

## Common Application Guide for Students

### What is the Common Application?

The Common Application is **used by over 500 American universities**. It is somewhat akin to UCAS, in that you will save time by being able to complete information and essays that you can submit to multiple universities. However, bear in mind that approximately **two-thirds of universities ask for supplemental information and/or essays**.

You can access the [Common Application Online](https://www.commonapp.org/) (https://www.commonapp.org/), as well as a [list of universities](https://www.commonapp.org/Login#!s/MemberLookup) (https://www.commonapp.org/Login#!s/MemberLookup) requiring the Common Application and their deadlines. You may also find out the universities requiring [supplements](#) and what they are (https://www.commonapp.org/Login#!PublicPages/ApplicationRequirements).

### 1. Registration

The first step to completing the Common Application is registering with the [Common Application website](http://www.commonapp.org) ([www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)).

The screenshot shows the Common Application website's registration page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the following links: About Us, Member Colleges, Media Inquiries, and Application Resources. Below the navigation bar, there are two main sections: 'MISSION' and 'SIGN IN'. The 'MISSION' section contains text describing the organization's purpose. The 'SIGN IN' section includes a 'Sign In' button, a 'Forgot your Password?' link, and a 'CREATE AN ACCOUNT' button highlighted with a red box. A 'HELP CENTER' button is also visible. Below the 'SIGN IN' section, there is a 'SEARCH FOR COLLEGES' section with a search bar and a 'Search' button.

When registering, use a professional email address (example: [hotguy85@hotmail.com](mailto:hotguy85@hotmail.com) would **not** be appropriate. [JWFulbright@hotmail.com](mailto:JWFulbright@hotmail.com) would be appropriate) as universities will be able to see it. When typing your phone number, enter the country code (044 for the UK) at the beginning and don't use any dashes or spaces.

**Account Creation**

1 Login Credentials > 2 Registration Information

First/given name\*

Last/family/surname\*

Address\*  
 188 Kirtling Street  
 Battersea Power Station  
 London, London SW8 5BN  
 United Kingdom

Sex\*  
 Male  Female

Phone\*

DOB\*

I am applying as a\*  
 First-Year Student  Transfer Student

I am a(n)\*  
 Applicant planning to enroll within the next 12 months  
 Counselor interested in learning more about the Common App  
 Teacher interested in learning more about the Common App  
 Other student  
 None of the above

The colleges that I am considering for application may communicate with me by email prior to submission of my application (you can subsequently change your response to this question in your account settings).

By checking this box, you represent that (i) you are age 13 or older and (ii) you have read, understood and agreed to the terms and conditions of the above License Agreement and Privacy Policy (unless you are over the age of 13 but under the age of 18, in which case, your parent or legal guardian has also read, understood and agreed to the terms and conditions of the Privacy Policy and Legal Information sections).

When typing your phone number, enter the country code (+44 for the UK) at the beginning and use no dashes or spaces.



Always say "yes" to both questions, as you want the admissions office to be able to communicate via email.

Leave State/Province blank if you live outside of the United States

## 2. Email Confirmation

After registering, you will be sent a confirmation email, like the one shown below. Make sure to write down your username and password, as you can sign in and out of the Common Application as many times as you like, saving your work each time. As you can see in the email, your password is not included. Because you will generate your own password, try to make it something you can easily remember.

Tip: Keep a list of logins and passwords related to your US applications! You will not be able to complete multiple applications with similar information, so it's vital that you know your login details.

Your Common App ID is: 12300648  
 Your User Name is: [advising@fulbright.org.uk](mailto:advising@fulbright.org.uk)

Dear William,

Thank you for selecting the Common App. We are proud of what we do, and have done for forty years, and we are committed to helping you have the best possible college application process.

By selecting the Common App you will have access to more than 500 universities and colleges in the United States and abroad. Whether you already have some schools in mind or you're just getting started, we hope you'll take time to explore the rich and diverse offerings of our Member Institutions.

As you prepare to make your applications, please always know that our team is here for you should you have questions or want some guidance. As your needs arise, do not hesitate to seek assistance from our [Help Center](#). There you will find a comprehensive list of FAQs covering all aspects of the application. If you cannot find the answer you are looking for, simply click the "Ask a Question" tab to contact our Support team. They will be happy to assist you.

