



University/College Handbook

2021-22

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Introduction

The American International School of Lagos helps students build upon their positive experiences to gain admission into universities all over the world. Applying to universities is an exciting and revealing experience that gives you a chance to look at who you are, what you value, and what you might want to do with your life.

To simplify the process, all AISL students must:

- Learn about universities;
- Make decisions about finding universities that are the best fit for them;
- Submit a final university shortlist (max 10 universities/systems*) to counselor;
- Complete and submit all applications.

There are thousands of universities to consider in well over 100 different countries. Your family will need to make choices about what university is best for you in terms of what university represents the best fit for intellectual, academic, social and career opportunities. The application process varies from university to university.

This guide has been developed to give some direction about the process of considering, choosing and applying to universities worldwide. In a continually evolving international higher education environment, there cannot be a definitive guide, and as such the majority of the investigation must come from students and parents. The AISL Counselor helps guide, support, and counsel students and parents as you research schools, make choices, select universities, then complete and submit applications. We have planned a program that takes students through the tools and strategies they need to use in order to develop strong applications for a list of “best fit” universities.

*The maximum of 10 universities/colleges is based on recommendations from College Board and leaders in college education.

We encourage you to access the AISL Counselor as a resource in a student-driven process that helps guide students towards post-secondary success.

University Timeline – Junior/Senior Class

Deadlines are at 11:59pm on the specified day, in the university's time zone.

Junior Year - January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue college & career research via BridgeU & other search engines (Big Search, UCAS, Common App, etc.) discussed in Junior Seminar class • Continue to edit University Shortlist on BridgeU • Consult Morrisby Assessment (administered spring of 10th grade) results in research/edit process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify/register for summer programs /courses/university tours • Update BridgeU Profile Builder
Junior Year - February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend university information sessions on campus • Register for March SAT, if offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue careers and university research • Identify/register for summer programs/courses/university tours
Junior Year - March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take SAT • Request teacher recommendations from departing teachers (via BridgeU) • Complete next year Course Request Form factoring in college interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue university research • Attend university info sessions • Plan for and take TOEFL/IELTS, if applicable • Visit university campuses during spring break
Junior Year - April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend university information presentations • Start working on Student Information Sheet needed for counselor letter of recommendation • Start working on draft college personal statements • Register for May SAT • Parent/Student/Counselor conferences, as requested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue researching universities of interest • Attend university info sessions • Edit BridgeU Shortlist as needed • Visit university campuses during Easter break • Remind departing teachers of teacher recommendations

<p>Junior Year - May</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take SAT ● Plan summer visits to universities of interest ● Study for G11 Final Exams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue research & attending college/career events & info sessions ● Continue working on draft personal statements
<p>Junior Year - June</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review and submit final university shortlist ● Review and submit draft personal statement ● Review and submit Student Information Sheet ● Review end of junior year transcripts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visit as many university campuses on shortlist as possible ● Take TOEFL/IELTS, if required ● Continue working on personal statement
<p>Senior Year - August</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School begins ● Register for SAT, if needed ● Update university shortlist, if needed (max 10 uni/systems) ● Schedule Individual Senior-Counselor Meeting ● Request counselor & teacher recommendations, if not done yet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Start working on college applications ● Take TOEFL/IELTS, if required
<p>Senior Year - September</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attend AISL University Information events for seniors/parents ● Deadline to notify counselor and update early application deadlines in application portals ● Deadline to request counselor & teacher recommendations & predicted grades for early applications ● Register for Oct SAT, if needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attend AISL college application workshops (Common App/UCAS) ● Attend university fairs & info sessions offered ● Continue working on college applications

Senior Year - October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take SAT • Submit early college applications, if applicable • All other requests for Letters of Recommendation due • FAFSA Form for financial aid completed by student and parent (US citizens) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st week-AISL Internal Deadline for UCAS early application review: Oxbridge, Med/Vet applications • 15th-UCAS Deadline: Oxbridge Med/Vet applications
Senior Year - November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register for Dec SAT, if needed • Submit early college applications, if applicable • Start submitting regular college applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15th-US early application deadline (some colleges) • 30th-US application deadlines start
Senior Year - December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit university applications • Take SAT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application deadlines continue • ED Admissions Decisions arrive • Week before Winter Break-AISL Internal Deadline for UCAS application review, if applicable
Senior Year - January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue submitting college applications, if applicable • Start communicating application decisions to Counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st week after break-AISL Internal deadline for UCAS application review • Regular deadline for UCAS • Regular deadlines for US/Canadian schools
Senior Year - February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue communicating application decisions to Counselor • HS-College Transition Lessons begin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country-specific applications/deadlines
Senior Year - March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue communicating application decisions to Counselor • HS-College Transition Lessons continue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country-specific applications/deadlines
Senior Year - April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue communicating application decisions to Counselor • HS-College Transition Lessons continue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reply to UK offers with firm and insurance acceptances announced by UCAS.
Senior Year - May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Deadline to decide on 'College that I am Attending' • Make final college decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G12 IB External Exams • Graduation

Senior Year - July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IB results reported to AISL, students and requested universities
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Knowing Yourself

After identifying your own style, strengths, skills, talents and desires, it becomes easier to find schools which are a match for you, or more often, those that are not a match! Ask yourself these questions. There are no right or wrong answers. It's all about self-discovery.

- What are your goals and values? Which values are most important to you? How have these developed and evolved?
- How do you define success?
- What unique gifts and strengths do you possess?
- What kind of person do you aspire to become?
- Is there any secret desire to choose one particular profession or path in life?
- What experiences have shaped who you have become and your way of thinking?
- What is your attitude towards studying?
- What are your academic interests?
- What courses have you enjoyed most?
- If on your own, what would you choose to learn?
- How do you best learn?
- Are particular teaching methods more effective for your learning style?
- What has been your most stimulating intellectual experience?
- How is your academic record?
- Have you taken the most challenging courses available?
- What are your grades?
- What are your SAT/ACT scores?
- How does your academic record represent you?
- Have there been circumstances that have affected your academic performance?
- What type of activities have you spent your time outside of the classroom? Which have been the most fulfilling? Is there a pattern of commitment and success?
- What is your role in your school and community? What would others recognize as your contributions to the school or community?
- Has the school environment encouraged your skills, interests and talents?
- How has your family influenced your outlook on life? Have your interests been nurtured or limited?
- How do you perceive the world around you? Have you found a cause for which to stand up? What issues do you feel strongly about?
- What is your social style - solitary or comfortable in large groups?

Career Goals and Interests – BridgeU and Morrisby Assessment

AISL uses BridgeU, a comprehensive online career and university guidance platform with an international focus. Students and parents will access BridgeU the 11th and 12th grades of their high school experience.

BridgeU empowers students to:

- engage proactively with personalized university, course and career recommendations that are fully aligned with their skills and interests.
- explore post-secondary options from over 24,000 global university destinations. BridgeU should be used extensively in the university search & application process. It is very important for students to make sure their information in BridgeU is up to date and correct.

Morrisby Assessment

All AISL Gr 10 students take the Morrisby Assessment.

<https://www.morrisby.com/about>

The Morrisby Assessment is designed to:

- Help students understand themselves and the sort of study and careers options that will be suitable.
- Provide guidance/suggestions on subject selection based on your strengths, interests and personality.
- Recommend career areas suited to your personality and interests while keeping options open.

Results guide IB course selections and exploration of college/university programs of study and majors.

Knowing Your Options

Your Academic Qualifications

As an international student at AISL there is a world of opportunities waiting for you after you receive your IB Diploma. You have so many university choices that it may be difficult to know where to begin. In recent years, the majority of AISL graduates attend US, Canadian, and UK universities, with others choosing to return to their passport countries or study in Europe, Australia or Asia. International higher education is always changing, influenced by many factors including global economics, immigration trends and policies and employment needs. When considering your options, understand that the IB Diploma is a rigorous and demanding program that provides them with first-class preparation for their future after AISL. Students follow a course of study with a global reputation for academic excellence, and universities throughout the world recognize the IB Diploma as an entrance qualification to higher education degree courses. In some countries, such as the United States and Canada, the IB Diploma qualifies students for advanced placement or academic credits.

