



African Leadership Academy
Developing the next generation of African leaders

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African Leadership Academy

College Handbook

2019-2020

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Parents/Guardians to complete these forms and return to ALA in September

Appendix 1: CSS Financial Aid Profile Worksheet

Appendix 2: ISFAA (International Student Financial Aid Application)

Appendix 3: Certification of Finances (US and International Applicants)

(These forms are for 2019-2020. Students will transfer answers to the 2020-2021 forms when back at ALA).

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Introduction from the University Guidance Department

Applying to colleges and universities can be confusing and daunting, but our job is to help ease the confusion for you. We will work with you every step of the way. Ultimately, the selection of a college or university belongs to you and you should feel a sense of empowerment and freedom because of this. You can look forward to learning a great deal about yourself through this process.

Over the holiday break, you must spend some time researching universities and majors/courses you are interested in. When you return, your counselor will go over your list and use past statistics to see whether you would be a good applicant at that institution. As we become more aware of opportunities around the world, we encourage all ALA students to keep an open mind and to consider all options available to them.

Do not just focus on US schools, look at universities in other parts of the world as well. There are a growing number of non-US universities interested in students from Africa and you are strongly encouraged to look at universities in Asia, Europe and of course on our own continent!

The University Guidance Office firmly believes that students must drive the post-secondary education search process. However, it must be a collaborative effort between students, parents, counselors, and advisers, and we will work hard to keep them involved. We promise to be honest and to provide you with many tools and aids during your search as we play our role in developing the next generation of African leaders.

The University Guidance office at ALA recognizes the vast diversity in students and families and the obligation of the school to give individual guidance. **What is right for you is not necessarily right for someone else!** We aim to educate our students and their families about colleges and college admission standards, procedures and trends. We facilitate the application process by advocating on behalf of our students and providing the colleges with accurate and complete information on students' qualifications for admission. We maintain an unbiased regard for a broad spectrum of colleges as we evaluate their appropriateness for the individual in terms of size, location, type, affiliation, reputation, financial aid availability and selectivity. Ultimately, our goal is to work with students and families to ensure that ALAians end up with options that fit them well so that they will fulfil their promise as becoming future African leaders!

It is important to remember that in any college application process there are things that a student can control (grades, activities, essay, quality of application, etc.) and things that they can't control (trends in application numbers, financial aid, admission decisions, etc.). **While we all must do our best to be informed and present the best possible application, there are no guarantees and it is impossible to predict with certainty the outcome of any application effort.**

Because of ever changing trends and an increasing competitiveness, we use an open-minded application strategy. Each student will create a varied list of schools they are genuinely interested in. If considering highly selective universities, keep in mind that many accept less than 7% of the applicants, and applications can number in the tens of thousands. Therefore, instead of looking for guarantees, we will look for hard work from the student, open-minded and supportive families and commitment to developing the best possible application. With that combination we are confident that students will find a very successful path to follow upon graduating from ALA.



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Holiday Homework and Expectations

Take a little break and time to yourself. Think about what will be important to you in this process. Research your options!

In September, you must return with the following material. Failure to provide these will result in the inability to schedule any 1-on-1 meeting with your college counselor further delaying your application process.

- 1) **Official transcripts from your previous school.** We need to send your records/transcripts from your previous school to colleges and universities. They must be originals—photocopies will not be accepted. If they are not in English, *you must get them officially translated*. If you have any exam results (National Examinations) bring the original or a certified copy of it. **DO NOT OMIT ANY ACADEMIC RESULTS FROM YOUR PREVIOUS SCHOOL.**
 - 2) **Student Questionnaire.** You must complete the student questionnaire on *Maia Learning*. This will help your counselor get to know you better.
 - 3) **Financial Documents.** You must have copies of your family's financial documents. This can include pay slips, letter from parent's employer stating salary, bank statements and/or tax returns. These are incredibly important and universities will often ask for them.
 - 4) **College Essay/Personal Statement.** You should expect to go over several drafts on your own during the break and come back with a working draft to share with your college counselor. Use any of the Common Application essay questions to guide your choice.

(The following are specific to applying to the USA)
 - 5) **International Student Financial Aid Application (ISFAA)** (*Complete in US Dollars and be sure to use the conversion rate at the time and state it*). This financial aid document is requested by most schools.
 - 6) **International Certification of Finances (COF).** It will ask how much your family can contribute to your higher education. Please have this discussion with your parents before you return to school.
 - 7) **Completed CSS Profile Worksheet:** Many schools require the CSS Profile be completed online. You must work through this worksheet with your parents, as this worksheet will help you complete the online form. **This ` be completed in your home currency.**
-
- 8) **US Passport Holders ONLY: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).** <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>. Application opens in October. Visit the website to learn more. **You must also complete the CSS Worksheet.**

When school starts in September, much of the month will be spent settling your university plans, meeting with your counselor and updating your lists. It is crucial that the elements listed above are completed before school starts. This will give you a head start on the process and hopefully ensure that you are settled. We are excited to work with you in helping plan your education beyond ALA.

MATERIAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE: September 10, 2019.



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Advice from Alumni



Kopo Oromeng, Botswana
ALA 2012, Oberlin College 2018

Dear First Years,

Congratulations on your different successful journeys to ALA and best of luck as you continue to shape and define yourselves and your leadership skills. Your quest for the right college has begun, but fear not because you are in great hands. Everyone at ALA is rooting for you and there to support you, so please remember that as you embark on this search.

First off, there is no one “perfect college” for you. There are multiple suitable learning institutions out there for you, so stay open minded. Attend all college visits, ask the right questions and use the ALA alumni network to reach out to alumni currently studying at different universities. The college search process can get hard for everyone, but it can also be eye opening and will often force you to be more reflective than usual. Try to be present throughout the entire process and be kind to yourself, your peers and the ALA staff supporting you.