One additional word, if I may. With any technology, there can be hiccups. If a screen does not immediately appear or is temporarily unavailable please don't worry. If we can, we will try to tell you about this kind of thing in advance, but in all instances you can know that we're always available, will respond promptly, and won't stand down until the job is done.

We feel privileged to be helping you apply to college this year and want to thank you, in advance, for choosing the Common Application.

Yours Sincerely,  
 Paul Mott

### 3. Instructions

After logging in, be sure to explore the Help Center toolbar along the right-hand side of the home page dashboard, which has helpful information on how to complete your application. If you click the small red arrow, you will be taken to the Help Centre website with fantastic FAQs and Training Resources to help you navigate the Common Application. Also read Fulbright's webpage with [general information and tips on terminology differences](http://www.fulbright.org.uk/study-in-the-usa/undergraduate-study/applying/common-application) (<http://www.fulbright.org.uk/study-in-the-usa/undergraduate-study/applying/common-application>). Familiarise yourself with the Common Application website, and use the tabs along the top of the screen to move between sections.


### 4. My Colleges

Under "My Colleges", you will select the colleges to which you will apply. Remember that the words "college" and "university" both refer to places of postsecondary education in American English. In order to populate the "My Colleges" section, you will need to select the colleges you wish to attend using the "College Search" tool.

#### Instructions & Help Center


##### School does not have my application

Once you submit your application and you see the green check on the dashboard, the school will h ... [+]

[more] 

##### School Requirements

Please check the requirements for each school on their specific page. Click on the name of the s ... [+]

[more] 

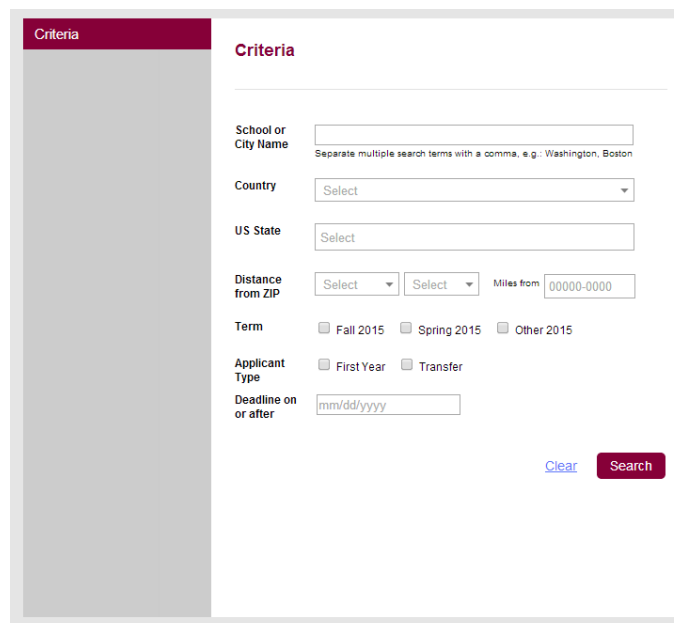
Tip: Add all of the colleges you're thinking of applying to in order to get email alerts. You can always go back and add or remove if you change your mind.

The 'My Colleges' screen is where you will complete work for each college to which you intend to apply. You must first add a college to your My Colleges list before you will be able to use this screen.

Go to the [College Search](#) screen to add colleges to your list.

### Search for Colleges

The "College Search" tool is also useful if you aren't sure which universities you are interested in (shown below). You can search by state, area, deadlines and more. You can also see profiles of the colleges if you want additional information.



The screenshot shows a search criteria form with the following fields and options:

- School or City Name:** Text input field with a note: "Separate multiple search terms with a comma, e.g.: Washington, Boston"
- Country:** Dropdown menu with "Select" as the current value.
- US State:** Text input field with "Select" as the current value.
- Distance from ZIP:** Two dropdown menus for distance and "Miles from" with "00000-0000" as the current value.
- Term:** Radio buttons for "Fall 2015", "Spring 2015", and "Other 2015".
- Applicant Type:** Radio buttons for "First Year" and "Transfer".
- Deadline on or after:** Text input field with "mm/dd/yyyy" as the current value.
- Buttons:** "Clear" and "Search" buttons.

