

MARCH EDITION NEWSLETTER THE NOVA UNIVERSE



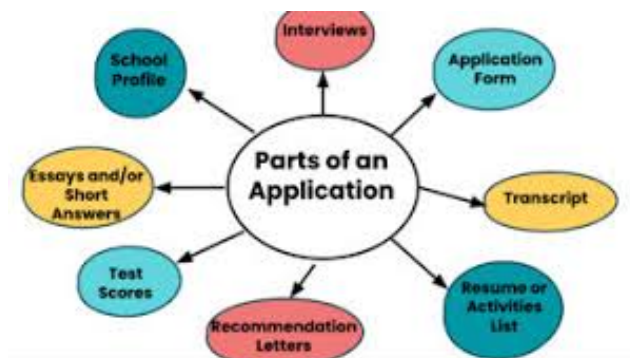
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Welcome to the March edition of the NOVA UNIVERSE!

In this edition, we cover:

- Elements of a university application
- IB subject group in the spotlight: Individuals & Societies
- Holistic vs credentials-driven admissions systems
- Writing a motivational letter for a European university
- The role of IB predicted grades in choosing programs and university admissions

ELEMENTS OF A UNIVERSITY APPLICATION



What goes in a university application?

While the application elements generally vary per country, in general, these are the things admissions officers look at:

- Academics/ transcript - in other words - GRADES, GRADES, GRADES!
- Standardized test scores* (SAT/ACT/TOEFL/IB/aptitude tests)
- Personal statement/motivation letter
- Reference letters
- Extracurricular involvement (CV/resume)
- Language proficiency tests
- Interviews
- Portfolios/auditions (for creative programs)

What are universities looking for in an applicant? Well, that depends!

The question of the **RIGHT FIT**

Well, that depends on the country and the type of university

Examples:

US colleges and liberal arts & sciences programs - holistic approach (as a rule, bigger, more selective institutions use grades as the primary selection filter; smaller, liberal arts colleges award a more balanced importance to other non-academic factors as well)

UK/Germany/Canada /Australia- academic qualifications are the most important factor!

Examples of different university system requirements

US universities



- Online application (<https://www.commonapp.org/>)
- Personal Statement (~650 essay)
- Supplementary Essays (college-specific)
- Table of Activities
- Counselor Recommendation (Secondary School Report)
- 1-2 required Teacher Recommendation Letters
- *English language proficiency test/standardized tests
- *Interviews
- If applying for financial aid, fin aid forms (CSS profile/FAFSA)

UK universities



- Online application (<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate>)
- Personal Statement (4000 characters)
- 1 Reference from a teacher/tutor/counselor
- Predicted grades (very important!)
- *Language proficiency test
- *Aptitude tests
- *Interviews

The Netherlands universities



- Online application (studielink.nl + individual university online application)
- Transcript
- Predicted grades
- CV
- *Motivation letter
- *Aptitude/placement test (numerus fixus/selection procedure programs)
- *Interview (university colleges)
- *Recommendation letter(s)
- *Language confirmation/confirmation of diploma document

Essentials of university planning

- Course selection
- Grades
- Recommendations
- Testing
- Non-academic time
- Individualized factors

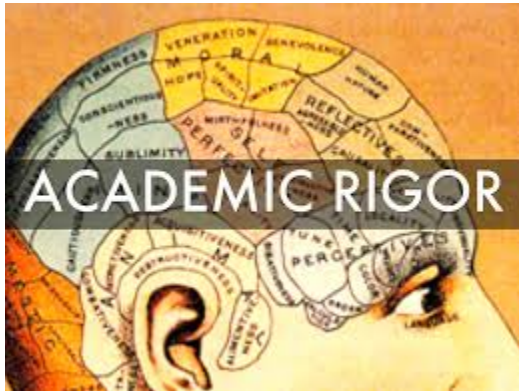


1. Course selection

- The importance of balancing course level difficulty, grades/GPA and having “a rich, healthy life” (skills & knowledge that allow students to mature, think about themselves and the world, and develop character, values, interpersonal skills and decision-making skills)
- Consider the distinction between
 - 1) What’s best for college admission
 - 2) What’s best for the student
- For the most selective colleges, students should go well beyond the requirements for graduation