Keith Mundangepfupfu, Zimbabwe
ALA 2013, Wesleyan University 2019

I remember this time in my first year, when second years had gotten their college acceptances and were waiting for their college results and planning their gap years. I also remember calling my father and telling him that the college process had started for me, schools were coming on campus and talking to us and “the collecting of college brochures” season had started. He said to me, “I know you are going to apply to good schools like Yale!” This is what I want to write to you about. Finding the best college for you should not be about whether or not it is an Ivy League school, which unfortunately for most African parents is the case. The college process requires you to really use your self-awareness skills well. Think about the person you are; do you enjoy the company of a small class, or do you enjoy big classes? Are you an independent individual or are you someone who wants the supportive structures? Are you a person who enjoys sports or do you enjoy poetry and music bands? Do you want to go to a school where the professor will know your name or not? Do you already know the area of academia you want to enter, if so which school offers the best program in that field? This is what really matters. Also, reach out to fellow ALA alumni who are at the schools you are applying to, ask them issues such as financial aid, social integration and academic rigor. Further, as you move into the college process, I urge you to not stress or fret. It is not easy to do so but try, focus on the things you can control, your current courses, the story you choose to tell when you are applying and worry about your SATs only when the time comes. Do not worry about how “bad” your grades from your previous school are or how your last term Math mark is terrible. What matters is what you can do now.

Stressing during this process is only going to be more detrimental than it will be constructive. Reach out to your college advisors and also listen and trust what they tell you, at the end of the day they have your best interest in mind. Enjoy ALA!



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Role of the Student, Parent and University Guidance Counselor

The college counseling process can be a confusing and stressful process, so it is important that the student feels supported throughout. It is equally important that the student communicates clearly and effectively with their counselor throughout the process, to minimize uncertainty. In order for this to work, it is important that students, parents and university guidance counselor follow their roles.

The Student

The responsibilities of the student are to:

- Keep their counselor abreast of their individual college search
- Take part in an honest reflection of their goals, strengths, weaknesses and apply this information to their university decision making process
- Write a thoughtful and well-constructed essay that tells their story
- Get approval before submitting any application
- Follow the internal deadlines set by the University Guidance office
- Use their counselor as a resource
- Inform their counselor of information requested by colleges
- Inform college counselors of final decisions regarding admissions

The Parent

The responsibilities of the parents are to:

- Be supportive of the students in the search process and open to their thought process
- Have honest conversations about financial restrictions early in the process
- Assist in financial aid applications and provide students with pay slips, tax returns and/or bank statements
- Not focus on names (Ivy League Only) and be open to colleges previously unknown to you
- Communicate with the counselor if they have any concerns or questions
- Check in with your daughter/son about the progress on their applications
- Be an objective participant in the process

The Counselor

The University Guidance Counselor will:

- Assist the student in forming a well-balanced college list
- Provide guidance on testing options
- Review Common Application and essays
- Send all supporting documents to colleges
- Start dialogues with admissions officers and act as an advocate for students
- Assist in solving any problems that arise during the process
- Stay up to date with trends occurring in college admissions
- Provide information about the most appropriate course selections



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Entrance Exams and Costs

UK Admission Tests

Depending on your chosen university and course, you may need to take an admissions test as part of your application (some joint degree courses require you to take two tests). We ask that you check the relevant universities website for the most up to date requirements.

US Admission Tests:

Some universities require the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admission. The SAT measures a student's skills in critical reading, quantitative reasoning and an optional writing assessment. The SAT Subject tests measure what a student has learned in a particular subject. The Subject Tests are not required at almost all schools but may be recommended by a very select few.

Language Tests:

TOEFL/IELTS may be required by some universities around the world.

Duolingo is an online test that is gradually gaining acceptance at major universities that may be free.

Anticipated Fees

- \$85-\$95 for the SAT test
- \$105 - \$140 for the SAT Subject Tests
- \$220—Internet-based TOEFL/IELTS and \$40 for Duolingo
- £80—Testing for UK schools (BMAT, LNAT)
- *Some schools may ask for scores to be submitted by the testing agency for a fee of \$25 for the first score and \$12 for each score thereafter. You can send scores for free for up to 3 weeks after taking the SAT.*

Application Fees

ALA will always request fee waivers for student applications meaning the student is not responsible for paying anything. **If we are unable to obtain a fee waiver**, you will be responsible for the application fee. Some European, Asian and all UK universities do not give fee waivers.

Students applying to the US can request fee waivers from the university.

- £26—UCAS Application Fee
- \$28—Sending the CSS Financial Aid Profile (to the first school)
- \$16—Sending the CSS Financial Aid Profile (to all subsequent schools)

Students are responsible for all fees required for the application process to universities, including testing. This includes SAT and TOEFL registration, UCAS application fees, sending test scores, submitting financial aid documentation and visa related fees. Wherever possible, ALA will apply for fee waivers to offset the cost to the student and family. We encourage students to go over the costs with their parents to be aware of the expenses associated applying to university.

Visa Fees

Once a student is accepted to a university, they will need clearance from the Finance Office before we can help process appointments and payments.



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The Next Step: Gap Year, Internship, University or Other?

University should not be your only option following graduation from ALA. In fact, it may not be the right option for some students. There are many ways to achieve a successful career and life in Africa. Proceeding immediately to undergraduate education is just one path to follow. Rather than going with the crowd, we encourage students and families to carefully consider and discuss several next-step options, so that each student carries on in the direction that will best lead to happiness and success. An important question to ask, consider and answer honestly is, “Am I ready for college?” Some students come to ALA younger than most students, some feel they would benefit from more time to develop their academic strengths and fill in gaps in their education and some might want to expand their extracurricular portfolio and gain hands-on work experience before university. Each student develops and matures at their own pace, and should not be rushed to take steps for which they don’t feel prepared.

Academic Gap Year: Students who are younger than their peers, or would benefit from an additional year of academic preparation before university, should consider applying for an academic gap year. During this year students can polish their academic portfolio, augment any weaknesses, and explore themselves and their interests. Students who complete a gap year before college are often more competitive college applicants after the gap year. ALA has built relationships with a number of top boarding schools and the college counseling office will assist those students who want to apply for a gap year.

Extracurricular Gap Year: Students who have strong academic portfolios, but who have had less involvement in extracurricular activities may have a less competitive application. Some may feel that, before committing to a particular course of university study, they want to gain some hands-on work experience in that field. Others may want to take some time away from academics to explore a new country or community. Any of these students will want to explore a practical gap year. There are a number of programs that offer the chance to do an internship, community service project, or passion project in various parts of Africa.

Hear about gap years from our alumni...