Students with the IB Diploma are accepted at a higher rate at selective US universities than those with other qualifications. In general, European universities prefer the IB Diploma to IB DP Courses (Certificates) or the AISL High School Diploma. European and Canadian universities may require a standardized test (SAT or ACT), if a student has the AISL High School Diploma with DP Courses (Certificates). UK universities may require IB Courses (Certificates) students to enroll in a Foundation Program year before entry into an undergraduate program.

Different Countries

The following provides a brief overview of the university systems in Australia, Europe, the UK, the US, and Canada. Many other systems throughout the world follow some form of the “course” or “major” based system of the UK or the Liberal Arts approach of the US and Canada.

Australia

- Most universities are public, with a handful of private.
- Course based system – most undergraduate degrees are 3 or 4 years.
- Most universities offer 1 or 2 semester Foundation Programs for students who do not meet entry requirements.
- IBDP is highly regarded; some universities offer credit for strong IBDP results.
- Main intake is in February; midyear intake is July. International students’ orientation is usually during February intake.
- Students apply in July – August after graduation with complete IB results.
- Usually rolling admissions for international students.
- Student visa required - may take several months to process.
- Student visas allow limited paid work while they study.
- Graduates can stay in Australia for at least two years on a Graduate Work Visa.

Europe

- Both public and private universities.
- Wide variety of systems – professional preparation, course based, liberal arts, American style universities, some offer residential, most do not.
- IBDP is becoming more widely accepted but students may need to take further entrance exams or have qualifications verified.
- Some programs taught in English – many in the Netherlands, some Foundation Programs offered.

United Kingdom

- Universities—traditionally regarded as the centers of academic learning and offer a wide variety of courses.
- Colleges and Institutions of Higher Education—generally smaller than universities and may concentrate on a specific field of study such as education, art or music.
- Oxford and Cambridge—have a unique status and different entrance system than all other schools. A student can apply to Oxford or Cambridge but not both.
- Red Brick universities, sometimes called ‘civic’ universities, are very competitive; degree programs tend to be less flexible than the newer universities.
- “New” universities vary in competitiveness; programs at these schools tend to be more flexible and often interdisciplinary.

- “Technology” universities offer very highly regarded degrees in pre-professional fields; strong industrial or commercial links; often offer sandwich programs; tend to be less competitive for admissions.
- Scottish universities usually offer four-year programs that tend to be broader based than other UK courses. Edinburgh and St. Andrews are very competitive
- IBDP is highly valued.
- Usually rolling admissions for international students.
- Student visas allow limited paid work while they study.

USA

- 5,300 colleges and universities. The terms “college” and “university” are used interchangeably.
- Colleges and universities each set their own criteria for determining who gets admitted. Each one designs its own application, asks different questions, has a variety of deadlines, and sets its own policies. The main criterion is grades earned from courses taken in Grades 9-12.
- Undergraduate degrees are a four-year Bachelor degree; which can be followed by a postgraduate degree (“Graduate school”) typically Master and Doctoral degrees specializing in a professional field.
- Community colleges offer high school, vocational and two-year Associate or “Transfer” Degree programs.
- IBDP has favorable recognition.
- AISL High School Diploma and IB Certificates are recognized.
- International students can only work on campus during their studies.
- Student visas expire upon graduation; no further stay is possible.

Canada

- Canadian universities are institutions offering four-year undergraduate programs; Canadian colleges offer high school, vocational and bridging programs.
- Undergraduate programs in the humanities, social sciences, physical and applied sciences are available at most universities in Canada. Professional programs such as medicine, dentistry, law, architecture, engineering and journalism are not available in all provinces.
- IBDP is highly valued, automatic credit or merit-based scholarships apply to IBDP graduates with strong HL subject grades.
- Colleges and universities each set their own criteria for determining who gets admitted. Each one designs its own application, asks different questions, has a variety of deadlines, and sets its own policies.
- Usually rolling admissions for international students.
- Study Permit required - may take several months to process.
- Study Permit allows limited paid work while they study.

- Graduates can stay in Canada for at least two years on a Graduate Work Visa.

Researching “best fit” Universities

You are at the center of the university application process; you are the person deciding what are the best “fit” universities for you. Selecting your schools first requires a self-assessment of your academic standing, educational values and goals, interests, talents, and aspirations. Once you know what is important to you, then you will be able to research universities to select the schools that fit your criteria. Most universities offer a quality education, and there will be multiple universities where you would be very happy and successful.

There are many tools that you can use to research individual universities.

- University Websites - Every college and university maintains its own website offering the most up to date information on courses, programs, course and application requirements, and even virtual tours of the campus. This is the best source of information.
- Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter - Universities offer social networks with current students as well as videos and other forms of communication for prospective students to gather more information about schools.
- The AISL library is another resource for students with a database which includes university guidebooks and guides to preparing for admissions tests.
- The AISL Counselor is always available to guide, advise and counsel students on their university choices.
- University Representatives - Each year AISL hosts many college and university representatives to our school (virtually, post-pandemic). Students should take advantage of these visits to learn more about university life and the application process in general as well as the specific school. Representatives are often the person reading your application and making admissions decisions. Therefore, it is extremely important to attend college visits.
- Other resources - Teachers, alumni, family friends, and current students are all great sources for discussing your university choices.

United Kingdom

- www.ucas.com - The official UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Services) site. Students applying to UK universities must apply through the UCAS site for most courses (except for Art Foundation and other Foundation Year courses). This site has all the information students need to research courses, application timelines, universities, get advice for writing personal statements, and more.
- Which university? <http://university.which.co.uk/> is a comprehensive site with great search tools, university reviews by students, loads of up to date information, advice and tips for writing personal statements, spending your summer etc.
- www.heaponline.co.uk - Comprehensive student guide to universities.
- <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/> - Support organization for international students
- unistats.direct.gov.uk - University satisfaction data based from student surveys

US and Canada

- www.bridge-u.com - AISL uses BridgeU, a comprehensive online career and university guidance platform. Students will access BridgeU in 11th and 12th grade. BridgeU

supports applications from universities around the world.

- www.commonapp.com - Common App is used in tandem with BridgeU during the college application process. Students will sync both accounts. Documents will be sent to selected Common App schools via BridgeU
- www.aucc.ca - Links to all Canadian universities and information about scholarships.
- www.cic.gc.ca - Information on study in Canada as an international student.
- www.educationau-incanada.ca - Canadian university information.
- www.collegeprowler.com - Student forum reviewing, rating and discussing universities; search tools; scholarship information.
- www.collegeconfidential.com - Another site similar to College Prowler with many student postings on university admissions issues and questions.
- www.bigfuture.collegeboard.com - The College Board Big Future is a search engine for career and university research.
- www.act.org - Everything you need to know about the ACT and test prep
- www.collegeboard.org - Everything you need to know about the SAT and test prep.

International

- www.hotcourses.com.au - Search engine for Australian courses.
- <http://whatdegreewhichuniversity.com/Home.aspx> - is a great site covering all you need to know about studying in Australia.
- www.i-studentadvisor.com - Website with interactive international education guides for students interested in finding out about universities in different countries and by different majors. Provides online brochures and prospectuses.
- <https://www.ets.org/toefl> - An English proficiency test accepted by more than 11,500 universities and other institutions in over 160 countries. The test that measures all 4 academic English skills – reading, listening, speaking, and writing.
- <https://www.ielts.org/> - The IELTS is an English proficiency test. Your ability to listen, read, write and speak in English will be assessed during the test. IELTS is graded on a scale of 1-9.