2. General requirements

- 4 years of English language and literature
- 3-4 years of math
- 3-4 years of science
- 3 years of social studies
- 2-4 years of world (or foreign or second) language
- Electives

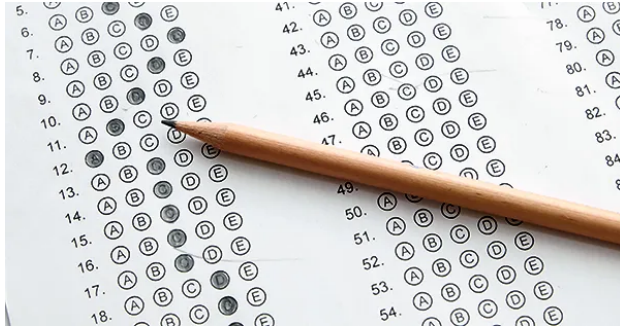


3. Academic rigor and grades

- Academic rigor (honors/advanced, AP/IB courses)
- High school grades, coupled with academic rigor, are the most important admission factor
- Higher grades yield greater choice
- Students need to recognize the power of grades and work to their potential
- You should seek to challenge yourself, but the challenge should be manageable and not at the expense of sleep, emotional and mental health, and pursuing other interests and activities

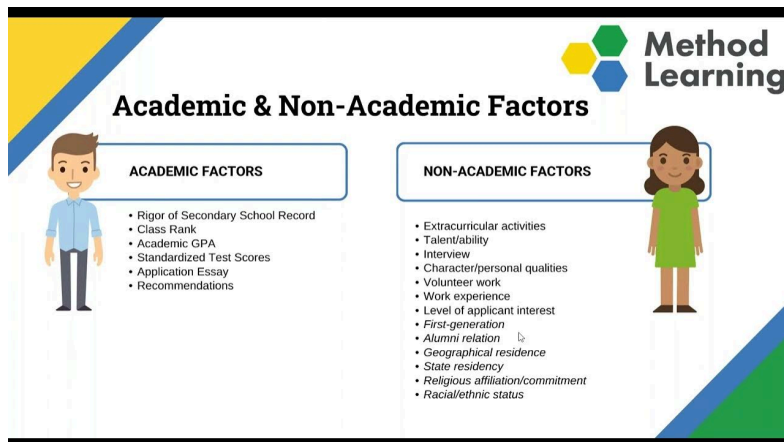
4. Teacher and counselor recommendations

- Think about the importance of establishing collegial relationships with your instructors and by junior year target specific teachers whom you will approach as the application time nears
- Establish a connection with yours truly , ie. your counselor as you need a strong counselor recommendation letter



5. Standardized testing

- To test or not to test? - check whether the programs of your interest require a standardized test like the SAT or they have their own admissions test
- When considering whether or not to submit standardized test scores for test-optional schools, view your scores relative to the median scores of admitted students, i.e. whether your profile satisfies the admission/entry requirements
- Plan, prepare and register for all necessary aptitude, standardized or language proficiency tests on time



6. Non-academic time

How you spend your out-of-school time and who you are beyond grades and test scores may be an important factor in college admissions.

- Personal Statement/Motivation Letter
- Supplementary Essays
- CV/Resume
- Interviews
- Recommendation letters

Extracurricular accomplishments/unique personal talents and skills/special personal/family circumstances/volunteering/work experiences



7. Essentials determined by personal need

Choosing a college is an important decision on an individual level

Factors to consider:

- Academic/Social/Financial Fit

IB SUBJECT GROUP IN THE SPOTLIGHT: INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETIES

As the IB course selection for next year is fully under way, we thought that it would be useful to introduce you to the IB subjects NOVA offers by interviewing NOVA IB teachers so that we make informed decisions and have a better understanding of each subject's requirements come junior year.

In this edition, we interviewed the IB teachers from the Individuals and Societies subject group - IB Psychology, IB History, IB Business Management and IB Economics. We would like to sincerely thank them for taking the time to respond to our questions.

IB Psychology - Ms Ivana Pemper

1. What does the curriculum in your subject cover - a short summary?

The IB Psychology curriculum focuses on understanding human behavior through real-world topics. Students explore areas such as how we think and learn, relationships, mental health, identity, culture, and development across the lifespan. A big emphasis is placed on applying psychology to real-life situations, rather than just memorizing content.