“Taking a gap year was not part of my initial plan. After my second year at ALA, the next step for me was college. My plan was to gain admission into my dream school and get ready for my adult life. However, things do not always turn out the way we plan them. After talking to my college counselors, I came to the realization that automatically going to college was not necessarily the route that everyone should take. Personally, my leadership journey and erudition were far from being over. It was then that I learned about Miss Hall's School in the US, which is a college prep school that focuses on women leadership. During my time at Miss Hall's, I got the opportunity to network, have an internship at the City Hall, strengthen my academics and get adjusted to US culture. It was an opportunity for me to further reinforce what I learned at ALA. At the end of my experience, I felt ready for college. Once I arrived at college, my friends were telling me about struggling to find a balance, getting adjusted to the new system and experiencing culture shock. I, however, had already been there. I do not regret taking that step back and reflecting on my journey and what was in store for me.” **Mame Coumba Mbodji, Senegal. ALA 2010, University of Rochester 2017.**



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“Looking back, the sad thought of, ‘...everyone is going to college and I am failure’ was unnecessary. During my gap year, I have had experiences that I will remember for a lifetime. More than anything else, I wanted to find my own reasons I could believe in on why taking a gap year was going to be worth it for me. And I did. Three things; firstly, I wanted to find out what I was really passionate about. Secondly, reflect on my high school and ALA experiences and lastly, to connect with my family in South Africa. I travelled to England, Scotland, USA, Rwanda, Lesotho, and the UAE. My biggest highlights were attending Draper University, California, where I worked on my business idea for three months, interning for Endeavor Global in South Africa, visiting Cape Town, and

travelling to the UK. If there is anything I learned it was that there is so much to do in the world. If you are thinking of taking a gap year be at peace with it. As much as I disliked hearing people say it to me before, it’s true, there is so much you are going to learn. And taking a gap year before going to college is probably one of the best decisions you will ever make in your youth.” **Goodman Lepota, South Africa. ALA 2011, Marist College 2018.**



“My definition of a gap year: A time period (that may not necessarily be a year) you dedicate to discovering new skills, talents, travelling and just doing many more things (positive, of course) that the schedule of a structured, controlled environment (such as school) does not offer you the freedom of exploring. I spent 3 months working as an intern at a non-government organization based in Slovakia. I am currently in the process of getting my driving license and I have begun coding classes, which I hope will do me some good with choosing the right course in college later this year. I have also set out achieving some personal goals like reading and writing every day. Apart from doing a range of stuff at my own time and pace, I have also grown a lot older.

Not in a bad way though. I’d like to think I have grown in wisdom and discernment over the past few months, even though I’m still very much of a teenager. Most of the successes I have achieved during my gap year involved quite a bit of personal effort. Initially, it was challenging. Imagine landing in a foreign country (where the official language is far from similar to yours) one day and being expected to know your way to work alone by the next day. These experiences have made me street-wise and more reflective. Not to mention that I feel more confident about defining who I am as an individual.” **Elizabeth Tanimola Somolu, Ghana. ALA 2013, Smith College 2020.**



“Taking a Gap Year is probably the best decision I have ever taken in my whole life so far. After my ALA experience, I figured out that I needed to discover another sort of learning: learning through experience. That’s why I decided to defer my attendance to college and plan an exciting year full of adventures I ran a teacher training workshop in Tunisia from September to December—and I am currently interning at LEAF in Slovakia. I am personally very excited about because this year will help me develop my passion for education. I advise every person to take a different sort of break and know more about life before heading to college. You will meet the most exciting people from

all over the world and you will know so much about yourself, your country and the world. This will help you have a better understanding of your mission on earth.” **Mariem Bchir, Tunisia. ALA 2013, Davidson College 2020.**



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“I decided to take a gap year to work on my passion: technology. I worked as a software engineer in Ethiopia for a mobile service that provided 600,000 rural farmers with market prices for goods. I was then selected as an Ashoka Catapult Fellow, where I spent time at the University of Chicago working on my project for microfinance in East Africa. Finally, I attended Draper University where I received \$100,000 in seed funding and office space to work on my project that teaches real-life financial skills (investment, savings, and debt management to students). I learned an incredible amount about myself, my passions and the direction in which

I want to head.” **Yonathan Dejene Woldemariam, Ethiopia. ALA 2012, University of Pennsylvania 2019.**



“A gap year was the last thing I ever wanted, but one that I will forever be grateful for. Until I received my last rejection, I had refused to accept the fact that I was taking one. At one point I didn’t even have a rough idea of what my gap year was to be like. I started off by setting personal goals like reading a book a week, and journaling each day. For my first three months I interned with Carolina for Kibera, an NGO in Nairobi. After this I went to Uganda where I worked with COBURWAS to train young entrepreneurs from refugee camps across Uganda on EL. This was also an opportunity to have an experience of the Ugandan culture and meet ALA alumni. I am currently working with Sanergy Limited, a sanitation

start-up in Nairobi, under their fellows program. As my gap year draws to an end I think this is an experience that every single ALA student needs to have. It isn’t an easy experience but with a good support system and a lot of proactivity it can change your life.” **Victor Ouko, Kenya. ALA 2013, Davidson College 2020.**



“I must say that taking a gap year is the best thing I have ever done. Duly noted it is one of the hardest things I have done, but not a day goes by that I regret it. The decision for me to take a gap year was a collaborative effort of the six colleges that I applied to giving me fourteen unplanned months of time before I left for a college. For the first few months I worked at Nestle Equatorial Africa Region’s headquarters in Nairobi with people twice to thrice my age, exposing me both to the realities of the corporate world and the culture that comes along with it. This environment validated the impact that an institution like ALA had on the way I interacted with others and expressed my ideas. Towards the end of my internship,

Nestle even agreed to fund half my costs for attending Draper University, a Silicon Valley startup program, where I am currently situated.” **Bryann Ngugi, Kenya. ALA 2013, Jacobs University 2019.**



“After graduating from ALA, I spent a semester at Miss Porter’s School in Farmington, Connecticut. In those short (but incredibly fulfilling) four months, I took classes ranging from Chorus to International Human Rights and even Photography. In retrospect, I can honestly say that I am glad I didn’t go to college right after graduating and that I took the time to pursue my passions and interests in a low-pressure environment.” **Sarah Nzisabira, Burundi. ALA 2013, Brandeis University 2020.**



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Selecting a Course of Study

There are innumerable options available to students today as they explore courses of study. Gone are the days of 'you must be a doctor, lawyer, or engineer in order to be successful'. In today's global employment arena, well-rounded and diverse candidates are the most highly valued. Most universities will encourage broad thinking when it comes to picking a major. Universities are increasingly encouraging students to think carefully about why they want to study, what they want to study.