Once you input your criteria, your search will generate a Result list.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Member Name	Location	Country	Type
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Harvard College</a> <i>i</i>	Cambridge - MA	USA	Coed

**Add**

You can use your Result List to investigate the colleges further. If you click on the university name, you will see that university's profile. Along the left-hand side, you will be able to explore that profile in depth, including aspects like Application Process, Financial Aid, Majors, Campus Life, etc.

### Harvard College

Address	86 Brattle St Cambridge, MA 02138 USA
Contact Info	Phone: (617) 495-1551 Fax: Email: college@fas.harvard.edu
On the Web	<a href="#">Web Page</a> <a href="#">College Navigator (Department of Education)</a>
Application Deadlines	FirstYear Fall 2015 Restrictive Early Action - 11/01/2014 Regular Decision - 01/01/2015  Fall 2015 Regular Decision - 03/01/2015

Note that deadlines are written in US format – mm/dd/yyyy

This deadline is 01 November 2014.

If after exploring the profile you decide you'd like to apply to this university, you **must go back to your Result List, tick the "Select" box and then select "Add"**. It will now be available in your "My Colleges" section.

Once you add that university, return to the "College Search" tab to add any additional universities to which you plan to apply.

Keep in mind that only over 500 Common Application member universities are profiled, and there are over 4,000 institutions offering undergraduate degrees in the United States. For more comprehensive university search engines see the [Fulbright website](http://www.fulbright.org.uk/study-in-the-usa/undergraduate-study/choosing-universities/resources) (<http://www.fulbright.org.uk/study-in-the-usa/undergraduate-study/choosing-universities/resources>) for suggestions.

While there is no limit to the number of universities you can apply to, we recommend you focus on **6 - 8** carefully selected universities including a mix of reach, match and safety/insurance universities. See our section on [Choosing Universities](#)

(<http://www.fulbright.org.uk/study-in-the-usa/undergraduate-study/choosing-universities>) for more on types of universities and factors to consider.

The screenshot shows the 'My Colleges' tab selected. The left sidebar lists several colleges: Amherst College (expanded), Cornell University, Harvard College, Haverford College, Northwestern University, and Williams College. The main content area displays details for Amherst College, including contact information (Phone: (413) 542-2328, Fax: 413-542-2040, Email: admission@amherst.edu), application deadlines for Fall 2015 (Early Decision - 11/15/2014, Regular Decision - 01/01/2015), and required documents (Application Fees, First-Year Test Policy, and Recommendations Required).

## 5. Common App

Before exploring your “My Colleges” tab, you should consider completing information about yourself in the “Common App” tab. There are six main sections, which can be found on the left-hand sidebar: Profile, Family, Education, Testing, Activities and Writing. Remember that the benefit of the Common Application is that you will only have to complete this information once for all of the universities you want to apply to.

The screenshot shows the 'Common App' tab selected. The left sidebar lists the sections of the Common Application: Profile, Family, Education, Testing, Activities, and Writing. The main content area displays a list of sections to be completed: Personal Information, Address, Contact Details, Demographics, Geography, Language, and Citizenship. A 'Common App Fee Waiver' section is also visible at the bottom.

## 6. Profile

Once you click on the “Profile” section, you will see sub-categories. As you complete each sub-category and click the “Continue” button, a small green check will appear on that tab to indicate that you have submitted all required information.

In the “Contact Details” subcategory, make sure to enter your mobile or home number without any spaces or dashes.

Tip! Double check to make sure all your contact information is correct, as the university may use this to set up an interview.

