and college is termed a gap year. Gap years can be approached in two ways.

The more common path is where the student applies for college in grade 12, waits for acceptances and once he or she has decided on a college or university, requests to defer enrollment for one year. A brief plan for the gap year is included with the request but the outline does not require tremendous detail.

Advantages of this Procedure

- Able to work and complete applications with the full support of the school.
- Doing the work when all peers are engaged in the same pursuit.
- Student has the entire gap year free to do productive activities without worrying about whether or not school will be in the future.
- Can make final decision

An alternative approach is when the student does not apply to college senior year, and completes applications during the year off from school. AES will provide assistance and send documents to support the college applications.

Advantages of this Procedure

- Student can focus on academics during senior year without added work of college applications.
- Student has more time to research colleges.
- Student applies with final transcript and IB scores.

If you are considering a gap year, it is highly recommended that you discuss this with your counselor early in the college search process.



Glossary of Terms

ACT – One of two main U.S. college admissions tests. Measures academic knowledge in four areas: English, math, reading and science. All questions are multiple choice.

Advanced Placement (AP) – Subject-specific exams sponsored by the College Board and taken in May. Often a score of 4 or 5 will give a student either college credit or advanced standing at U.S. institutions.

Bachelor of Arts (B.A. or A.B.) – This is a degree awarded for successful completion of a course of study in fields such as social sciences, arts, and the humanities.

Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) – This is a degree awarded for successful completion of a course of study in areas such as fine arts, theater, and dance.

Bachelor of Science (B.S.) – This is a degree awarded for successful completion of a course of study in the physical or natural sciences and sometimes in professionally-oriented areas, such as engineering or education.

College Board – This organization sponsors the PSAT, SAT, Subject Tests, and AP as well as some financial aid forms. The website is a resource for general information about the college application process.

Cooperative Education (Co-op) – A program through which students have the opportunity to work outside the educational institution and gain real life practical experience in their field of study as part of their degree.

Core Curriculum – Required courses all students take, regardless of major, in areas such as humanities, arts, sciences, math, and social sciences.

CSS Profile – This financial aid form is used by more than 400 colleges in the U.S. to gather additional information to determine financial aid eligibility.

Demonstrated Financial Need – The difference between the cost of college or university and the institution's assessment of the family's ability to pay.

Demonstrated Interest – A measure of a student's true interest in a particular college or university. Factors such as a campus visits, correspondence (on and off campus), interviews, can contribute.

Distribution Requirements – Middle ground between Core Curriculum and Open Curriculum. Students are required to take coursework within fields of learning but can choose specific courses within those fields.

Double Depositing – Sending an enrollment deposit to more than one institution in order to secure a space in multiple entering classes; this practice is unethical and goes against the regulations of the National Association for College Admission Counseling. Offers could be rescinded.

Dual Degree or Double Major – Also known as a “joint degree.” An academic choice to major or concentrate in two distinct disciplines.

Early Action – An early application that is non-binding and receives an early response from the college. Other Early Action programs include Restricted Early Action and Single Choice Early Action. These options have additional guidelines.

Early Decision – An early application that is binding. A student may only apply to one school Early Decision. If admitted, the student must withdraw all other applications.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC) – After careful review by a financial aid office at a college or university, this is the amount of money the family is expected to contribute toward the education of the student.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) – Open only to U.S. citizens and permanent residents. This form is required to apply for U.S. federal aid.

Financial Aid Package – The amount of financial aid being offered to a student, including grants, work study, loans, and scholarships.

Gap Year – A year off between high school and the start of college or university.

Gapping – Term to describe when the college's financial aid package does not fully meet the demonstrated need of the student.

Grant – Financial aid awarded to the student that does not have to be repaid.

High School Credit – In high schools with a US curriculum, where all courses meet for usually the same number of hours, students earn one credit for a course that lasts all year, or a half credit per course per semester. AES requires a total of 23 credits to earn the AES HS diploma.

Honors Programs – These programs for highly qualified students often offer greater academic rigor, smaller class sizes, scholarships, and special housing options. Selection can be offered through a regular application or it can be secured through a supplemental application.

Ivy League – Collegiate athletic conference comprised of sports teams from eight private institutions in the northeastern United States. These universities do not offer merit or athletic scholarships.

Liberal Arts and Sciences – Commonly referred to as “Liberal Arts.” Typically a four-year program that includes a breadth of coursework in the humanities, sciences, languages and a depth of study in a student's chosen major.

Major – Also known as “concentration,” this is the main area of study for a student in the last two years of undergraduate program. Normally majors are declared in the second semester of sophomore year.

Matriculate – To enroll at a university or college.

Merit-Based Aid – Money given to a student on the basis of high academic achievement, outstanding abilities in sports, the arts, or other areas.

Minor – An option in which the student studies a distinct field but to a lesser degree than in the major field of study. This usually entails 4-6 courses during the final two years of the undergraduate degree.

National Merit Scholar – Only U.S. Citizens who take the PSAT in grade eleven are eligible for this designation. To qualify, students must score extremely high on the PSAT.

Need Aware – This term is used when a family's ability to pay tuition is taken into account when making a decision on admission.

Need Blind – This term is used when a family's ability to pay tuition is NOT a factor in determining admission. Few U.S. institutions are Need Blind for non-U.S. citizens.

Open Curriculum – Allows students to take courses without concern for any requirements except for those within chosen concentration or major.

Retention Rate – Refers to the percentage of freshman who return as sophomores. The retention rate is an excellent gauge of student satisfaction.

Rolling Admission – Process by which applications are read by colleges and universities as they arrive and decisions are made when files are complete.

Secondary School Report (SSR) – This form is completed by counselors and sent as part of the supporting documents for a student's application. It includes basic data about the student, the school, and often a letter of recommendation from the counselor.

Three-Two (3-2) Program – In this specialized degree program, students generally do three years at a smaller, liberal arts and sciences institution and then move to another, often larger institution, to complete the degree over a two year period. Generally, 3-2 programs are concentrated in the areas of computer science and engineering.

Transcript – The official record of the student's grades and course work at a school. The AES high school transcript includes only course work completed at AES in grades 9-12.

Undergraduate – An entry-level university student is known as an undergraduate.

Waitlist – A situation in which a college has not formally offered admission to a particular student but may offer admission in the next few months if space becomes available.

Yield – Term referring to the percentage of students offered admission to an institution who matriculate.