2. What's the key difference between doing your subject at HL and SL?

HL students cover some additional content and go deeper into analyzing and evaluating psychological research. They also develop stronger research skills and critical thinking.

3. What are some common myths or assumptions about your subject?

A common myth is that psychology students can read people's minds. They can't! 😊 Instead, we learn patterns of human behavior and gain a better understanding of ourselves and others using scientific evidence.

4. What tips can you give for students taking your subject in order to be successful in it?

I asked my senior students for advice, as they can reflect on this best. They suggested: be present in class, participate actively, take and keep organized notes, and stay consistent with revision. If you do these things, you will be absolutely fine. Psychology rewards steady effort more than last-minute studying.

5. Are there any prerequisites for your class?

No prerequisites - just curiosity, motivation, and interest in understanding human behavior.

IB History - Mr Bojan Marina

1. What does the curriculum in your subject cover - a short summary?

The DP History 2028 Subject Brief provides the official IB summary of the History curriculum for your cohort. -

<https://ibo.org/globalassets/new-structure/programmes/dp/pdfs/dp-history-sb-en.pdf>

2. What's the key difference between doing your subject at HL and SL?

At NOVA, DP History is only offered as an HL subject.

3. What are some common myths or assumptions about your subject?

Common myths about the subject include: "History is just memorizing dates". To the contrary, the DP History curriculum emphasizes analysis and evaluation over rote memorization. Dates do provide the chronological framework, but the assessment marks are earned by explaining why and how events unfolded. Or, "There is only one right answer". The reality is that DP History is defined by historiography. The course requires you to acknowledge that different historians have different interpretations of the past based on their perspectives, e.g., orthodox, revisionist, post-revisionist etc.

4. What tips can you give for students taking your subject in order to be successful in it?

Success in DP History is determined by three specific skills: *source evaluation*, i.e., the ability to analyze the value and limitations of historical evidence based on its origin, purpose, and content (OPCVL); *argumentation*, i.e., the ability to construct a clear, logical, and balanced essay that addresses a "to what extent" prompt; and, last but not least, *synthesizing perspectives*, or the ability to integrate different historical viewpoints into your own writing, in order to show your sophisticated understanding of the past.

5. Are there any prerequisites for your class?

There are no formal academic prerequisites for entering the DP History course. The History guide (First examinations in 2028) notes that while previous study of history is helpful, the most important requirements are a high level of literacy, an interest in global affairs, and a willingness to engage with complex, conflicting narratives.

IB Business Management - Ms Marina Perunovska

1. What does the curriculum in your subject cover - a short summary?

The IB Business Management curriculum is designed to develop a holistic understanding of how organizations function and make strategic decisions within an increasingly complex global environment. The course is structured around five core units: Business Organization and Environment, Human Resource Management, Finance and Accounts, Marketing, and Operations Management. Integral to the syllabus is the Business Management Toolkit (BMT), a collection of fifteen analytical frameworks—such as STEEPLE, SWOT, and Ansoff's Matrix—that students use to synthesize data and evaluate real-world business problems. These functional areas and tools are explored through the "conceptual lens" of Change, Creativity, Ethics, and Sustainability, ensuring that students can critically assess the impact of business activities on stakeholders and the wider world.

2. What's the key difference between doing your subject at HL and SL?

The key difference derives from the depth and extent of the content explored. While there is no separate HL-specific unit, there are chapters or chapter sections that pertain to HL only. These, aside from the extra content, include additional calculations that trigger further analysis and evaluation.

3. What are some common myths or assumptions about your subject?

Myth #1: It is very easy. Here, I would say: While it may seem easier than other IB courses, and it may be less voluminous (if we use the page number as a base for this assumption), it still requires class engagement, focus, and at-home work. It requires studying, consistency, and continuity if one wants to do well. It also depends on preferences. For example, students prone to natural sciences may find it challenging.

- Myth #2: It is the same as IB Economics (just easier). Well, No. The subjects are complementary but have different areas of study. There is a particular intersection of the Finance and Operations units from IB BM with the HL- only Market Power unit in IB Econ, but other than that, each subject takes a different avenue.