**Contact Details**

Email address\*  
advising@fulbright.org.uk

Preferred phone\*  
 Home  
 Mobile

Preferred phone number\*  
+44 7912345678

Alternate phone\*  
 No other telephone  
 Home  
 Mobile

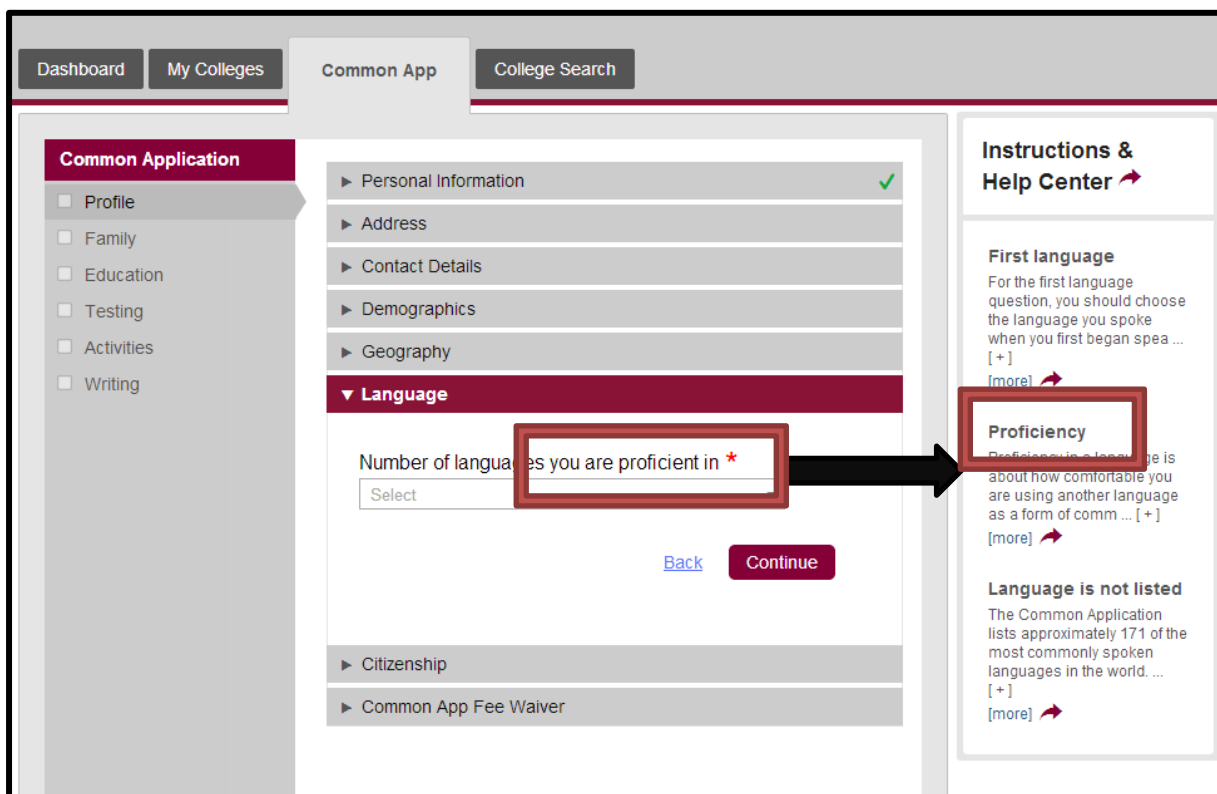
Alternate phone number\*  
+44 2012345678

[Back](#) [Continue](#)

In the “Demographics” sub-category, these questions are for statistical purposes and to demonstrate diversity. It is okay to leave them blank if you’re uncomfortable filling them in.

In the “Geography” sub-category, select “0” for the “Number of years you have lived in the United States” if you’ve never lived in the USA. For the “Number of years you have lived outside of the United States”, select the number that corresponds with your age.

**As you proceed through the sub-categories, you will notice that the tips provided under the Help Center toolbar will change according to the section you are in.** For example, in the “Language” sub-category, you are asked to list the number of languages you are proficient in, and the help center toolbar provides an answer about what proficiency means for the Common Application purposes.



In the “Citizenship” sub-category, you will be asked to provide information about your background. If you hold a US Dual citizenship, select “Dual,” and you will then be asked to provide your Social Security number as well as your non-US country of citizenship from a drop down menu. Select “Other (Non-US)” as your citizenship if you do not hold a US or US Dual citizenship. (Note: if you hold dual citizenship between two non-US countries, you should select “Other (Non-US)” and then select both of your citizenships in the drop-down bar.)

If you select “Other (Non-US)” for your citizenship status, you will then be asked to select your citizenship from the drop-down bar.