International Baccalaureate Country-Specific Guides to University Applications

Every year, thousands of IB students apply to over 5,000 universities worldwide. To facilitate the application process, the IB offers country-specific guides for students applying to university: <https://ibo.org/university-admission/support-students-transition-to-higher-education/guides-for-students-applying-to-university/>

Additional Helpful Sites

- <http://xstudy.eu/>
- https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/homepage_en
- <http://www.studyineurope.eu/>
- <http://ec.europa.eu/education/study-in-europe/>
- <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk>
- <http://eunicas.ie/>
- <http://www.astarfuture.co.uk/>

European Country-specific Websites

- Austria: <https://studyinaustria.at/>
- Czech Republic: www.studyin.cz
- Finland: <https://www.studyinfinland.fi/>
- France: <http://www.campusfrance.org/en>
- Germany:
 - www.daad.de

- www.young-germany.de
- <https://www.study-in.de/en/>
- Holland: www.studyinholland.nl
- Ireland:
 - <https://www.educationinireland.com/en/>
 - www.cao.ie
 - www.hea.ie
- Italy:
 - <http://www.study-in-italy.it>
 - <https://studylink.com/study-in-italy>
- Denmark: <https://studylink.com/countries/denmark/>
- Netherlands:
 - www.nuffic.nl
 - www.studyfinder.nl
 - www.studyinholland.nl
- Norway: www.studyinnorway.no
- Sweden: www.studyinsweden.se
- Switzerland:
 - <http://www.crus.ch>
 - <https://www.studyinswitzerland.plus/>

Campus Visits

During the summer break between Gr 11 and Gr 12 students should plan to visit universities where they have an interest in applying. This is an excellent way to help narrow your choices. Universities list their Open Days on their websites as well as under Open Days on the UCAS site. Most universities also offer daily tours or self-guided walks. Following are companies with organized tours:

- TS College Tours – www.tscollege tours.com or email enquiries@tscollege tours.com or tstur geon@tscollege tours.com
- College Visits – www.college-visits.com or email info@college-visits.com

Students are always welcome to set up campus visits directly with the admissions office universities of interest.

Where Will I Apply?

The following list is not meant to be the only means of evaluating a university. Each individual must prioritize and weigh the importance of these and other considerations that are unique to you. The following are simply considerations that should be examined. You will need to review websites, catalogs, handbooks, brochures, online listings, speak to alumni and university representatives and others about specific universities.

- **Type of school:** public (government or state) vs. private; religious or secular; coeducational or single sex; Liberal Arts, pre-professional (engineering, business, nursing, etc.), vocational, polytechnic; conservative or liberal student body; traditional or progressive.
- **Enrollment:** number of undergraduates; male/female ratio; % of international students; residential or commuting; retention rate after one year.

- **Location and Surroundings:** geographic location; weather/climate; proximity to family, friends and transport; size of town/city.
- **Curriculum and academic environment:** degree of competitiveness; availability of professors for student conferences; quality of faculty; teaching vs. research; what are the core curriculum classes which must be taken; majors offered; academic pressure and workload; IB recognition.
- **Campus life:** clubs, fraternities, sororities; weekend events/activities; religious organizations.
- **Housing:** co-ed/single-sex, required for first year/off campus housing possible; meal plans; security; recreational facilities/extra-curricular activities.
- **Expense:** cost of tuition, room/board, books and supplies; travel expenses; financial aid available, percent of students receiving aid; work study programs.
- **Entrance requirements:** course prerequisites; application process/ deadlines; ACT or SAT or SAT Subject Tests; TOEFL/IELTS; IB requirements; selectivity; % of applicants admitted; average scores of freshman/first year student profile.

Building Your List

You should strive for a list of universities based on this model:

- 2 “reach” choices
- 4 “realistic” choices
- 2 “safety” choices

We limit applications to a maximum of 10, with UCAS and University of California/University of Texas applications counting as one application.

Who Does What in All of This?

It is important to know who is responsible for each part of this complicated process.

AISL School Counseling Services

The AISL School Counselor will provide the following services throughout the university search and application process:

- Introduction to international university admissions processes (11th grade).
- Parent information sessions concerning international university admissions processes and transitioning children to university (11th and 12th grades).
- Be available to meet with students and parents to discuss academic concerns, career and higher education options.
- Provide ongoing guidance in the use of BridgeU.
- Facilitate university exploration.
- Advise in finding a “best fit” for each student.
- Coordinate university admission representative visits to students.
- Advise and assist with the university application process.
- Provide the necessary AISL documentation: school profile, transcripts, and recommendations that individual universities request.
- Provide guidance in writing essays and personal statements.
- Assistance with financial aid applications, if applicable.
- College and university admissions tests advising.

- Student study visa advising.
- Transition to university information for students.
- Assistance with GAP year decisions.

It is not the role of the AISL Counselor to:

- Choose universities for the student.
- Choose degree programs for the student.
- Meet deadlines that are specific to a university. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of university deadlines and communicate with the counseling office.
- Complete the application.

AISL Students' Roles

- Engage in your own research.
- Follow the university Timeline.
- Meet internal and external deadlines.
- Ask questions if there's anything unclear.
- Compile a list of potential universities and programs before the end of your IB1 year.
- Refine/revise the list over the summer and wherever possible, try to visit some of the universities.
- Attend college fairs and meet with representatives who visit our school.
- Listen to the advice of your counselor, parents, and teachers.
- Work on personal statements or college essays (if required) and complete them well before deadlines.
- Be proactive (Do not sit back and expect the process to happen, take ownership!).

Parents' Roles

This is an exciting yet stressful time for your family. Throughout this process your son or daughter is expected to maintain their regular school workload as well as take control of their university applications.

You must:

- Be a supportive force in your child's application process.
- Discuss with your child the various options/programs of study, and universities/ countries that they will consider.
- Encourage them to meet internal and external deadlines.
- Discuss finance. 'What can we afford?'
- Maintain lines of communication with counselors when questions arise.

Your role is not to:

- Apply or complete university applications for your child.
- Write your child's essays or personal statements.
- Choose your child's degree program or university.

How Do I Apply?

Australian Universities

- Start applications as soon as they open, typically in April.
- Apply directly to the university.

- Application fees vary.
- Australian students (living in Australia or abroad) apply through the state-based Tertiary Admissions Centers for Semester One admissions. These Centers manage and promote the application procedure, receive and process applications for most university courses within their state, and inform applicants of outcomes.

Canadian Universities

- Canadian universities publish their IB prerequisites and minimum entry requirements, making it clear to know if you are likely to be admitted.
- Applications are assessed on a rolling admissions basis. We encourage students to apply early and conditional offers are often received as early as January.
- Applicants are evaluated on their high school academic achievement from Grades 9, 10 and 11 and IB predicted grades.
- Students applying with an AISL High School Diploma and IB Courses will probably be required to take the SAT.
- The application process varies according to the province. Most universities have an online application. Some may require hard copies of transcripts sent by AISL.
- A large number of universities in Ontario use the OUAC (Ontario University Application Center) as a central application agency: www.ouac.on.ca/.
- Colleges in Ontario use this site: <https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/en>
- A TOEFL or IELTS is often required for international students if they have not been in an English speaking school for at least three years. This requirement may be waived if the student meets the English language proficiency requirements in some other way.
- Application fees vary.
- Students must inform the HS Office by the last Friday in November if Transcripts and/or Letters of Recommendation must be mailed.
- Some universities require grade 12 Semester One grades to be sent. Students must request the AISL Counselor to send these grades.

South African Universities

- Start Applications as soon they open, typically in April.
- Apply directly to the university.
- Application fees vary.
- IBDP students must also apply for a matriculation exemption: <https://mb.usaf.ac.za/>

US Universities

With over 5,300 colleges and universities in the USA, the application process can vary widely from one institution to another. Finding the right “fit” is more important than ever. For this reason, AISL recommends applying to no more than 8 well-researched US colleges or universities.