This type of thinking places emphasis on developing both depth and breadth in a student's curriculum. Depth is achieved through specializing in one or two key subject areas (majors, concentrations), while breadth is achieved by requiring the student to explore other important subject areas to a lesser degree. The result is a student who has a clearly defined expertise in an area of interest, but also a number of general, widely applicable skills that any college graduate should possess. These skills include good critical thinking skills, strong oral and written communication skills, and understanding of the basic concepts behind economics, intercultural exchange, management and leadership, appreciation of the arts, and at least one foreign language.

Here are a few important things to keep in mind when choosing a course of study:

1. You must reject the old assumptions that you must be a doctor or engineer to be successful. Humanities and social science majors are incredibly successful in their careers. Math and science aren't the only good tracks.
2. It is absolutely okay to enter college as undecided. You can be unsure of what you want to study, that is fine. Through exploration and self-reflection, you will be able to identify your strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, passions and interests.
3. Do not limit yourself to one track of study at ALA. Explore as broad a range as possible.
4. Follow your strengths. Do not try to force yourself into a math/science track if that is not where your strengths lie. If you are getting C's or D's in math or science, you need to reevaluate your path.
5. Follow your passions! Do not force yourself into a subject because your parents want you to follow a certain career or because you think this is where to make money. We will ask you why you want to study _____ and you should be able to come up with a solid response. It's no use being a doctor if you can't stand the sight of blood!
6. What you study in college does not equal what your career will be. In today's marketplace, engineers become entrepreneurs, bankers become teachers, lawyers become businessmen, and doctors become human rights activists and so on. Choosing a course of study that will equip you with a variety of widely applicable skills and introduce you to a wide range of career options is the way to go.



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Selecting a Country

ALA strongly encourages students to apply to a variety of universities around the world. We encourage students to look in their home country, on the African continent, in Asia, Europe and North America. **Do not assume that going abroad necessarily means that you are going to a better university or getting a better education.** Students must explore options elsewhere as there are great universities on every continent and increasing opportunities around the world.

Countries to Target:

- Canada-UBC/Toronto/McGill
- China
- France - Sciences Po
- Ghana - Ashesi, Academic City
- Hong Kong - UHK, Poly U, CUHK
- India - Ashoka, Flame
- Japan - Asia Pacific Uni, Waseda, ICU
- South Korea - Yonsei, SUNY
- Mauritius - ALU, Middlesex
- Middle East - NYU Abu Dhabi
- The Netherlands - Erasmus
- South Africa - UCT/WITS
- Spain - IE
- United Kingdom
- Italy – Bocconi, John Cabot

United States: College and University in the US denote the same thing with one major difference. A college is devoted completely to undergraduate programs. A university offers both undergraduate, graduate, Master's and Doctoral degrees. Universities are frequently committed to research as well as teaching. Other than that—they both offer 4-year undergraduate degrees. Most colleges and universities in the US require you to take core general requirements, exposing you to a variety of disciplines ensuring that students have a breadth of knowledge in addition to their chosen major. Admission factors the following:

1. SAT – At least a combined 1300 will help with placement in top tier universities.
2. Rigorous Academic Profile – taking upper level courses (A – Levels) is better than taking many AS – Level courses.
3. English Proficiency / Recommendation letter.
4. Leadership roles, awards and extra-curricular activities

US admission note: If applying for financial aid, a university may consider a family's ability to pay before giving an offer of admission i.e. Need-aware admissions

United Kingdom: The majority of degree programs in the UK take three years to complete and students focus solely on the one of two subjects that they have chosen to study. If you are absolutely certain of the course you want to study after high school, the UK might be a good choice for you. A major factor that will affect your decision to attend a school in the UK over the US will be the issue of cost. There are very few undergraduate scholarships available to international students and they may only cover a small part of your tuition. Some UK programs will require specific admission tests. Visit each school's website to see the minimum course requirements for the subject you want. Three A Levels at a minimum will be needed.



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Canada: Canada is divided into several provinces, some of which are French speaking. In Canada there is a big difference between colleges and universities. Institutions granting Bachelor's degrees are universities, while colleges focus on vocational and technical training. A school (School of Engineering, Arts & Sciences, etc.) is often called a Faculty. Canadian schools look at a combination of A-Level Examinations and ALA grades. They will consider the following:

1. **CIE** – 3 A Levels in different subjects in different disciplines.
Engineering: Physics, Math and Chemistry (chemistry is encouraged but not compulsory)
2. International students CANNOT study Medicine or Nursing in Canada
3. 4 Years of English Preferable, or letter from English teacher and counsellor on English Proficiency

South Africa: Several options are available in South Africa that offer Bachelors, Honours, Masters, and Doctorate degrees. South African universities are internationally recognized for their research in areas such as astronomy, business and public policy, as well as the calibre of student produced. Students are admitted on a competitive basis—either with a Matric certificate, their previous school qualifications or a combination of A-Level and AS-Level Examinations in addition to the National Benchmark Test (NBT).

CIE: 4-5 Different subjects are required in the combinations below: (Note that grades also matter)

3 A Levels plus 2 AS - 2 A Level plus 3 AS

4 AS plus 1 IGCSE - 2 A Level plus 3 IGCSE

Around Africa: Almost every country in Africa offers a slightly different education program. It is important to learn about the accredited universities in your home country. **In some cases, studying in your home country may be your best option, especially if you are considering studying medicine or law.** Selection criteria at most universities in Africa will be based solely on academic achievement.

Other countries: If you are interested in learning about universities in other parts of the world, please visit the university guidance office and we will work to help you in your contact with these universities. These include: Asia Pacific University in Japan, IE University in Spain, Yale-NUS in Singapore, Jacobs University in Germany, NYU Abu Dhabi, NYU Shanghai, EARTH in Costa Rica, St. Georges in Grenada, Yonsei in Underwood, and others.