- Myth #3: Taking IB BM will teach you how to become a millionaire overnight. It sounds too good to be true, doesn't it? In reality, it takes a lot to become a millionaire, but taking IB BM helps you understand how companies work. It gives you the basics of business education, but just scratches the surface of business studies and the challenges of the internal and external business environment. Thus, any business education is favorable to the mission of becoming a millionaire, although IB BM itself is not a guarantee.

4. What tips can you give for students taking your subject in order to be successful in it?

IB BM is an IB subject. That assumes all the traits of the IB learner by default. In addition, besides the above-listed focus, consistency, etc., the key to success hides in taking handwritten notes, active listening, reading the (business but also any) news, and keeping the pace (because slow and steady wins the race).

5. Are there any prerequisites for your class?

While the IB doesn't set "hard" academic barriers, there are a few foundational "soft" prerequisites that will make your life in my classroom much easier.

- Functional Numeracy - You don't need to be a calculus wizard, but you must be comfortable with percentages, ratios, and basic algebra.

- Strong Command of English - This isn't a multiple-choice subject. Whether you are SL or HL, you will eventually face the 10-mark (SL) or 20-mark (HL) "Evaluation" questions. These require you to build a coherent, balanced argument and reach a justified conclusion. If you can write a solid, structured essay, you've already won half the battle.

- A "News Junkie" Mentality - The best IB Business Management students are those who actually know what's happening in the world. We use real-world case studies every single day; if you aren't curious about the world around you, the theory will feel very dry.

- Time Management - It requires you to be self-directed and organized. If you tend to leave things until the night before, the "Change" and "Sustainability" concepts we explore will feel like a much heavier lift than they actually are.

For those who read this far: Bring a calculator, a notebook, a pen, a newspaper, and a critical mind. We'll handle the rest together.

IB Economics - Mr Veeneth Mullappilly Parameswaran

1. What does the curriculum in your subject cover - a short summary?

IB Economics is about understanding how people, businesses, and governments make choices when resources are limited.

The course is divided into four main parts:

Introduction to Economics

- You learn the idea of scarcity. We cannot have everything, so we must make choices.
- Example: A government cannot spend unlimited money on healthcare, education, and defense. It has to decide what matters most.

Microeconomics

- This looks at individuals and businesses and how prices are decided.
- Real world examples:
 - When global oil prices increased during the Russia Ukraine war, petrol prices went up everywhere.

- Governments tax cigarettes or sugary drinks to reduce consumption.
- Clothing companies are often criticized for pollution caused by fast fashion.

Macroeconomics

- This looks at the whole economy of a country.
- Real world examples:
 - After COVID, many countries experienced high inflation because supply chains were disrupted.
 - Central banks increased interest rates to control rising prices.
 - Youth unemployment is still a major issue in parts of Europe.

The Global Economy

- This focuses on how countries are connected.
- Real world examples:
 - Trade tensions between the US and China affect prices around the world.
 - Countries depend on imports for fuel and food.
 - Some countries grow quickly while others struggle with development.

So throughout the course, you are always linking theory to what is happening in the world.

2. What is the key difference between doing your subject at HL and SL?

Both HL and SL study the same topics. The difference is in depth.

- HL goes further into the same ideas and expects more detailed answers.
 - Example: In microeconomics, HL students study firm behavior in more detail such as how companies like Amazon or Apple make pricing decisions
- HL also has an extra exam paper based on data and calculations.
 - Example: You may be given inflation data and asked to calculate and explain what it means
- HL also requires stronger evaluation.
 - Example:
 - If interest rates increase to control inflation, you must also discuss
 - Does this slow economic growth?
 - Does it affect jobs?
- In simple terms:
 - SL helps you understand and apply ideas
 - HL pushes you to think deeper and explain your judgement

3. What are some common myths or assumptions about your subject?

- “It is all maths”
 - Not true. The maths is basic. The main focus is understanding and explaining ideas clearly.
- “It is only about money or business”
 - Not true. Economics is about real issues you see in the news:
Rising cost of living
Climate change policies
Inequality between countries
Government decisions that affect daily life
- Example:
Why are food prices rising?
Why are governments reducing fuel prices or supporting energy costs?