The following is a list of most universities’ decision-making criteria. In reviewing and evaluating each applicant, most take a holistic approach and no single factor is considered in isolation.

- **Academic Record** - All university admission officers place major importance on your semester grades as recorded on your academic transcripts from Grades 9-12. Your grades are the best predictor of college success. Universities are interested to know that students are taking the most challenging courses possible. In the IBDP, you are already doing that.
- **Standardized tests** - Most universities are interested in standardized test scores, SAT or ACT. Although they are evaluated in the total context of a student’s school performance and make up one part of your application. The more selective the institution, the more interest is

placed on scores since the applicant pool will all have strong grades. There are more than 800 universities that have made standardized tests optional (see www.fairtest.org for the list).

- **Extra-curricular involvement** - universities are looking for students who are active members of their communities and get involved outside the classroom. Quality of involvement, commitment, and leadership in activities are important.
- **Community Service** is highly recommended and valued as a sign the student will contribute to the university community and beyond.
- **General essays and supplemental essays** allow the student to come alive and show who you are, how you write, and what distinguishes you.
- **Counselor and teacher recommendations** have an impact on your chance of admission. Make sure you select teachers who know you well and provide both the counselor and teacher with the requested Student Information Sheet.
- **Individual Factors** can play a role in acceptance, such as unusual talents or achievements, alumni affiliations or ethnic background.
- **Character.**

Virtually all colleges and universities now use online applications. When creating an account, make sure you remember your password and username!

The Common Application is used by an increasing number of colleges and universities, including some international universities. www.commonapp.org

A complete application usually includes the following:

- Application
- Personal essay and supplemental essays as required
- Application fee
- High school transcript and IB predicted grades
- School profile
- School report
- Counselor and teacher(s) recommendations.
- Proof of finances for international students (Certification of Finances)
- Early decision contract, if applicable

UK Universities

www.ucas.com - UCAS is the central organization that processes applications for full-time undergraduate courses at UK universities and colleges. The UCAS website has extensive information on searching for courses, universities, entry requirements (IB prerequisites are published), how to apply, how to write a personal statement, a parents' section and student finances.

- Applicants complete the online application, submit to the counselor for approval, if the application is filled out correctly, counselor completes the reference and predicted grades and submits to the UCAS. If a correction is needed, the application is returned to the student and the student makes the edits and submits to the counselor again for the submission to UCAS. **Once submitted to UCAS there can be no edits/corrections made to the application.** UCAS then forwards the application to the universities that the student has indicated. Each university then makes a decision about the application, forwards that information to UCAS, and it is then posted in the student's UCAS account, under TRACK.

- The UCAS application limits you to a maximum of five courses, or four choices in clinical areas such as medicine or dentistry. These course choices could be at five different universities, or two courses or more could be chosen at the same university.
- October 15th deadline for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, and Veterinary Medicine.
- January 26th (2021-22) for all other applications.
- There is a one-time application fee for all five universities.
- Universities consider applications on a rolling basis, making conditional offers as early as January. Conditional offers specify what final IB results will allow the offer to become unconditional.

Dutch Universities

www.studielink.nl - Studielink is the central application organization in the Netherlands. Students must create a Studielink account to apply to up to 4 courses. Studielink is different from the UK's UCAS system. Studielink is simply a registration tool to ensure that students are only applying to 4 courses in the country and to provide general information about applicants to the universities.

Note: If you are an international student you should check with the university requirements first as some universities do not require international students to register with Studielink. This information can be found online during your research about the application process or through a phone call to the institution.

- Determine whether or not you must register with Studielink and then complete university specific applications. These applications are available on the university's web site.
- Dutch universities will require applicants to upload their own transcripts and supporting documents.
- Letters of recommendation are not required for most programs.
- Generally, admissions decisions are sent after 4 weeks after completing your application.

Europe, Middle East and Asia

Admissions requirements and processes vary widely. Explore university websites and contact the universities directly to verify the requirements, application process and deadlines for admissions. There is an increasing number of quality universities around the world with degree programs taught in English.

The Application

It is a digital world; the vast majority of applications are online.

- Proofread before you submit. Neatness, consistency and clarity are important
- The application reflects a great deal about you. University admission committees have very little else with which to evaluate your candidacy.

Application Fees

Application fees must be paid by either a credit card or a wire transfer at the time of submitting applications. AISL does not make credit card payments on behalf of students and their families. Please inquire directly with the university regarding the wire transfer option when a credit card is not available.

AISL School Profile

The school profile is provided to universities with information about our academic programs, our results and our educational context.

Academic Transcripts

The transcript is your academic record of grades earned in your classes, grades 9-12. Students request AISL transcripts through their counselor for universities where required. Some universities allow applicants to self-report their grades. Seniors are given a copy of their transcript at the Counselor-Senior meetings at the beginning of senior year. After our Semester One grades are posted, updated transcripts are sent to universities, as required and requested.

International Baccalaureate (IB) Transcript

IB Coordinator collects requests from students at the end of April, just prior to the IBDP Examinations, while students are still on campus. Deadlines for coordinators to file requests are:

- Canada and USA: July 1
- Singapore: June 1
- All Other Countries: June 1

After the dates students must make requests directly from the IB. More information [here](#).

Predicted Grades

AISL provides students in Grade 12 with Predicted Grades. The purpose of providing predicted grades is because universities require them as a part of the admissions process. Universities use these grades to make an initial assessment of a student's application while the admissions team is awaiting final IB results. The timing of these grades depend upon university requirements. Below

- October (early admission, Oxbridge)
- Mid December (all other university applications)
- April (to be submitted to the IB)

Predicted grades are generated based on student achievement on class work/assessments and using IB weightings to produce a prediction of a student's final IB grade. They are given as a whole number (not a range). The IB Diploma Coordinator manages the collection of Predicted Grades and issues a signed AISL Predicted Grade Report.

Predicted grades factor in the two IB components:

- The external assessment: in Groups 1-5, a multi-paper examination worth 70-80% of the grade.
- The internal assessment: work completed in school that is submitted to the IB for verification of internal grading.

At AISL, requesting or negotiating for higher predicted grades is not an accepted practice. The faculty, who are all trained by the IB and have extensive IB experience, take significant care and pride in their efforts to issue the most accurate predicted grade, based on evidence of learning that the student has submitted. Please note that Predicted Grades represent a realistic assessment of student learning not an aspirational assessment. AISL's University PG Policy can be found [here](#).

Please note that an awarded predicted grade may differ from an awarded semester grade on an AISL Semester Report due to the differences in assessment scope.

UK Personal Statements

The personal statement is your chance to make a convincing case for your admission. Requirements for writing the personal statement are quite specific and you are advised to follow UCAS suggested guidelines. The UCAS website has a section on writing the personal statement and your Counselor will advise you how to construct well-organized personal statements. University websites also offer advice on what they are looking for in candidates for specific courses. Create your personal statement offline and you may have your Counselor and/or teachers check it before you paste it into your UCAS application.

US College Essays

The Essay is an opportunity for the student to come alive in the application and show who he/she is as a person. It is a chance to hear the student's voice – to show how you think and write and what is interesting about your "story". You have the choice of a variety of questions and so trust your instincts and choose what interests you and what feels right. There is no set style or subject matter, just make sure the essay is grammatically correct and appropriate. It is essential to show you are a decent writer and an interesting person with something to say. Give yourself plenty of time to write the essay and complete several drafts before your final version. The Counselor will offer more detailed information and samples of successful essays.

Letters of Recommendation from Teachers

Teachers are a great source of information for the admissions officers. Be selective in who you ask for a letter or recommendation. The Letter of Recommendation (LOR) for the UK universities is very different from the one for the USA or Canada.