EUROPE

- Main targets – UK, Spain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Russia, Italy
- 3 A – Levels Strongly Recommended
- National Secondary Leaving Certificate for most institutions
- A – Level Math is encouraged regardless of discipline

MIDDLE EAST

- SAT (1400 to be competitive for NYU Abu Dhabi and Qatar Education City)
- Emphasis on Sciences – American University of Beirut (STEM Scholarship)
- 3 A Levels Preferred



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JAPAN:

- 3 A – Levels Preferred
- National Secondary Leaving Examinations Certificate Preferred
- SAT Scores recommended but not required

Note: Japanese universities are very strict with regards to admissions requirements. Ensure that you research requirements for each university and program.

INDIA:

- 3 – A Levels
- Liberal Arts Model
- SAT Scores Preferred (1250 minimum)
- Engineering Admissions – very competitive, A – A* in Math preferred
- Emphasis on writing skills for applications

ALA ALUMNI EXPERIENCES AROUND THE WORLD

“Sometimes the system needs to be changed from within and that is why I decided to study at a South African University. At first, I was skeptical when my counselor advised me to consider universities on the continent, as they offered good and more affordable education. The voice inside my head said, “They are just trying to reduce the traffic to American universities. Chebet, you are competitive enough and you will make it to these world class institutions in America or the United Kingdom.” It took my individual African Renaissance, courtesy of African Studies classes, to change this mindset. I am currently studying at University of Witwatersrand and even though I am not in a position to compare, I dare say that I am well on my way to receiving a world-class and African-class education. The lecturers are great and avail themselves through office hours and we have tutors to review the lectures in smaller groups. I am very happy here and determined to get that degree in Construction Studies, which is for me another brick to the build of the great cathedral that is a peaceful and prosperous Africa.” **Shanice Chebet Kuntai, Kenya. ALA 2013, University of Witwatersrand 2019.**

“At NYU Abu Dhabi, I have the privilege to benefit from a world-class education that is designed to meet my goals and values. I am learning in an inspiring environment and I am designing my academic life based on my passions, fortunately, the university offers an extremely supportive and flexible environment in order for students to take ownership of their achievements. If you are a person with a vision and a lot of commitment for a particular cause, if you like starting your own projects and being in a cosmopolitan environment, then NYUAD is the right place for you. This university will be the best commitment you can make for four years of your life if you want to develop yourself through a practical and original education that is made just for you to become a better citizen of the world.” **Imen Haddad, Tunisia. ALA 2010, NYU Abu Dhabi 2016.**

“I chose to go to the UK because I was familiar with the environment and the British curriculum. I really enjoy studying in the UK because courses in the UK are pretty straightforward, structured and detailed. Also, there are a variety of opportunities (internships, societies & clubs). There is also a nice mix of people from different backgrounds and that adds to the whole entire university experience. I would definitely recommend studying in the UK if you identify with any of the things mentioned earlier in the paragraph.” **Isaac Chukwumah, Nigeria. ALA 2013, University of Exeter 2018.**



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“Sciences Po has a vast network, incredible diversity and amazing professors—all while being in an amazing city. The city combines beauty, business activity and diversity. Language might be seen as a barrier but I was shocked to find out that most people are English-speakers, especially at Sciences Po. Simply living in Paris, I was able to travel around visit places including Brussels during the ALA gathering. It is also for me an opportunity to meet Senegalese authorities who often do business in France. One aspect that I was worried about was a lack of support for ALA graduates living outside of the US. However, Ms Ansi is doing a great job with regard to that; a European chapter is in the making. I believe studying in Europe will be a wonderful experience and I would recommend ALA students to look into it.” **Moustapha Fall, Senegal. ALA 2011, Sciences Po, France 2018.**

“Yale-NUS embodies global education as I always imagined it. I was interested in being part of a place where East and West are equally explored in courses, where diversity is treasured (40% international students) and where hands-on learning is emphasized. Also, I was excited to be in a small enough college to offer great support systems and a close-knit community (with the residential college system), yet big enough to have incredible resources and connections to our partners Yale and NUS. My experience so far has been nothing short of amazing. I intend to major in Economics and Global Affairs, and Yale-NUS offered me the opportunity to take courses and conduct research with world-renowned academics, to interact with students and faculty from all around the world, and to get support to explore my interests first-hand through travelling to Japan and studying Religion and Politics or interning in India with a global entrepreneurship organization this coming summer” **Fatima Daif, Morocco. ALA 2012, Yale-NUS, Singapore, 2018**

“I chose to study in Australia because I wanted the chance to experience a place I'd never been before and explore a new part of the world. I'm currently a second year student at UNSW studying screen and sound production. Academically, I feel challenged and because of the range of free electives and general education classes. I always get a chance to learn something outside of my field interest. So far I've had a great time and I'm looking forward to greater times ahead.” **Eric Umeofia, Nigeria. ALA 2012, University of New South Wales 2018.**

“Coming here has been amazing for me because Ashesi presents us with a liberal arts curriculum that is embellished with the African culture. So I get to understand global phenomenon with a local touch, which is important if you want to build a career in Africa. I will definitely advise ALA students to first look it up before crossing off Ashesi and other African schools completely off their list. You might be surprised!”— **Felix Tetteh, ALA 2008, Ashesi University 2014.**

Think Global!



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Researching Options

Starting the research process can be daunting, but if you use all the resources available to you, it will be a stress-free process. Maia Learning is going to be an important resource for you during your search. It will give you statistics about ALA students admitted and denied from certain universities, giving you their SAT scores and GPA. Looking at as many websites as you can will give you a good idea of the programs that are offered at a specific school. ALA students are at a disadvantage, as they don't get to visit the campus before applying—but the more research you do, the more informed your decision will be. A great resource is www.campustours.com, a website that has virtual tours, photos, and campus maps of over 1,000 colleges and universities.

Colleges and universities sort themselves out into categories that a student can use to narrow a potential list. The following are some of the most important general categories to consider when analysing what the student might find appealing:

Major/Courses: Does this university have what you want to study? Go directly to the university website and check out the degrees offered followed by the major or course of study.