4. What tips can you give for students taking your subject in order to be successful in it?

- Understand the idea instead of memorizing
 - Example: Do not just learn what inflation is. Understand why prices rise after events like COVID or war
- Use diagrams clearly
 - Example: Demand and supply diagrams help explain why house prices or rents increase
- Always connect to real world examples
- Example:
 - Inflation means higher grocery prices
 - Taxes mean higher petrol or cigarette prices
 - Subsidies make things like public transport or renewable energy cheaper
- Learn to evaluate by asking questions
 - Who benefits?
 - Who loses?
 - Is this short term or long term?
- Students who do well are the ones who can explain clearly and connect ideas to real

5. Are there any prerequisites for your class?

There are no prerequisites.

- What helps is: Being curious about what is happening in the world
 - Following basic news

- Asking questions like: Why is this happening? Who is affected?

HOLISTIC VS CREDENTIALS DRIVEN ADMISSIONS SYSTEMS

When evaluating applicants, some universities take a holistic approach, meaning they look at multiple factors (academic/personal/extracurricular), while other universities focus mostly on objective academic criteria, such as grades and admissions test results. US universities as well as liberal arts and science programs (for example, university colleges in the Netherlands) and some private universities (for example, IE University in Spain) globally practice holistic admissions, while other universities, mostly public ones (think Germany, Austria, Europe in general, Australia, Canada, the UK) are mostly about academics, GPA and results on admissions tests.



What's a holistic review in the context of university admissions?

Holistic review considers a broader range of factors in admissions decisions, assessing an applicant's unique experiences alongside traditional measures of academic readiness.

A “holistic” admissions process is simply one that tries to look at the whole applicant and not reduce them to a mere test score or GPA—all factors are considered in an effort to view young people as more than just the sum of their parts. That said, “holistic” does not mean that every component of one's application is treated equally—there are indeed factors in any holistic process that still carry more weight than others. For example, the fact that you play the ukulele and participated in an oceanography camp in Costa Rica is not going to make up for your 2.1 GPA and poor test scores.

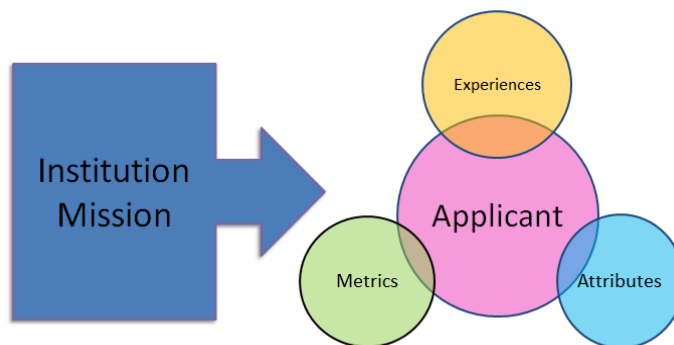
Factors in holistic admission

A holistic review usually involves reviewing all of the following:

- Rigor of academic coursework
- Any trends (up or down) over the course of your academic career

- **Test scores** including SAT/ACT, or AP/IB exams
- How your performance compared to others from your high school (i.e. class rank)
- What your counselor and teacher recommendations reveal
- Essays and short response answers
- **Extracurricular activities**
- Special talents and/or passions you possess
- Special circumstances like disabilities, illness, or family/financial situation

The Holistic Perspective



AMERICAN DENTAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

ADEA THE VOICE OF DENTAL EDUCATION

In essence, holistic review is a university admissions strategy that assesses an applicant’s unique experiences alongside traditional measures of academic achievement such as grades and test scores. It is designed to help universities consider a broad range of factors reflecting the applicant’s academic readiness, contribution to the incoming class, and potential for success both in school and later as a professional. Holistic review, when used in combination with a variety of other mission-based practices, constitutes a “holistic admission” process.

Example: <https://admission.stanford.edu/apply/selection/>

Credentials-driven admissions

- Colleges usually identify the high school transcript as the most important credential.
- They consider rigor of coursework, grade point average (GPA), and sometimes class rank.
- Institutions typically publish their minimum expectations for applicants' high school curriculum.
- In evaluating the transcript, most colleges highly regard honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses.