- When selecting teachers as recommenders, ask them if they will be able to provide you with a positive LOR.
- Choose a teacher who knows you well, not just the teacher of your best subject.
- Use the Student Information Sheet to provide information about yourself. Counselors and teachers will use this in the letter writing process. Make sure you specify where the LOR is intended, ie: UK or USA.
- Teachers may also ask for additional information from you.
- If you want a LOR from a teacher that is leaving AISL, ask them to complete this during Semester 2 of Gr 11.
- Check exactly how many LORs you need and do not ask for more than this. Some universities do not require any letters; other universities will highlight the minimum or maximum amount of letters.
- For UK applications you should ask two teachers who can comment on your abilities that relate to the course that you are applying for.
- For US and Canadian applications ask teachers who know you well in a range of contexts.
- All recommendations sent from AISL remain confidential.

- Always give teachers at least two weeks' notice when asking for a letter of recommendation.
- A Student Information Sheet will be completed to give teachers more insight into your skills and interests.
- Students should have a conversation with their counselor about which teachers to consider asking for a LOR.
- All teacher recommendations must be requested electronically through BridgeU.

Counselor Letter

The Counselor will use the Student Information Sheet for the counselor letter and/or written evaluation.

Interviews

If you are being considered as a candidate for Oxford or Cambridge, you will be invited for an interview. Other courses in the UK, such as medicine and some art programs may also require interviews. Some US universities require interviews for admittance and many may not offer them on campus, but may use alumni to interview. The purpose of the interview is to give the interviewer an idea of the candidate's suitability for the university and also to provide information to the candidate about the school and program.

Here are some general suggestions to think about when meeting with university representatives, whether it is a college visit (virtual or in person) at AISL, meeting with alumni, an interview at a university, or an interview on Zoom.

- Be on time.
- If on a university visit, remain standing until you are invited to sit down.
- Be respectful: Do not chew gum, slouch, or use "informal, inarticulate language", turn off your cell phone and do not text message.
- Look directly at the representative during the entire conversation or presentation. If it's a college visit at AISL and the representative hands out brochures, do not read the brochure and stop paying attention to the presentation.
- Research the college or university, be aware of requirements, programs of study and be prepared to state why you are interested in the school.
- Try not to have vague questions such as, "Tell me about your university." Be specific with questions, such as, "*Could you tell me about class spirit? Can you give me examples of some campus traditions? In my first semester what will my class sizes probably be? What is the college's greatest asset? How would you describe the student body?*" and any other questions regarding courses, financial aid, scholarships, or student life that are important to you.
- Be sincere in your answers, questions, and attitudes. You don't want to be boastful, but don't be over-modest either. Speak to the point concisely and completely without monopolizing the conversation.
- Practice answering questions, such as, "*Why do you want to attend this university/college? What is your intended area of study, why? What do you like to read? Whom do you admire? What do you enjoy doing outside of your academic work?*"
- Wait for the interviewer to begin, listen attentively without interrupting, and answer all questions tactfully, firmly, honestly, and to the best of your ability. Don't be afraid to ask questions that you feel are important. Don't be afraid to say you don't know the answer to a question you may be asked.
- Whether it is an AISL school visit or an interview at university, always thank your interviewer for his time and interest.

- Within 48 hours of the interview, write a thank-you note.

Standardized Admissions Tests

Standardized tests refer to the university entrance examinations used by universities in an attempt to measure general aptitude and serve as a benchmark for differing academic systems – SAT/ACT are most common. Currently, many universities throughout the world use standardized tests as an entry requirement. If students are not taking the IB Diploma, the SAT can be used to support admission to Canadian and UK universities as well as other European schools. Other university systems, such as in Singapore and Hong Kong, and Korea may also require SAT scores.

Standardized tests are optional at many colleges and universities in the US. Post-COVID, a lot of universities have gone test-optional.

Here is a list of test optional US colleges and universities: <http://fairtest.org/university/optional>.

With all of these different requirements at schools all over the world, it is important for students to check individual university standardized test requirements. The following offers a brief explanation of these admission tests:

- The SAT (www.collegeboard.org) and the ACT (www.act.org) are both accepted by US colleges and universities.
- The SAT is more widely accepted by other university systems, such as the UK and other European and Asian schools.
- Students must register online for all standardized admission tests and choose their preferred test center.
- AISL is a closed test center for SAT.
- When you take an SAT or ACT you are the person who receives and “owns” the scores. Universities require that test scores be “officially” sent, which means that you must request the testing agency to send your scores to the schools. You may have your scores sent free to universities at the time you register for the test online at the testing website; you may also pay to request additional test scores to be sent through your login at any time. Please remember your username and password to access your account and to get your scores.
- **PSAT** – currently, all AISL students in Grade 10 and G11 take the PSAT. US citizens who take the test in Grade 11 might qualify as National Merit Scholars for US schools. After receiving results in January, students can go to www.StudentScores.CollegeBoard.org to use their “access code” to download their test results and link them to Khan Academy for SAT practice.
- **SAT** - the most widely used college entrance exam administered by the College Board and created by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). The SAT Reasoning Test takes about 4 hours to complete. Both test sections: evidenced based reading and writing & mathematics are scored separately, with scores ranging from 200 to 800 in each area, for a total possible score of 1600. The best time to take the test is in March or May of Grade 11. You can retake the SAT again, if you would like, in October and December of G12. You must register online at www.collegeboard.org. **AISL is a closed test center (only AISL students).**
- **ACT (American College Testing)** - subject based, three-hour test that consists of four sections: English, Mathematics, Reading Comprehension, and Science Reasoning. Scores range from 1 to 36 for each of the subtests, with a final average or composite score. An optional 30-minute writing test is part of the ACT-Plus Writing test offered only in April, October, and December. www.act.org

Preparing for standardized tests can be done in many ways. College Board has partnered with Khan Academy to offer free test preparation for the SAT: <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat>.

Proof of English Language Competence

If students have not been in an English speaking school for their academic career; their mother tongue is not English; they come from certain passport countries; if they don't take English HL, or if they score low on the SAT or ACT, the IELTS or TOEFL may be required to satisfy admissions or immigration requirements.

- **IELTS** – The International English Language Testing System is another standardized test for English language skills developed in the UK and accepted by universities worldwide. www.ielts.org.
- **TOEFL** – Test of English as a Foreign Language is a standardized test for English language skills. www.toefl.org.

Registration for the IELTS must be done through the British Council in Lagos and online for the TOEFL. Testing occurs at regular times throughout the year. Results must be sent from the organizations to the universities, not by AISL. It is to your advantage to use the free reports when you take the test. Please be aware that unless you bring a copy of your scores into the Counseling Office and ask for it to be scanned and added to your file, we have no record of this.

Admissions Decisions

Once the university has reviewed your application, they will notify you about your acceptance. Universities using “rolling admissions” usually notify applicants six to eight weeks from the time they have a completed application folder (with your test scores). Students applying in September sometimes hear in October. On the other hand, many of the US colleges and universities use the national notification date of April 1st and send out decision letters on or before that date.

Acceptance

You are likely to receive your decision online, either through an email or through your account on the college website. Since email decisions are sent in batches, it's entirely possible that a decision email ends up in your spam folder. Around decision time, get into the habit of looking in your spam folder before you automatically delete all of the messages. Some colleges still send decisions in the regular mail. As soon as you have received your acceptance (and even your denial), please come and let your counselor know. We are very interested! Update your BridgeU account using the decision option from the drop down menu.

Deferral

Students who apply Early Decision or Early Action sometimes are “deferred”, which means that the college will wait and consider you in the “Regular Decision” pool of applicants. A deferral can be due to the need to see your first semester senior year grades, or because the admissions office is unsure of the strength of the rest of the applicants. A deferral is not necessarily a terrible thing. Some students who are deferred are admitted later. If you applied to a binding Early Decision or Early Action plan and are deferred, you are released from any binding commitment and are free to apply to other universities. Please follow the university's directions they provide and if needed, consult your Counselor for guidance on how to best move forward.