Size. Large universities can offer more variety in terms of programs, facilities, and specific professional training, but might feel impersonal and might use teaching assistants or graduate students to teach introductory survey classes. Liberal arts colleges tend to be more personalized in dealing with students and might stress individual contact with professors, but could offer a more generalized education. Do you see yourself at a school with 10,000 students or a more intimate educational experience with 1,000 students?

Location. Colleges or universities that are in or near urban centers may offer a wide range of off-campus opportunities—museums, night life, concerts, sporting events, and the like—but at the cost of diminishing the “community” feeling that a campus in a more isolated rural setting might have. Often, given academic workloads in college, a student might not have time to take full advantage of the on-campus extracurricular or social events that even a small campus will offer. Conversely, despite a heavy schedule, a student might feel more “connected” to explore a major city if there are ready opportunities to do this.

Cost. Most private colleges and universities have tuition, room and board charges in excess of \$60,000 per year. Add the costs of travel, books, and incidentals to this figure, and you will find that a year of college at the high end can approach \$80,000. **Your college options may be affected by affordability.**

Other questions to ask yourself as you begin your research

1. How is diversity represented and embraced on campus?
2. What are the class sizes?
3. Do the courses sound interesting enough to keep you challenged for four years?
4. What are the academic requirements for undergraduates? Is there a core curriculum?
5. Does the university offer need based financial aid or merit scholarships?
6. What support structures are provided for international students?
7. Will I be successful in such a university environment?
- 8.

Using the ALA Network: A good source of current information about a specific college or university is the student who is actively enrolled there. Students should feel free to connect with these ALA acquaintances for their opinions about and perspectives on the colleges where they are enrolled.



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Applying to the US

The Components of a University Application

1. A completed application form with essay/personal statement
2. Application Fee
3. High School Transcript: Your previous school, ALA and EL report included
4. School Report and Counselor Recommendation
5. Teacher Recommendations
6. Test Scores
7. Predicted CIE grades (Required at highly selective universities and all UK schools)

Note about Engineering, Medicine, and Law

Engineering: This highly competitive major/course of study will require exceptionally strong grades in math and sciences depending on the field of interest. Students are able to enter straight into engineering schools at most universities around the world as long as they meet their stringent admission requirements. It is no secret that is tougher to get into a college of engineering than the college of arts and sciences at most major universities. Students can pursue engineering as an undergraduate at most liberal arts colleges that will offer a 3-2 program. This dual degree program yields a B.A. at the college they enrol in followed by a two year specialized engineering program at a larger university resulting in a B.S. degree from them.

Medicine: We encourage any student who feels confident in this choice of subject that their first and possibly only option is to explore this from their home country where they would be eligible to apply using home qualifications. Some students may want to consider UK universities but the cost and lack of financial aid for merit students does not make this an easy option. South African universities hold very few spots open for foreign students who would have to show that there is no medical school program in their home country. According to Yale University, "It is extremely difficult for international applicants to gain admission to U.S. medical schools as there are very few scholarships and they will not qualify for government sponsored loans. International applicants who are considering a career as a medical doctor and hope to receive their education at an American medical school should think carefully before applying to an undergraduate program in the United States." We are currently researching other options to study medicine in China, Japan, Grenada and the Ukraine, please consult your counselor if you may be interested in exploring these avenues.

Law: It is important to answer the question of where you want to practice first before undertaking a search on where to study law. We encourage students to research the requirements to practice in their home country first before deciding to pursue a degree abroad. Do you have a family friend involved in law? Take some time to interview them to learn the process. (It is not possible to study law as an undergraduate student in the US though you can be classified as pre-law while you major in a particular subject.)

Applying to UK universities

If you plan on applying to a UK university, you are required to indicate your course of study at the time you apply. Unlike the US, where students can apply without having decided their major, there is no such thing as undecided in the UK. If you like the idea of studying in the UK, you must be prepared to launch into a quite specific course of study and to stay with it for the three years until you complete your degree. The word 'course' is used to describe your subject of study. If you change your mind about your course of study, you have to reapply to a different course, and unless it is a closely related field, you would have to begin your degree over from the beginning. For this reason, students who are uncertain of their course of study are not a good match for the UK.



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Application Process: UCAS is the UK version of the Common Application. It is a common application for all universities around the UK. Applicants fill out a single online form that asks for demographic information, testing information (A-Levels) a list of current year courses and a one page personal statement. A reference is added and once the form is submitted, UCAS forwards the application to the universities that the student indicated. UCAS limits your applications to a maximum of 5 courses. This can be made up of five different universities or multiple different courses at the same university. *UK schools have a deadline of January 15th.* ALA is registered with UCAS and our school code is S45905.

Unistats, found at <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/> is also a helpful website that helps you compare courses across multiple universities. You will find data about the number of A-Level points achieved by the average admitted student, which is a rough way of determining selectivity. But remember that the best source of information is the actually university's website!

Oxford/Cambridge: 'Oxbridge' has their own unique supplements for applicants. You must choose between Oxford and Cambridge—you cannot apply to both. **Note: The Oxbridge application deadline is October 15th.**

Personal statement: The personal statement is very different from a personal essay that you submit to US colleges. Your personal statement is your chance to make a convincing case for your admissions to study a particular subject. The personal statement can be no longer than 47 lines or 4000 character and should focus on why you have chosen to study the course you have listed and what interests you about that subject. Details about what you have studied, read or experienced in relation to your course will help the admissions officers assess your suitability for admissions. This is not a place to talk about your extracurricular, but rather to discuss how any particular activity might have helped to prepare you to study your subject.

Reference: The UCAS reference is different than a recommendation letter to a US university. The reference should specifically concentrate on your suitability for the proposed course of study and will include a predicted A-Level exam grade as reported by your teacher. A teacher in your area of intended study will write your UCAS reference.

Financial Aid: There is little to no financial aid offered to international students applying to the UK. You are encouraged to connect with British Council in your home country to research scholarship opportunities available for your country. Individual universities may have specific scholarships on their websites. Students from Commonwealth countries may benefit from researching scholarships through www.chevening.org



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Financial Aid Overview

Financial aid is money contributed from outside sources to pay for college. It comes in different forms—need-based and merit-based. Need-based is offered to a student that has demonstrated financial necessity. Merit-based aid is offered regardless of a family's need and is based on academic success. Financial aid packages are usually comprised of three parts: grant, loan, and work-study. A grant (scholarship) is free money and does not have to be paid back. Some students might get a small loan in their financial aid package, which they will have to pay back following graduation. The third part, work-study, will be an offer of a campus job (working anywhere between 8-20 hours a week), which will provide the student with spending money.