**▼ Citizenship**

Select your citizenship status\*

Other (Non-US) x ▼

List citizenship(s)\*

United Kingdom x

Currently held United States visa\*

I do not hold a currently valid U.S. non-immigrant x ▼

[Back](#)

## 7. Family

In this section you will be providing information on your family and their education. As you know, the US admission process is holistic, taking into account a range of factors in addition to your academics. This information will provide some context about your background for the admissions office. Note that “college” in American English is synonymous with “university.”



The first sub-category in the Family section is about your household. This section allows you to categorise the relationship your parents have. You will then provide additional information about your parents individually in the next two sub-categories.

If you live with only one parent, be sure that the information you provide for "Parent 1" below matches up with answer you provided in this "Household" section!



**Household**

Parents marital status: (relative to each other)\*  
 Divorced x ▾

Divorced date: \*  
 August x ▾ 2004 x ▾

With whom do you make your permanent home? \*  
 Parent 1 x ▾

Do you wish to list any step-parents? \*  
 Yes  
 No

[Clear](#)

Do you have any children?  
 Yes  
 No

[Clear](#)

[Back](#) [Continue](#)

You will be required to select Parent 1's highest educational level from a dropdown menu.

Here is a helpful chart of conversions between US and UK terms:

US options found on the Common App	UK equivalents
Grade school	Primary school
Some high school	Some secondary school, perhaps to the equivalent of GCSEs
High school diploma or equivalent	Completed secondary school to A-level or equivalent
Business or trade school	Vocational certification or equivalent
College	University degree

If you indicate that Parent 1 was educated to college level (university), you will then be asked questions about that university.

Education level\*  
 College x ▾

Indicate the number of colleges\*  
 1 x ▾

College lookup\*  
⊗ Please complete this required question.

Number of degrees your parent received from this college\*  
⊗ Please complete this required question.  
 Select ▾

When you click on "Find College," a new screen will pop up that allows you to search for the institution by name, country or city.



Complete the rest of the section for both parents/legal guardians and any siblings.

## 8. Education

Under Education, you will submit information about your current school or sixth form college.

In selecting school representatives, you will choose two teachers and one guidance counsellor to support your applications.

Note the teacher and guidance counsellor cannot be the same person, and they will have access to different forms.

The guidance counsellor will submit a school profile, transcript and evaluation on your performance in a broader manner through the School/Final Reports. The two teachers you select will submit a more specific recommendation letter primarily about your academics and potential.

We recommend that you use your Head of Careers, Head of Sixth Form or Housemaster/mistress as the counsellor and that two current teachers complete your teacher references. Make sure to inform them in advance, and make sure that the email address you submit is correct. Login information for the forms will be sent out to them via email through the Common App system (you do not have to send the forms to them yourself), so it is vital that you have the correct information.

Collectively, the referees should reinforce and elaborate on how the student meets the university's (holistic) admissions criteria, including academic performance and potential, extracurriculars and leadership ability, character, etc. However, if it would add significantly to the application package, the student can submit an additional reference from someone who knows the student from an extracurricular perspective for example.

As before, when you click on “Find School,” a new screen will pop up that allows you to search for the institution by name, address, country or city.

Choose your School	
Name	Location
<input type="radio"/> Cristo Rey Brooklyn High School	Brooklyn,NY, United States of America
<input type="radio"/> Hope International School	Shunyi,Beijing, China
<input type="radio"/> Istituto Aleardo Aleardi International School of Verona	Verona, Italy
<input type="radio"/> 1199 School Social Change	Bronx,NY, United States of America
<input type="radio"/> 2001 Alternative Program	Davenport,IA, United States of America
<input type="radio"/> 21st Century Charter School at Gary	Gary,IN, United States of America
<input type="radio"/> 21st Century Community School House	Salem,OR, United States of America
<input type="radio"/> 21st Century Cyber Charter School	Exton,PA, United States of America
<input type="radio"/> 21st Century Learning Academy Charter School	Mullinville,KS, United States of America
<input type="radio"/> 21st Century Scholars Program	Gary,IN, United States of America
<input type="radio"/> 21st Century eSchool	Middleton,WI, United States of America

[Continue](#)

If your school is not already on the list, you can select the option that says “I don’t see my high school on this list”, and you will be able to manually input your school’s information. Please note, that if you are inputting your school’s details, the American term “public” is equivalent to the UK term “state school,” and a “charter school” would be most similar to an “academy” or “free school” in the UK.