Denial

Unfortunately, not everyone can be admitted everywhere. Admissions decisions have little to do with you personally and more to do with the other students who applied that year. **You can do everything right, and still not get in.** If you happen to be denied admission to a university you especially wanted to attend, never call the admission office to vent your anger. If you are contemplating transferring a year later, you don't want to have had a bitter encounter with the admissions office. Only in extraordinary circumstances is an "appeal" possible. Appeals are rarely successful unless the college has made an honest mistake—perhaps they were unable to locate a part of your application and denied you for that reason. Please see your Counselor for guidance, if needed.

Waitlist

All colleges admit more students than they have room for in a freshman class, because they realize not all students they admit will choose to enroll. Hard to believe, perhaps, but even Harvard only gets approximately 75% of their accepted students to enroll. Guessing the "yield" is a difficult task—especially as more students apply to more schools each year. If a school underestimates the number of accepted candidates who enroll, there will be holes in the incoming freshman class, which are filled from the waitlist. Even so, the wait list is usually a long shot. Final notification may not come until well into the summer so, for safety's sake, accept an offer of admission from another school, even if it means sending in a non-refundable deposit. Only choose to remain on a waitlist if you really plan to attend should you be admitted later.

Final College Decision Reply Date (USA)

- Once you have your acceptance letters, you must decide where to go. For a lot of US candidates, the reply date is May 1st. If you don't tell a school by then that you're coming in the fall, they can, and often do, withdraw your acceptance.
- Notify all other schools that accepted you of your decision not to attend. An email is a great way to do this. If you're sure you won't be attending, notify the college promptly so they might be able to open up other slots for other (possibly AISL) students.
- Once you've made your choice, pay the non-refundable enrollment deposit, which tells the school you are showing up in the fall.
- Also, check on housing arrangements. Read the materials you receive with the acceptance letter to see how you should take care of these matters.
- Thank all those who proofread your essays and wrote letters of recommendation. Teachers asked to write recommendations are eager to know the outcomes of the admissions decisions you receive! Keep them updated!

UCAS Offers (UK)

Each time a UK university makes a decision on one of your applications, UCAS will notify you of the offer details. You will be asked to code all of your offers (you could have as many as five) as "Firm," "Insurance" or "Decline." Choose one firm and one insurance offer; all others must be declined. Since most offers are conditional upon IB examination score results and you won't have received the exam results, this can be a difficult decision. If you are confused about any offers or need advice regarding which offers to accept, check with your IB Coordinator & Counselor. Once you have made a commitment to particular courses you cannot change your mind. UCAS asks for prompt replies

and you should check Track for the timeline and deadlines. If you did not receive any offers, you can participate in a process called “Extra” in which you can apply one at a time to additional courses until you receive an offer. See your Counselor for help with this process.

Canadian Offers

Some universities in Canada have coordinated their decision period to coincide with the US. However, it is still common for others to inform of offers in January and February and others not make decisions until after receiving final Gr 12 grades, especially if a candidate is on the borderline between admit and deny. Final quarter of Gr. 12 is no time for “senioritis” if you are waiting to hear from Canadian universities. If you don’t get a reply by late April, email or phone the admissions offices to check if all required documents were received.

Accepting an Offer

When you receive an acceptance from the university you wish to attend, **follow the instructions they provide** regarding:

- Payment of fees at specific times.
- Housing reservation.
- Personal information data sheets.
- Medical forms and immunization records.
- Visa procedures (when needed).
- Some universities will even send information about registering for classes.
- Acknowledge the acceptance with a letter to the Director of Admissions or the admissions officer assigned to you, thanking him/her for the attention given to you and saying that you are looking forward to attending.
- At the same time, email the other universities that accepted you. Thank them for their consideration and ask them to withdraw your name from the list. Explain that you have decided to attend another university – name the university. In withdrawing your name promptly, you are giving an acceptance possibility to another applicant who may have been placed on the waitlist.

Psychological Stages

The university search and application process can be complicated and arduous but it comes at a time when students are already under significant academic, social and emotional demands. It also represents one of the first times that young adults are confronted with major life decisions that will directly impact their whole future. This is both an exciting and daunting rite of passage into the adult world.

Consider the following emotional states that students experience as they move through the various stages of the process:

- In searching and making a list, students may experience passive denial when confronted by the reality of the process ahead of them
- The process can be overwhelming, with external pressure felt from parents, peers and teachers. Students need to manage their time, stress and their anxiety effectively so that their academics are maintained
- AISL’s university cap of 10 schools/systems is to help student better manage the stress and anxiety inherent during this time of year
- Students can be overwhelmed by the decision making process, experiencing confusion and maybe becoming frozen
- Some denials from admissions offices are inevitable. Students experience sadness and disappointment when they hear they have not been accepted

- Elation - when students are accepted into universities, it is a huge relief and should be celebrated. Occasionally students relax too much, losing focus on their academics
- Parents also commonly experience emotions such as hope, anxiety, frustration, disappointment, relief, reconciliation and elation.
- Waiting for your offers can be very difficult when friends are receiving offers from “Rolling Admission” schools.

After You’ve Accepted an Offer of Admission

Housing Contract-USA/Canada

Housing information is usually included in the acceptance packet. Send this form early to better your chance of getting good housing. In the housing contract, there is a form asking about your likes and dislikes. This information is used to match you up with a compatible roommate. You may be asked to comment (honestly) on areas such as neatness, study habits, smoking habits, and taste in music (remember to complete this form honestly, it could make a big difference in your roommate selection). A college won’t guarantee to match you up with a perfect roommate, but they’ll try. Once you find out who your roommate will be (usually in July), contact him or her. Several colleges now have online roommate selection. You are able to post information about yourself and see information about others. Roommates are then able to mutually choose each other.

Address Changes

If you leave Lagos right after graduation and return to your home country for June-August, file an address change with your university in late May. If not, you might miss important mailings, such as information about orientation programs, course registration, roommate assignment, and housing. This is particularly important as many students list the AISL address as their home address.

Getting a Visa

If you are intending to study in a country other than your passport country or a country where you hold permanent residency, then you are classified as an international student. In most cases international students need to apply for and have a valid student visa in their passport before entering the country where they will study. The visa application process often includes demonstrating an offer of enrolment; demonstrating sufficient finances to support the costs of education and living; and demonstrating the intention to enter a country only for the purposes of studying.

- When possible, for Canada, the UK, and the USA, the AISL Counseling Office seeks to provide visa information meetings in the months of February to May of grade 12 to assist students and parents with the visa process.
- Students seeking a visa for the USA will receive a “Form I-20” from the university. The I-20 is required for the student visa application process. For more info on the Form I-20 please visit: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students-and-the-form-i-20>
- The following website is a good starting point for students seeking a Study Permit for Canada:
<https://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/student.asp?countrySelect=NG>.
- <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas> contains all the information you need when applying for a student visa under Tier 4 of the points based system for immigration.

Health Documents

You will receive health forms, which need to be completed by a physician. You will also be asked to include an official copy of your immunization history. You will not be able to begin classes unless this form is completed.

Travel Plans and Orientation

Confirm your university's start date. This will vary from country to country. Many expect new students to arrive on campus a week or two before classes actually begin for the orientation program. Do not skip orientation. It's a great way to meet new people and to get over jitters before classes begin. AISL graduates always report that attending orientation was a big help in their adjustment to university. Because August is a major vacation season, finalize your airline reservations as early as possible; otherwise it may be impossible to get to campus on the proper date. If necessary, contact the university to find out when you should arrive.

Financial Aid, Scholarships and the Cost of University

One of the most important decisions made about attending university is how to pay for it. Families must have many discussions about what is expected and what can be provided before the student applies to university. There must be a clear understanding of who will pay for the cost of university and how much is available to invest in this venture. The best information about financial aid or scholarship at a particular university is available through that university.