- The most important aspect is the qualifications/diploma a student earns and satisfying the academic entry requirements
- Example: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/medicine-mbbs>

<https://www.mcgill.ca/undergraduate-admissions/apply/requirements/international/ib>

Knowing your profile and strengths, as well as what universities are looking for in applicants will help you prepare better and choose the right university for you.

HOW TO WRITE A MOTIVATIONAL LETTER FOR A EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY



Motivational letters have become increasingly important in the admissions process for European universities, allowing applicants to demonstrate their interest in a particular subject and institution

“We are looking for students for whom learning is a way of life, and grades alone are not the only factor in decision-making,” says the head of admissions of a big and popular European university.

“We value self-reliance and independence,” comments another.

And it is through their CVs and motivational letters that university applicants can demonstrate these and many other sought-after qualities when applying to universities in continental Europe.

Applying to university in Europe: the role of the motivational letter

With some notable exceptions, motivational letters or essays have become increasingly important in the admissions process for most European universities. In a highly competitive educational landscape, motivational letters demonstrate an applicant's genuine interest in and direct engagement with the institution and the degree they are applying for.

From this perspective, motivational letters can be seen as much more university-specific and programme-focused than [Ucas personal statements](#). They also differ from [Common App essays for US universities](#), by being more practical, with less focus on storytelling and more on mutual benefits that a future student and a university can potentially bring to one another.

How to structure a motivational letter

A standard motivational letter is usually between one and one and a half pages long. It has a letter-like structure with the date, place and salutation, followed by an introductory paragraph stating who you are and what programme you are applying for.

The introduction then leads to the candidate's academic background and achievements. Compact but compelling, this must relate the candidate's experience to what the programme has to offer, and focus on those features that genuinely inspire their intellectual curiosity and are consistent with their professional goals. Delving into the syllabus and looking at lists of research seminars or the faculty's publications are excellent ways to find those entry points, which weave the candidate's experience into the programme's academic fabric.

But, as mentioned earlier, the motivational letter also needs to bring to the foreground the candidate's personal qualities and values through their extracurricular involvement and non-academic interests. Of the many clubs, electives and volunteering projects that the student may have been involved in, it would be advisable to focus on those that best fit the university profile. For public universities, in particular, admitting foreign students means a significant long-term investment, and an applicant's demonstrated commitment to the

institution and potential contribution to the host country may play a decisive role in decision-making.

Prompt-based essays

In the past couple of years, however, many admissions departments have moved away from the traditional structured motivational-letter format. Indeed, the rapid advance of AI has accelerated the tendency towards more spontaneous, less well-crafted writing.

Prompt-based essays in addition to or in lieu of motivational letters are also common for European universities. IE University in Spain, for example, asks potential students to write 650 words on topics ranging from “A challenge you have had to overcome” to “Personal qualities that would make you a valuable member of the IE community”.

Shorter prompts, such as “What question about yourself would you like to be asked?”, are meant to reveal the candidate’s unique traits and elicit a spontaneous response. Admissions at ESADE in Barcelona ask candidates to reflect on their academic progress and setbacks, whereas students applying to EHL Hospitality Business School in Switzerland are prompted to explain the most important criteria for their programme choice.

Imperfect human intelligence

With universities wary of AI-generated content, essay prompts and motivational questions are likely to become ever more personalised and programme-specific. One may assume that they will also become less formal in style to allow imperfect human intelligence to shine through.

Some universities, however, have adopted a different strategy to combat motivational letters produced by ChatGPT. Bocconi University, for example, has reduced its application process to pure numbers: 55 per cent of the assessment is done on the basis of SAT, ACT, or the Bocconi entrance test, while the remaining 45 per cent is calculated on the basis of the candidate’s GPA from third-to-last and second-to-last-year academic transcripts. CVs,

motivational letters and recommendation letters are no longer required.

Bocconi's shift to a fully numerical and anonymous admission process may be seen as more rigorous and merit-based. On the other hand, however, it has deprived candidates of the opportunity to demonstrate their character and originality, their worldview and value systems, their academic interests and future aspirations.

Motivational letter example - Utrecht University College

My motivation for applying to UCU's Liberal Arts and Sciences programme originates from my desire to pursue my education in an interdisciplinary manner. A defining part of my character has always been my curiosity, which has prompted my extensive involvement in a broad array of extracurricular activities. They showed me that my identity isn't shaped only by one straightforward field, but rather by a combination of activities that I care about and commit myself to.