When researching colleges, pay attention to the **international student's financial aid** tab on their website. There are many great schools that cannot fund international students fully or do not provide aid for international students. Your counselor will know which schools can fund fully and which can't, so discuss that with them in your meetings.

US Financial Aid Application Process

We are highlighting the US financial aid process because of the paperwork required in the process.

The financial aid application process is most effective when full information is disclosed in a clear, accurate, and timely manner. In order for universities to evaluate a student's financial need, they need applications and financial documentation. Students **need** to return to school in September with a recent bank statement (stamped and signed by a bank official) and a current pay slip or tax statement from your parents (if applicable).

Some schools have their own international financial aid applications (Harvard, Bucknell) so be sure to check the website before starting anything.

CSS Profile: The CSS Profile is a financial aid application run by the College Board. This is a fairly long form (it should take about an hour to complete) and asks questions about your family's financial history. This form can be completed in your **home currency or US\$** (*Be sure to state the exchange rate you used in the explanation of special circumstances*). You will need to consult with your family on many of these questions, so it is best to start and preferably complete a paper copy of the CSS profile during the before you return for Year Two. If you are applying to a school that requires the CSS, email the financial aid office asking for a fee waiver code. ALA cannot cover the additional fees, so you will be billed if a university you are applying for requires the CSS and does not give you a waiver code.

ISFAA: The International Student Financial Aid Application is a four-page financial aid application that is required by some schools. It asks questions about yearly expenses of your family and how much your family can contribute per year at university. This form is to be completed in **US Dollars**. This is a paper form that you scan and email to universities with a bank statement, so it is free of charge.

Certificate of Finances: The Certificate of Finances is a one-page document asking how much your family can contribute per year at university. This can be scanned and emailed to colleges.

IDOC: The Institutional Documentation Service is a form that some (not many) schools ask for. This requires you to send a tax return for your family to schools. If your country doesn't issue tax returns, you can fill out a non-filer tax form stating your parent's income.



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What Do Universities Look For?

Every year, universities receive applications from many more qualified applicants than they can accept. Just because you have the grades and scores for a college, does not mean that you will be accepted. What makes you special? What makes you stand out in a pool of thousands and thousands of top students? In 2018, Brown University received close to 35,000 applications, but only 7% of those received acceptance letters. College admission is competitive, and you need to know what will make you stand out in a pool of thousands of students from around the world.

Your profile is not just your grades and SAT scores; it also involves your character, growth, development, passions and contribution to your community. Here are some questions that admissions offers ask when they are reading your applications:

- Have you reached your maximum academic and personal potential?
- Have you been stretching yourself?
- Do you have initiative? Are you a self-starter? What motivates you?
- Where will you be in twenty-five years? Will you contribute something to those around you?
- What have you learned from your interests? What have you done with your interests? How have you achieved results? With what success or failure? What have you learned as a result?
- What is the quality of your extracurricular activities? Do you appear to have a genuine commitment or a leadership role?
- What about your maturity, character, leadership, self-confidence, warmth of personality, sense of humour, concern for others and grace under pressure?
- Will you contribute something to the university that you join? Will you benefit from your experience at that university?

As you start to consider which universities you want to apply to, take into account that though there are differences throughout, much of the material requested will be the same. Please remember that there is no mathematical formula to make the perfect application. Do not buy into someone's fool proof strategy on getting into college. What worked for the applicants to Cornell last year will most likely not work this year and vice versa. Just because your uncle went to Harvard does not mean that it is the right university for you. A person with thoughts, ideas, goals and real world experience will read your application – not a machine that looks at numbers only!

While we value objective criteria, we apply a more expansive view of excellence. Test scores and grades offer some indication of students' academic promise and achievement. But we also scrutinize applications for extracurricular distinction and personal qualities.

Students' intellectual imagination, strength of character, and their ability to exercise good judgment — these are critical factors in the admissions process, and they are revealed not by test scores but by students' activities outside the classroom, the testimony of teachers and guidance counselors, and by alumni/ae and staff interview reports.

With these aspects — academic excellence, extracurricular distinction, and personal qualities — in mind, we read with care all the components of each application.

William Fitzsimmons, Dean of Admissions, Harvard College



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The College Essay

The essay is the most time-consuming part of your application. Talking about yourself isn't always easy; it takes time to write about yourself in a thoughtful and meaningful way. Before you sit down to write, you first need to understand the purpose of the college essay.

1. To give the admissions officers a sense of who you are, beyond your grades, course choices, and SAT scores.
2. To highlight issues that are glossed over or only partially referred to elsewhere in your application.
3. To show how well you write, i.e., the technical correctness and fluency of your writing style.
4. Think of it this way: the college essay is really the only personal part of your application, where your own voice comes through. It makes you "come alive" to the person reading it. As one college admission officer said, "Your essays provide you with an opportunity to speak to us."

2019-2020 Common Application Essay Prompts (Select One)

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

Reflections on the Essay: "When you write your essay, consider simply telling a story. I can think of few college application essay topics, including the weightiest, that don't provide the student with an opportunity to tell a story; I'm convinced that storytelling comes more naturally to most of us, and also more accurately expresses our nature, than does essay writing. Ask me to tell a story; no problem. Ask me to write an essay and I break out in a sweat. But I long ago figured out that some of the best essays I've ever read are simply stories well told."

Fred Hargadon, Retired Dean of Admission, Princeton University

During the 2018-2019 application year, the most popular topic of choice was: "Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design." (24.1%). The next most popular topics were: "Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others." (23.7%), followed by "The lessons we *take from* obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success.



