

County Sixth Form



Applying to Universities Abroad

American Universities

There are obviously a lot of Universities abroad that you can apply to and some in Europe teach courses in English. This guide is for those considering applying to American Universities as that tends to be where our students consider if they want to study abroad.

COST: Tuition fees can vary significantly from university to university. You will also need to take into account other costs such as getting there, health insurance etc. Scholarships that cover total expenses are rare. Some universities offer sports scholarships or arts scholarships. Some universities will offer scholarships specifically for UK and/or international students. The Fulbright Commission is able to provide information on specific colleges that offer this type of funding. The following websites may also prove useful www.scholarships.com www.globalgrant.com www.InternationalStudentLoan.com

REPUTATION: There is no centralised, authoritative ranking system of American universities. Unofficial rankings, such as US News and World Report and [Princeton Review](http://PrincetonReview.com), will give you a general idea of the academic reputation and relative prestige of a university but there are very few differences between the top 20. It is best to look at several ranking systems to get an idea as they all judge by different criteria.

APPLICATIONS: Many colleges use the Common Application but you will have to check each one separately as some require supplements or are not part of the Common Application scheme. The website www.commonapp.org contains comprehensive instructions of how to register. Essay titles change so it is important that you check the most recent information available.

Applications normally require the following information

- General application questions
- Name, Date of Birth, Family information
- A Transcript (This is a school completed form containing GCSE grades as well as predicted A Level grades)

- Extracurricular activities and interests
- Application and / or college supplementary essays
- Secondary School Report and school profile
- Two teacher references
- Mid Year School report (an update of your predicted grades based on your latest data)
- Financial Aid Form
- Optional Art / Music / Drama supplementary forms

Additional Application Requirements

As well as the application form and fee you will also need to submit the following:

- UK final examination results
- SAT/ ACT scores
- Application Fee
- You may also be asked to attend an interview (usually with an alumni)

The SAT /ACT You will probably be required to sit a standardised admissions exam to gain entrance to an American university. Most universities require you to take the SAT I 'Reasoning Test' or the ACT. You can register for these tests at www.collegeboard.com.

ESSAYS: In your applications you are normally required to write at least one essay. This is certainly the case if your university requires the Common Application form.

Unlike the UCAS personal statement, these do not ask you to explain your interests and achievements in a particular field. You really need to think about the topic you choose and the manner and style in which you respond.

Some questions that have been used in the past include

- Ben Franklin once said, "All mankind is divided into three classes: those that are immovable, those that are movable, and those that move." Which are you? (350 – 500 words)
- Virtually all of Stanford's undergraduates live on campus. Write a note to your future roommate that reveals something about you or that will help your roommate, and us, know you better. (250 words)
- Imagine looking through a window at any environment that is particularly significant to you. Reflect on the scene, paying close attention to the relation between what you are seeing and why it is meaningful to you. (250 words)

RECEIVING AN OFFER: Early decisions are received in December and regular decisions in late March / early April. Once you have made a decision, send in your acceptance letter. Remember to inform all schools that you have applied to of your decision so that you are not holding a place unnecessarily.

WAIT LIST / ROLLED: If you do not get accepted initially, you may be 'waitlisted' or at early decision stage you may be 'rolled' to regular decision. This happens when you meet all the admissions requirements but the College has already accepted a maximum number of students or wants to see how you compare when they look at the rest of the applicant pool. You will be offered a place if spaces become available.

REJECTION: If you are rejected, don't take it personally. Some Colleges take less than 10% of those who apply. We usually advise you to apply to UK Universities through UCAS alongside applying abroad.