



THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN ENGLAND

“Admissions Officers look for individuals who will make a contribution to the university community.”



WHAT UNIVERSITIES LOOK FOR IN AN APPLICANT

Beyond the glitz of national rankings that report the “best” universities is the reality that each person’s collegiate experience is personal and unique. Finding the “best” university requires honest self reflection, as the “best” means something different for each student.

WHAT ADMISSIONS OFFICERS AT UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES LOOK FOR IN AN APPLICATION:

There are many pathways toward personal goals, and applicants to universities in the United States, the UK, Canada, and worldwide should explore what institution provides them with the best way to reach those goals. A College Counseling Office should be proud of the diversity of its students as well as its university list. Finding the “best” university is really a personal journey. Below are some of the areas that universities consider when evaluating an application - although it depends on each university and each student.

Proven Academic Achievement:

The most important factor in the university admissions decision is your academic transcript and your predicted grades. US universities will be looking at the types of courses you have taken, the number of courses, the level of courses, and the grades you earned.

“Universities are looking for strong grades in an academically challenging program. Did you take the most challenging academic program? How did you perform in the courses you have taken? Are you taking classes you enjoy?”

Standardized Test Scores & Predicted Grades:

The amount of weight placed on standardized test scores and predicted grades in the admissions process varies from university to university. Standardized scores or predicted grades provide universities with a measure to compare students from different schools. As a general rule, the more selective the university the more important test scores or predicted grades are, due to the rigorous and academically challenging programs offered at selective institutions.

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Extracurricular Involvement & Work Experience:

Here the emphasis is on quality rather than quantity. Admission Officers are not interested in a list of ten activities with little time commitment and involvement. Admission Officers are looking for those students who have invested their time, energy, and commitment to pursuing one or two activities in depth.

Demonstrated Interests:

Admission Officers are looking for unique individuals, students with special talents or experiences that set them apart from other candidates: outstanding musicians, writers, actors, athletes, and editors. Universities are looking for individuals whose unique talents will make significant contributions to their communities.

Interview:

Some universities recommend or require an interview while others do not. For some schools, the interview is provided solely to inform you about the university and provide you with an opportunity to ask questions. For other schools, the interview provides Admission Officers with additional information about you and your future goals. Depending on the school, this information may or may not be used during the application decision-making process.

Teacher Recommendations:

Each university has its own specific requirements for teacher recommendations, but in most cases one reference is required for the UK UCAS application and for universities in many other countries. Some universities are very specific and ask for recommendations from teachers in certain disciplines. The teachers you choose to write your recommendations should be able to speak to your abilities and accomplishments both inside and outside the classroom.

When choosing a school and considering a college counseling program, look for college counselors that have a low caseload. This ensures that students receive a significant level of time, personal attention and support during the university application process.



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The appearance and content of the application will reflect a great deal about you, therefore, it is very important that you invest time and thought into each application.

The Application Itself:

Presentation is everything! Never work on an original application before completing a draft copy. Neatness and clarity are important. Unless otherwise stated, you should always type your application. Applications through UCAS and the Common Application are completed online and, as such, this is not a problem.

Essays (US):

This is the part of the application that students often rush to complete. Take the time to think about and write an essay that demonstrates your writing ability and makes your application 'come alive.' The essay is your golden opportunity to let them know more about you, what you value, and what your future goals are.

"The essay is a critical factor in the admissions decision and it is entirely under your control."

Personal Statement (UK):

For the UCAS application it is very important that this is the best it can be. It is possibly your only chance to differentiate yourself from everyone else. Your Personal Statement is specific to your course.

CV/Resume:

Your resume should demonstrate that you have what it takes to succeed at the college or university. It must include a brief summary of jobs, awards, leadership activities, and creative or other capabilities like music, art, languages, sports or other skills. You can start to build your resume early in your high school career and include summer internships and volunteer work that will help you get noticed by Admissions Officers when it comes time to apply to university.

TASIS College Counseling Office works with students and families to prepare them for their learning journeys beyond TASIS and at universities in the United States, the UK, Canada, and worldwide. The four year College Counseling Curriculum is unique to most international schools.

Source: TASIS England College Counseling Handbook.



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TASIS The American School in England offers a challenging American curriculum with Advanced Placement (AP) courses and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme to day (ages 3-18) and boarding (ages 13-18) students. On its beautiful Surrey campus, students from more than 50 nations are emboldened to flourish as principled, open-minded, and compassionate members of a global community.

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