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Tips for essay writing:

- 1) The subject of the essay ultimately must be about **you**. What would you want an admissions reader to know about yourself?
- 2) Stay away from cliché topics (failing in a class, your goal to save Africa, a trip that showed you cultural awareness, helping poor people, etc.). Make it personal.
- 3) Admissions readers want to get to know you as a person—be genuine and share your story.
- 4) Show, don't tell!
- 5) It is okay to show some style in your writing, but avoid getting overly stylized or using too much fancy jargon that you would not normally use in your everyday life. This essay is not the same as an essay for English class where you might be trying to stretch your range of expression — keep your prose simple and natural.
- 6) Be likeable, not impressive. Don't use your essay to brag about your accomplishments. It is advisable to come off as humble, approachable and genuine.
- 7) Choose a story to tell. As you try to select a topic on which to write, don't begin by asking yourself, 'what message do I want to send to colleges?' Instead, choose a story that has meaning to you and that you can tell with ease and thoughtfulness. Any story that you remember vividly has meaning behind it, and as you tell the story, its meaning will likely unfold in your mind.
- 8) Let the reader into your mind. As you write your essay, feel free to mix in your thoughts surrounding the event and the people you are describing.
- 9) The best essays are often about the 'small stuff'. This often comes off as quite genuine, conversely writing about bigger, more grandiose topics can easily fall into the trap of sounding disingenuous, forced or trite. Likewise, think small as you determine the meaning of your essay and the messages it conveys. Smaller lessons or conclusions usually have more credibility and resonate more in the minds of an admissions officer.
- 10) Remember that the college essay is a short piece and that admission officers will be reading quickly. Don't overburden the essay with cumbersome details that distract the reader from the primary plot and the meaning behind it. With each detail, ask if that detail is necessary for the reader to understand the story, or whether it can be eliminated for the sake of brevity.

Useful resources: The admissions officers from Johns Hopkins University provides full essays from accepted students that were particularly strong. Reading these can be a good starting point and can give you some inspiration as you start the essay. <http://apply.jhu.edu/apply/essays/>.

Short Answer Questions

Many schools have supplemental essays (supplements) that you have to write just for that institution. These questions range from 'Why XYZ University' to 'Write a sample letter to your future roommate' and 'Find the value of x'. There is a wide array of supplemental essay topics, and they should be edited and written with the same care and attention that you did for your main college essay. Many schools ask why you are interested in that particular school, and colleges can tell when you use a generic answer. Take time to research that school (what makes it special/different?) and write a well-written response. Supplements are your chance to write more specifically about the university and demonstrate your interest and fit.



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Glossary of College Terms

CEEB: College Entrance Examination Board code. ALA's CEEB code is 640200.

College Board: The US based non-profit that runs the SAT Examinations. In addition to that, the College Board offers the CSS/Financial Aid Profile. College Board is also a tool for college search.

Common Application: A standard application form accepted by approximately 400 colleges in lieu of their own form. (Usually referred to as Common App)

CSS Profile: College Sponsorship Service. A financial aid application run by the College Board.

Deferral: If you apply Early Decision/Early Action to a school, your admission decision may be deferred, meaning they will look at your application again with their Regular Decision pool.

Early Decision: An early application deadline (usually November 1 or November 15) whereby if you are accepted you are bound to attend. You may only apply to one school ED, and it should be your first choice school. You will receive a decision by December 15th.

Early Action (EA): An early application deadline (usually November 1 or November 15) that is not binding. You can apply to multiple Early Action schools.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC): The amount of money a family is expected to contribute towards a student's college expenses. The EFC is calculated using the information provided on the financial aid application, and takes into consideration income, assets, family size, and number of family members in college. Typically, the lower the EFC, the more financial aid a student will receive.

Gapping: A term used to describe a financial aid package that does not meet demonstrated need. The packages leave a 'gap' between a family's ability to pay and the offered financial aid.

Ivy League: The group includes 8 colleges, Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania and Yale University. These highly selective schools all have a reputation for high scholastic achievement, selectivity in admissions and social prestige. Any students applying to the Ivy League should consider these Reach Schools.

Liberal Arts: A course of study that includes humanities, social science, natural science, mathematics, foreign language and fine arts. Liberal Arts encourages students to explore and learn about subjects outside their area of specialization or major.

Match School: A college where your academic credentials fall well within (or even exceed) the school's range for the average freshman. There are no guarantees, but it's not unreasonable to be accepted to several of your match schools, and it is highly recommended to apply to several.

Major: Area of concentration in a particular field of study. Usually, students consolidate their majors during their third and fourth years at college.

NACAC: National Association for College Admissions Counseling. The common application fee waiver that you will have to sign will be a NACAC fee waiver.



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Maia Learning: The website that you will be using to manage your lists. Once you put your preliminary list on Maia Learning, your counselor will be able to make changes and suggest new schools. Your college counselors use Maia Learning to submit all of your documentation.

Need-Blind Admissions: A policy in which colleges make admissions decisions without taking into account an applicant's ability to pay for college. Need-Blind schools will meet 100% of your demonstrated need.

Oxbridge: Common name for University of Oxford/University of Cambridge.

Reach School: A college where your academic credentials fall below the school's range for the average freshman. Reach schools are long-shots, but they should still be possible. Students should apply to a few reach schools that they like, but be realistic about their chances of getting in. You will need to make sure you have a really strong application to stand a chance in getting into a Reach School.

Regular Decision (RD): A non-binding deadline of January 1 or January 15 for most US schools. You can apply to multiple school on this deadline, ALA allows you to apply to up to 7 RD schools.

Rolling Admissions: An admissions policy with a more flexible deadline than ED/RD deadlines. Once your application is complete, they will review your application and notify you of your decision within 6 weeks.

Safety Schools: A college where your academic credentials fall above the school's range for the average freshman. You can be reasonably certain that you will be admitted to your safety schools, so even if they aren't necessarily your first choice, it is good to apply to a few as a back-up. However, do make sure that these are schools that you can still see yourself attending.

Single Choice Early Action: Also known as Restrictive Early Action (REA), it is an early decision plan that is not binding. Students may not apply ED/REA anywhere else. This is offered by Yale and Stanford.

Secondary School Report: A report completed by your counselor which is sent to universities with your transcripts, test scores and recommendations.

Super Scoring: When colleges take your highest section from each sitting of the SAT Reasoning test.

Waitlist: Rather than deny a student admission from the start, a college may put him or her on a waitlist. If the college does not fill all spaces from its first round of acceptances, it will offer admission to some of the students on the waitlist. Only applies to RD application decisions.

Yield: The percentage of accepted students in a college who enrol in the same college. If a yield is high, the competition is usually greater. (also, the less likely that any students will get off the waitlist)