Many universities require a separate application for financial aid be completed in conjunction with an application for admission. The deadline dates may be different from the admissions deadlines so careful attention is needed to this. In addition, universities may require that additional information be submitted through the CSS Profile. The FAFSA is for US Citizens applying for financial aid.

Types of Financial Aid

Financial aid can be need- or merit-based.

- **Need-based financial aid** is awarded to students who have shown that his/her family does not have sufficient funds to cover the cost of education. Students prove eligibility through submitting documents to show assets and income that could be used to pay for college tuition and costs. Need based aid is often given in the form of loans, work-study and grants.
- **Merit-based aid** is awarded to students based on academic excellence, talents, or achievements. Merit based is usually given in the form of scholarships.
- **Grants** - May be awarded by the government or by the university. No repayment is necessary for aid awarded in the form of a grant. US citizens may qualify for the Federal Pell Grant, which the university will award in the form of a grant. Some universities may offer institutional grant money to students with demonstrated financial need.

- **Work-Study** - A campus based program (supported by the US government or by the individual university) where a student is employed part time on campus in order to earn money towards university expenses.
- **Loans** - Money borrowed by a student or a student's parents must be repaid with interest. US students with demonstrated high need may qualify for the Federal Perkins Loan Program. The most common loans are the Federal Stafford Loan (student) and Federal PLUS Loan (parent). In most cases, repayment begins six months after the student's graduation from university.
- **Scholarships** - Most scholarships are merit awards. These are based on academic achievement, special ability, and extraordinary talent. Funds may be from individual universities or from private sources.
 - **Scholarships in the UK:** Student finance consists of a tuition fee loan, maintenance loan, and a maintenance grant. Loans are paid back, grants are not. An individual is assessed on set criteria.
 - Student grants are available from a wide variety of organizations: <http://www.unigrants.co.uk/>; <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance/overview>; <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/>
 - **Scholarships in Australia:** The Australian government and universities provide a large number of scholarships for international students wanting to study in Australia. They are available for both academic excellence and leadership: <http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/australian-education/scholarships>.
 - Scholarships in Canada: With strong academic grades, good leadership credentials, well rounded experiences or financial need it can be possible to receive a scholarship from a Canadian higher education institution. Canada automatically rewards high achieving IBDP students: <https://www.topuniversities.com/student-info/scholarship-advice/scholarships-study-canada>
 - **Scholarships in the US:** http://www.internationalstudent.com/study_usa/financing/
 - **Scholarships International:** Scholarships offered to international students at universities and colleges worldwide. Many universities and colleges offer favorable funding incentives to international students based on criteria such as academic achievement and leadership. Check individual institutions' websites for further information. The following are a selection of possible search options.
 - <http://scholarship-positions.com/>

There are many other websites available. Please be aware however that some will charge for their services. We do not recommend paying for these services. Remember also that in many countries it is possible for international students to supplement their income by working.

Applying for Financial Aid – US

- FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid: <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/afsa>. US citizens needing to apply for financial aid should work with the Counselor after January 1st 2020.
- CSS PROFILE <https://profileonline.collegeboard.com> Many private universities require that students complete the CSS Profile to be considered for financial aid.
- **Federal Student Aid**- Connects students to US government services and information including careers advice, planning and paying for a college education.

Financial Aid Information for US and Non-US Citizens

Financial Aid Spread sheets are available from the Council of International Schools' website <https://studentaid.ed.gov/eligibility/non-us-citizens>. On this website, you can view, print and download a wealth of information regarding universities. The most current summary information is available including: Total enrollment, percentage of international students, tuition, room and board costs, and the availability of need based, merit based and athletic based scholarships for US and non-US citizens, as well as the average award.

On this site, information is available for the following categories of schools: US colleges and universities, US style colleges and universities in Europe, Canadian universities, UK universities, Australian, New Zealand and other universities.

What if You Don't Want to Go to University?

Gap Years

Should students decide to take a GAP year, the AISL Counselor can assist with the application process.

Taking a year off before studying at university is becoming a more popular option with high school graduates. Having that year to reflect on interests, skills and desires can give a new direction or provide a strong motivation to move ahead with one's education. Taking a Gap Year experience is advisable if there is a plan and a goal that is to be achieved during that time. Drifting aimlessly will not provide a strong foundation for future studies. Universities and employers will want the individual to be able to articulate the goal and what was accomplished during the Gap Year. Traveling to learn about a new culture or immerse oneself in a home culture (after being an expat), community service or volunteer work, additional language training and culture immersion, and full time work are all seen as positive experiences by university admissions officers.

The decision to take a Gap Year should be carefully considered. Students who take a Gap Year often apply to university during G12, get accepted to the university of their choice, and then "Defer" their actual enrollment for one year while they work, study, or travel. Not all universities have this "Deferral" option. Check the university website.

- Find out what opportunities await those planning to take a gap year between high school and university: <http://www.gapyear.com/>.
- Semester at Sea provides opportunities for the exploration and study of many people, places and cultures around the world. <https://www.semesteratsea.org/>.
- Amigos de las Americas - this organization creates opportunities for young people to excel in leadership roles promoting public health, education and community development. AMIGOS is a nonprofit organization that provides leadership training and volunteer opportunities in the U.S. and Latin America. <https://amigosinternational.org/>
- City Year - A national youth service organization that unites diverse young people ages 17-24 for a demanding year of full time community service, civic engagement and leadership. <http://www.cityyear.org>
- Disney World College Program - If you wish to work/intern at Disney World you might be interested in exploring this work/internship program for college students. <https://jobs.disneycareers.com/disney-college-program>
- The Experiment in International Living - An international nonprofit organization promoting intercultural learning through home stays, educational group travel, study abroad, language training, work exchange, and other cultural immersion programs. <http://www.experiment.org>.

- Leap Now Lifetime Education Alternatives - Internships, volunteer experiences, work exchanges, experiential academic programs. <http://www.leapnow.org/>.
- National Outdoor Leadership School - Learn outdoor skills and leadership; offers courses 10 days to full semesters in the most spectacular wilderness classrooms: <https://www.nols.edu/en/>
- Outward Bound - Through its 5 wilderness schools, 2 urban centers and whole-school learning model and expeditionary learning, Outward Bound programs emphasize personal growth through experience and challenge. In all programs, students develop self-reliance, responsibility, teamwork, confidence, compassion and environmental and community stewardship. <http://www.outwardbound.com>.
- Taking Off - A highly personalized program which works with young people, ages 16-25, who are taking time off from a traditional classroom setting either before, during or after university. Works closely with the student to develop and implement a well-thought-out plan which maximizes the individual's time and experience and ensures that taking time off does not become "dropping out." <http://takingoff.net/>
- Corporation for National and Community Service - Programs for people of all ages and backgrounds to serve others: <https://www.grants.gov/learn-grants/grant-making-agencies/corporation-for-national-community-service.html>

Glossary of Terms

- **ACT (American College Testing Program)** - Standardized admissions test includes sections on English, mathematics, social studies, and natural sciences; accepted by most US colleges and universities.
- **Arts and Sciences** (see Liberal Arts)
- **Associate's Degree (AA)** - The academic title granted usually by a two-year college; transferable to institutions that grant Bachelor's degrees.
- **Bachelor's Degree** - undergraduate degree granted upon completion of a three or four-year, full-time program of study or its part-time equivalent.
- **Candidate Reply Date:** May 1 is the national deadline for most US candidates submitting a deposit to their final college. A lot of US colleges and universities abide by this deadline. Check with each uni/college for their deadlines and school-specific directions.
- **CEEB Code:** College Entrance Examination Board Code. Used when signing up for and taking standardized tests for U.S. colleges/universities. AISL's CEEB Code is 630589.
- **Certificate of Finance** - Form submitted to a university by a student which verifies an international student's ability to cover the costs associated with enrolling in the university. Must be supported by parent's bank statement or signature from bank official.
- **College Scholarship Service (CSS)** - The division of the College Board that is responsible for the PROFILE form. Many colleges and scholarships use the information collected on PROFILE to help them award non federal student aid. There is a registration fee that covers the cost of customizing your PROFILE application as well as a fee for each school or program to which you want information sent. Registration can be made via www.collegeboard.org.
- **Combined Honors - (UK)** study of several subjects, which may or may not be related, often narrowing as the course progresses to two or three subjects.
- **Common Application - The "CommonApp,"** is an online application that can be used to apply to nearly 800 colleges and universities in the US. The applicant needs to submit one application that is then available to all member institutions where the student applies. The CommonApp is viewed as equivalent to a university's general application form.