For “Graduation Date”, enter the date you will receive or did receive final results for A-levels, IB, etc.

For the “Other school” section, please complete information for any secondary school you have attended since Year 10 in the UK. If you have not changed schools since Year 10, select “0” to indicate this.

Under “Education Interruption,” if applicable, choose the option that best applies to you. If you have not had any interruptions or delays in your education don’t tick any of the boxes. Note that GED is a US High School equivalency exam.

For the “College & Universities” section, keep in mind that the American term “course” is the equivalent of “classes” or “modules” and that the American term “colleges” is used to mean “universities.” **Also note that ninth grade is equivalent to Year 10 in the UK.**

**▼ College & Universities**

If you have taken a college/university course beginning with 9th grade, please indicate number of colleges\*

They will then ask you to list any community programmes that have helped you with your application. If none, leave these blank.

In the section titled “Grades,” Graduating Class Size is the number of students in your year group. Please note that you may leave the class rank and GPA questions blank if your school does not provide these.

For “Current Year Courses” (qualifications and subjects), you should first select the number of modules you will receive results for in Year 13, such as A-levels, Scottish Higher/Advanced Higher, BTEC, Pre-U, IB or the equivalent. Then for each module, list your subject title. If one of your courses has a level designation that is not included in the choice list, please include the level as part of the Course title (for example: “A-level French”). For IB, note which subjects are Higher and Standard.

For the question “How many courses would you like to report?”, courses is a term used by American high schools and universities, and unless you go to an American or international school, it is likely to not be applicable. **If it does not apply to you**, the best advice we have is to put “1”. (Though several universities have noted, it does not actually matter what you put as the course credit value, since they realise it is not applicable for many UK students).

For selecting the course scheduling system your institution is using, there is the option of either “semester” or “trimester.” Some US secondary schools are on a trimester system; though, most UK schools will be on a semester system. Please check with your institution if you are unsure.

For “Course 1 Schedule”, if your subjects will be the same for all three terms (all year), tick the option for “Full Year”. If you will change modules through the year, select the appropriate term length for each course you report.

Under “Honors,” submit information about any academic honours you have received. **When filling out this section, please note that Grade Level 9, 10, 11 and 12 will correspond to British Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 (GCSEs and A-levels).** Like above, you will first select how many honours you have received before expanding on each one. In this section, you will only place the title of the honours. You will have 150 characters in the "details, honors, and accomplishments" field in the “Activities” section if you want to provide further information. You will also be asked for the “Level(s) of Recognition” and will be able to click more than one box if the honours is recognized at more than one level.

For the “Future Plans” section, it’s OK to be undecided about your career interests under the liberal arts philosophy followed in the US system. While there is not an undecided choice, “other” is an option.

▼ Current Year Courses

Please list all courses you are taking this academic year. If you are not currently enrolled, please list courses from your most recent academic year.  
How many courses would you like to report? \*

1

Please select the course scheduling system your institution is using. \*

Semester

Course 1 title \*

Course 1 level, if applicable

- Accelerated
- Advanced Placement (AP)
- Dual Enrollment
- Honors
- International Baccalaureate (IB)
- Regents

[Clear](#)

Course 1 schedule \*

Full Year

[Back](#) [Continue](#)

► Honors

► Future Plans

▼ Future Plans

Career interest \*

Other

Highest degree you intend to earn \*

Undecided

[Back](#) [Continue](#)

## 9. Testing

Under Testing, you can report your best (super-scored) SAT or ACT scores. If you don't have your scores before you submit the

application, you will enter the dates when you will take the exams. **Please note that even though you are entering the scores into the Common Application, you will still need to send your official scores directly from College Board or ACT to the colleges where you are applying.** Note that SAT Subject Tests are not required by the majority of US universities but generally are required by the most competitive universities. Check with each individual university regarding what admissions tests they require.

When you select "Yes" to self-report your standardised test scores, you will be able to select ALL the tests you've taken or expect to take from a drop-down menu.