The life sciences initially piqued my interest in middle school, as I was fortunate enough to have a dedicated chemistry teacher that supported me both in and out of the classroom. She dedicated many hours in quarantine to help us prepare for regional competitions, ensuring we wouldn't fall behind even under unpredictable circumstances. Her genuine love for her career incentivized me to outperform in the life sciences as they felt much more personal and meaningful to me. Such a mentor made me eager to understand and explore the opportunities around me, which ultimately led me to joining the debate club at the Youth Educational Forum. Through exploring conflicting perspectives and motions, I became increasingly aware of cultural, political, ethical, economic and environmental issues. In that sense, it made me more empathetic, educated and open minded about the world about me. Interacting with debaters at tournaments and summer courses internationally gave me the opportunity to make friends with people that have different experiences, yet the same critical thinking and ambitious mindset. These experiences have shown me the importance of learning from people with diverse perspectives making me well prepared to contribute and thrive in UCU's multicultural community.

From the academic disciplines that UCU offers, I'd like to center my studies around biology, chemistry, medical science, political science, law and literature. I see these subjects as deeply interconnected, the life sciences allow me to delve deeper into molecular interactions and processes while the social sciences provide a structured approach to the regulations and ethical perspectives that influence how scientific discoveries, for instance those in pharmacology, are applied. I started to become interested in law and politics through discussing global issues at international tournaments. A notable example are the policies and regulations of the EU Mercosur trade deal, which was the prepared motion for the European Debate Championships. Additionally, literature is also essential for perfecting my communication skills and allowing me

to express my thoughts and ideas in an impactful and coherent way. The skills acquired from literary analysis are crucial for data interpretation and logical reasoning, which in turn are important for scientific research and having a well rounded approach to problems.

UCU provides students the exceptional opportunity to explore a variety of fields while shaping them into independent and inquisitive thinkers. This thorough approach across disciplines combined with a community that inspires students to broaden their horizons is a defining feature of UCU.

Therefore, I would consider it a privilege to continue my personal and professional development at UCU's academically enriching and international environment.

THE ROLE OF IB PREDICTED GRADES IN UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS

What are IB predicted grades?

The predicted grade is **the teacher's prediction of the grade the candidate is expected to achieve in the subject, based on all the evidence of the candidate's work and the teacher's knowledge of IB standards.** Predicted grades may also be required for theory of knowledge and the extended essay.

A predicted grade is the grade of qualification an applicant's school or college believes they're likely to achieve in positive circumstances. (best fit)

These predicted grades are then used by universities and colleges, as part of the admissions process, to help them understand an applicant's potential.



How do teachers issue predicted grades?

There are many ways to do this and schools have different processes

Typically, predicted grades are based on:

- Internal assessments
- Final junior year grades
- Mock exams
- Evidence of continuous performance over time

Teachers use data and exercise their professional judgement. **For the Class of 2028, predicted grades will be based on final junior year grades.**

Principles for predicted grades (guidance from UCAS)

Predicted grades SHOULD be:

- **entered for all pending qualifications, unless the assessment method or structure of the qualification makes this inappropriate** – failure to do so can lead to complications or, in some cases, the rejection of an application
- **in the best interests of applicants** – fulfilment and success at college or university is the end goal
- **aspirational but achievable** – stretching predicted grades can be motivational for students
- **determined by professional judgement** – teachers' expertise and experience are vital in informing predictions
- **data-driven** – while each school will have its own process, teachers should look at past performance and/or internal examinations to inform their predictions
- **finalised by the point of submitting an application** – universities and colleges are only likely to consider predicted grades entered at the time of the application. While they will make an effort to accommodate genuine errors in data entry, this may not always be possible for highly selective courses

Predicted grades SHOULD NOT be:

- **affected by student, parental, guardian, or carer pressure** – there are [risks associated with inflating and suppressing predicted grades](#)
- **influenced by university or college entry requirements or behaviours** – predicted grades should be set in isolation of an applicant's university or college choice(s)
- **affected by student behaviour or background** – predicted grades should be made objectively and disregard external factors. Teachers need to be careful to reflect on any preconceptions to mitigate against unconscious bias, particularly for protected