- **Community College** - An institution at which students study toward a two-year Associate degree after completion of secondary school.
- **Conditional Acceptance** - A student will be admitted to the college/university if they attain the specified combination of grades after their final IB exams. The Conditional Acceptance is based on predicted grades.
- **Consortium** - A group of colleges affiliated in some way. The extent of the association can vary widely. Some consortiums – usually located near one another – offer a range of joint programs that include cross-registration, interlibrary loan, residential exchanges, and coordinate social, cultural and athletic events.
- **Cooperative Education** - A program in which a university facilitates a student’s employment during the course of study. Full time employment usually occurs within the time of full time study. May lengthen the time required to complete a degree program.
- **Core Curriculum** - A group of courses all students in the college must take in order to graduate.
- **Credit Hours** - A unit of measurement usually awarded on the basis of one credit per hour of class per week. A college course worth 3 credits/hours will generally meet 3 hours per week.
- **Deferred Admission** - Students who apply Early Decision or Early Action sometimes are “deferred”, which means that the college will wait and consider you in the “Regular Decision” pool of applicants.
- **Deferred Enrollment** - A practice of allowing an accepted candidate to postpone enrollment in a college, generally for a period of an academic term or year; also known as the GAP Year.
- **Degree** - An academic title awarded by colleges and universities to signify completion of a course of study.
- **Distribution Requirements** - Rules that require students to take courses in a variety of broad subject areas in order to graduate. Typically categories included the humanities, social sciences, fine arts, natural sciences, foreign languages and mathematics. Unlike a core curriculum, distribution requirements do not usually mandate specific courses that students must take.
- **Double Deposit** - Committing to enroll at more than one college by sending a financial enrollment deposit to multiple colleges. This is unethical.
- **ETS (Educational Testing Service)** - An agency employed by the CEEB to produce its tests.
- **Early Action (EA)** - Students apply early and, if accepted, are notified early in IB2– usually December 15th. Colleges do not require that the student commit to the institution upon acceptance. Some universities now have Single Choice Early Action whereby a student is bound to only that school for applying early. Early Action can be a risky choice for a student who seeks financial assistance.
- **Early Decision (ED)** - Notification of acceptance into college early in IB2– usually December 15th. Colleges stipulate that the students withdraw all other college applications if accepted under Early Decision.
- **FAFSA (Free Application For Federal Student Aid)** - This form is required by all colleges in the USA to determine the student’s need for federally funded financial aid programs. This form applies only to U.S. citizens.
- **Family Contribution** - The amount of money that a family can reasonably be expected to pay toward a student’s education as determined by a standardized needs analysis form. This is usually denoted by EFC or Expected Family Contribution.
- **Financial Aid Package** - Colleges award financial aid on the basis of need and the student’s projected contribution to the school community, or EFC (Expected Family Contribution). Aid can come in the form of scholarships, grants, loans and work/study; the financial aid package can have any combination of these. In addition to Federal financial

aid, some states have specific financial aid programs. Forms and processes will be state-specific.

- **International Student Financial Aid Application** - provided by the College Board for non - US students who are applying for financial aid while attending college/university in the US. Financial aid is extremely limited to non-US students. These students should investigate financial aid options in their home country as well.
- **Grant** - Money that is awarded to a student through the university and that does not have to be paid back.
- **Greek System** - The social fraternities and sororities on a university campus.
- **Honors Program** - Any special program for academically-advanced students, usually offering the opportunity for educational enrichment, independent study, acceleration or some combination of these.
- **Humanities** - Subjects in which the primary focus is on human culture - history, philosophy, language, literature.
- **I-20** - The form issued by the university to international students. The students then take the I-20 form to the US Embassy in order to obtain their F-1 student visa.
- **IELTS (International English Language Testing System)** - A test of English proficiency for students whose dominant language is not English and whose scores on the SAT I or ACT might not reflect their potential for higher education because of inexperience with the English language.
- **Interdisciplinary Major** - A major that combines two complementary subjects from different fields eg. biology and psychology. Students completing these majors take courses in each area as well as courses that explicitly join the two.
- **Joint Honors - (UK)** Study of two separate but equal subjects, which may or may not be related. Often there is little to no cooperation between departments and this translates into a double degree.
- **Legacy** - An applicant for admission who has a family member who is an alumnus of that particular school. Students with legacy status are sometimes given preferential consideration in admissions.
- **Liberal Arts and Sciences / Liberal Arts College** - A general program of 4 year study wherein the student takes courses in a wide variety of subjects such as history, literature, foreign languages, math, philosophy, social sciences, natural science, art, etc., majors in one of these areas and graduates with a Bachelor's Degree. The curriculum gives the student a sound basic education with the intention of developing general knowledge and reasoning ability, as opposed to training for a specific career. It does fulfill the requirement for entrance into graduate school where most liberal arts graduates specialize in a particular area of study.
- **LOR** – Letter of recommendation, usually written by teachers and counselors.
- **Matriculate** - To enroll in a program with the goal of successfully obtaining a degree.
- **Matriculation exemption** – A legal requirement for students applying to South African universities with qualifications other than South African qualifications.
- **Merit-based Scholarship** - A financial grant usually awarded for academic achievement or special skill in an extracurricular activity and not based about need.
- **Need-based Aid** - Money awarded to the student for tuition, fees or room and board, solely on the basis of financial need.
- **Need-blind Admissions** - The policy of a university to consider an applicant for admission without considering the student's ability to cover the cost of enrollment.
- **Private Schools** - Refers to the control of the institution not being held by any level of government.
- **Profile (CSS Profile)** - A U.S. College Scholarship Service form designed for certain colleges/ universities to determine a student's financial need. There is a fee charged per college, so it should only be sent to those colleges which request it.

- **Public Schools** - Refers to an institution being owned or controlled by some level of government, usually state or county. Tuitions are usually different for residents and non-residents.
- **Minor** - The subject which ranks second in concentrated courses to the major course of study. Minors are required at some colleges and universities.
- **Open Admissions** - Colleges that admit all high school graduates without regard to additional qualifications.
- **Rolling Admissions** - some colleges and universities make offers of admission as they make decisions, rather than waiting for the April 1 National Notification Date, sometimes as soon as 6-8 weeks after receiving a completed application.
- **SAT** - Standardized tests that are often used as criteria for admission of college applicants. While the SAT measures critical reading, mathematical reasoning and writing.
- **Sandwich Courses - (UK)** Alternating periods of study and related work experiences, normally lasting four years.
- **Single Honors - (UK)** study of one subject, within which a range of specialized options may be available.
- **TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)** - A test of English proficiency for students whose dominant language is not English and whose scores on the SAT or ACT might not reflect their potential for higher education because of inexperience with the English language.
- **Waitlist** - A number of qualified candidates who have applied at a selective college will not initially receive either a letter of acceptance or a letter of denial, but may eventually be offered a place after the Candidate's Reply Date (May 1). Students who receive a Waitlist letter will be asked if they want to remain on it.

Appendix