Once you select a test from the drop-down menu, a new section will appear at the bottom of the screen with that test's name. When you click on that section, you will then be able to provide your scores

You may wish to clarify with the universities you are applying to, but to the best of our knowledge, you would **only tick that you have taken leaving exams if you are finished with your A levels.** If you click "yes", a new section will appear at the bottom of the screen named "Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations". When you click on that section, you will then be able to enter your details and your score

**Tests Taken**

In addition to sending official score reports as required by colleges, do you wish to self-report scores or future test dates for any of the following standardized tests: ACT, SAT/SAT Subject, AP, IB, TOEFL, PTE Academic, and IELTS? \*

Yes  
 No

[Clear](#)

Indicate all tests you wish to report. Be sure to include tests you expect to take in addition to tests you have already taken. \*

SAT Tests x SAT Subject Tests x

**International applicants:** Is promotion within your educational system based upon standard leaving examinations given at the end of lower and/or senior secondary school by a state or national leaving examinations board? (Students studying in the US typically answer no to this question.)

Yes  
 No

[Clear](#)

[Back](#) [Continue](#)

▶ SAT Tests

▶ SAT Subject Tests

▶ Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations

**Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations**

Number of Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations you have already taken\*

1 x

Date taken\*

Month Year

Examination board\*

GCE A-levels x

Academic subject\*

Score\*

Score type\*

Actual  
 Predicted

[Clear](#)

## 10. Activities

Under Activities, report any extracurricular activities you have completed in school or in your community. A few examples: school clubs or activities, school leadership roles (Head Boy/Girl), sports you participate in at school or recreationally, arts lessons or performances, voluntary service, work experience and internships. In the drop down menu from which you choose your activity, JV/Varsity means that it was a High School level team (equivalent to the last four years of secondary school in British education) as opposed to a professional or recreational team. If you can't find your activity, choose "Other Club/Activity" and then you will be able to type it in yourself. Also note that on the application, **Grade Level 9, 10, 11, and 12 correspond to British Years 10, 11, 12 and 13** (GCSE years and Sixth Form).

Your response in the 'Position/Leadership' section will be limited to 50 characters.

In choosing to add more activities to your applications (you can include up to 10 activities), you may wish to re-order them at the end in order of importance, with the most important as Activity 1. You can do so using the Up and Down arrows in the top right corner of the activity box.

## 11. Writing

In this section, you will have a personal essay to complete that will be sent to all of the universities that you apply for through the Common Application.

Keep in mind that approximately two-thirds of Common Application member universities will also want you to complete writing supplements, some of which will include additional essay topics.

The screenshot shows the 'Activities' section of the Common Application. At the top, there is a '▶ Activities' header with a green checkmark. Below it is a red header for '▼ Activity 1' with a downward arrow. The form contains the following fields:

- Activity type \***: Athletics: JV/Varsity
- Activity name \***: Cricket
- Position/Leadership description and organization name, if applicable \***: Participant
- Details, honors won, and accomplishments \***: Most Improved Player - Year 11
- Participation grade levels \***: 10, 11, 12
- Timing of participation \***: All year
- Hours spent per week \***: 4
- Weeks spent per year \***: 52
- I intend to participate in a similar activity in college. \***: Yes

At the bottom of the form are three buttons: 'Edit' (blue), 'Back' (blue), and 'Continue' (red).

[Add another](#) (8 of 10 available)

The screenshot shows the 'Personal Essay' section of the Common Application. On the left is a sidebar for 'Common Application' with a 'Writing' tab selected. The main content area is titled '▼ Personal Essay' and contains the following text:

The essay demonstrates your ability to write clearly and concisely on a selected topic and helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice. What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores? Choose the option that best helps you answer that question and write an essay of no more than 650 words, using the prompt to inspire and structure your response. Remember: 650 words is your limit, not your goal. Use the full range if you need it, but don't feel obligated to do so. (The application won't accept a response shorter than 250 words.) \*

Below the text are five radio button options:

- Some students have a background or story that is central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- Reflect on an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what lessons did you learn?
- Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?
- Describe a place or environment where you are perfectly content. What do you do or experience there, and why is it meaningful to you?
- Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

Below the options is a 'Clear' link. At the bottom, there is a text box with a prompt: 'Please write an essay (250-650 words) on the topic selected. You can type directly into the box, or you can paste text from another source. \*' and a rich text editor with 'B I U' buttons.