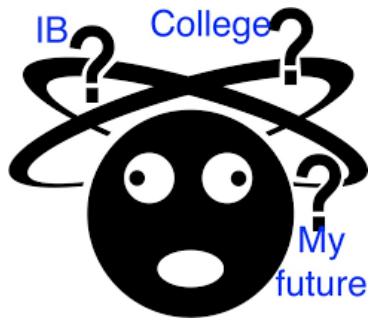
characteristics (including sex, race, religion/belief, disability, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment)

The dangers of over/underpredicting

[Video](#) - lost scholarship

[Video](#) - on probation

[Video](#) - the cumulative impact of over-predicting



Why are IB predicted grades important?

Around the world, universities and colleges have a range of different admissions procedures for new students. Some require letters of recommendation, others require final exam marks or transcripts. Many universities require predicted grades. - [Video](#)

Who needs to submit predicted grades?

- Applicants to highly selective and internationally focused US universities.
- Applicants to universities all over the world (UK, Australia, Canada, Europe, etc).
- Students who are applying to a university outside of their home country. (essentially, most of you, unless you apply to public universities which have their own admissions tests)



The US Higher Education Landscape

- Different US universities ascribe different value/weight (if any) to IB predicted grades
- They are part of a contextual and holistic review - **Quantitative measures are important relative to the context** - While the transcript and all scores are the cornerstone of the application, other factors influence the decision, such as family and school context
- Indicators of academic ability can be reflected in other parts of the application, such as essays and teacher recommendations
- Universities look for patterns/trends
- Prior to enrolment, US universities expect from admitted students to maintain the same quality of performance as the one demonstrated at the time of admission
- If there is a significant difference between the anticipated and actual IB grades, a student risks having their offer rescinded (a warning letter may be sent)
- US universities give advanced credit for IB grades (up to a full year)

Europe/UK/Canada

- University websites specify program entry requirements - the required points for the IB diploma in order to gain a conditional offer from the university, as well as any point requirements for specific subjects (usually higher level subjects). Offers are confirmed as unconditional once final results are known.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS



- Students should consider applying to a variety of undergraduate courses, including those whose entry requirements are slightly above their anticipated IB marks, as there might be some flexibility when it comes to final offers due to that year’s course cohort and the individual student’s profile. It is important to apply to courses whose entry requirements are lower than the student’s current standing as well, to ensure the best possible chance of receiving offers
- Having a balanced list of universities and consideration of academic fit is key!

Examples of entry requirements

<p>UK - The University of Edinburgh - Bsc in Biological Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IB: 37 points with 666 at HL - 32 points with 555 at HL. <p>Required subjects: IB: HL: Biology and Chemistry at 5. SL: Mathematics: Analysis and approaches, Mathematics: Applications and interpretation, or Physics at 6 and English at 5.</p>	<p>The Netherlands - Erasmus University Rotterdam - International Bachelor in Economics & Business Economics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English A HL (4), English A SL (5), English B HL (5). • Mathematics (new curriculum): Analysis & Approaches HL minimum grade 4, Analysis & Approaches SL minimum grade 5, or Applications & Interpretation HL minimum grade 5. • Minimum requirement of 30 points (TOK, EE and CAS excluded).
<p>Canada - McGill University</p> <p>Applicants will be considered for admission on their high school transcript and predicted IB results or, if already completed, on the final IB Diploma results. The Diploma with</p>	<p>Switzerland</p> <p>https://www.swissuniversities.ch/en/themen/zulassung/zulassung-universitaere-hochschulen/international-baccalaureatete</p>

grades of 5 or better on each Higher and Standard Level subject is the minimum expected for most programs. Many programs are more competitive and will require higher grades.	Zürich Recognised with a minimum of 32 out of 42 points (not counting bonus points) and including 6 subjects, one out of each of the 6 categories mentioned above. At least 3 of these subjects must be taken at Higher Level (one of which must be mathematics or another natural sciences subject)
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Having this in mind, when applying to university...

- Carefully review entry requirements at the level of the country/university/program
- Select program in line with academic fit
- Be realistic and select a range of programs (aspirational/on target/safety)