On the right side of the page, there is a sidebar with 'Instructions & Help Center' and 'Updating the Essay' section. A red box highlights the 'Essay formatting' section, which states: 'Currently, paragraph breaks for your Common App personal essay will appear in the text box or th... [+]'.

The supplements will be unique for each individual university and are located within each university application in the “My Colleges” section.

You may wish to check the Supplement section for each college you’re applying to, and consider all of the essays and the personal essay together to ensure that you are not repeating yourself and that they are complementary to each other.

Note that for the personal essay, this will be seen by all colleges you apply for. Do not make your personal essay specific to one college as you will be able to do that in the supplements. See Fulbright’s [website with sample essays and essay writing tips](http://www.fulbright.co.uk/study-in-the-usa/undergraduate-study/applying/essays) (<http://www.fulbright.co.uk/study-in-the-usa/undergraduate-study/applying/essays>) for additional information.

Be sure that you follow the directions outlined in the essay introduction and that you select the essay that you will be answering.

**As with all pages on the application, be sure to take advantage of the Help Center tool on the right-hand side of the page for additional helpful information!**

In the “Disciplinary History” section, you will have to provide information about any discrepancies or negative circumstances that may have affected your marks or extracurricular involvement. If you answer “Yes” to either receiving a disciplinary violation at an educational institution or ever being adjudicated guilty or convicted of a misdemeanor, felony, or other crime, a new section will appear at the bottom of the screen called “Required Explanation.” You will need to click on that section to provide additional information about the incident.

In the “Additional Information” section, you will have the opportunity to provide information about **any circumstances or qualifications** not reflected elsewhere in the application.

### **13. My Colleges (Continued)**

Now that you’ve completed the actual application, you will be able to finish your university selections. In order to submit your application, you must first complete the university-specific questions and assign your recommenders for each college. You may also be required to complete a university-specific supplement for those that require them.

#### **Questions:**

The questions in this section will vary from university to university. You should answer them as best as possible, and we’ve tried to provide guidance for the questions you’re likely to see.

1) The first subcategory under the “Questions” section is titled “General”. Here you will need to select your “**Preferred Admission Plan**” to decide whether to apply Early Decision, Restrictive Early Action, Early Action, Regular Decision (autumn admissions) or Regular Decision (spring admissions). Some universities will only have a few of these options, or they may have them all. The admission plan options are:

**A. Rolling admissions** - Students can apply over a set period of time (typically August to spring), and admission decisions will be made on a rolling basis. It is still suggested that applicants still apply early (October/November) if possible. This type of deadline is non-binding and non-restrictive.

**B. Regular decision** - Students typically apply by 1 January in anticipation of an admissions decision by 1 April. This type of deadline is non-binding and non-restrictive. Students may apply to as many universities in the US as they choose under regular decision policies.



**C. Early action** - Students typically apply by 1 November in anticipation of an admissions decision by 15 December. This type of deadline **is non-binding AND non-restrictive**. Students may apply to as many universities in the US as they choose under early action policies.

**D. Restrictive early action** - Like early action, students typically apply by 1 November in anticipation of an admissions decision by 15 December. This type of deadline **is non-binding**. Generally speaking, you can only apply to one university restrictive early action, and this will be your only early application in the US. There may be exceptions in the university policy (check on their admissions page) such as allowing you to apply early to state universities with a non-binding, rolling admissions policy or to universities where the university application is considered for scholarships must be submitted earlier than 15 December.

**However, check for restrictions in the university policies on whether you can apply to other universities while you have a restrictive early action application out.** You can also refer to the [Common Application's Decision Plan Rules Handout](https://appsupport.commonapp.org/link/portal/33011/33013/Article/1176/Decision-Plans) (<https://appsupport.commonapp.org/link/portal/33011/33013/Article/1176/Decision-Plans>).

**E. Early decision** - There are two early decision deadlines: ED1 in November and the slightly less common ED2 in January. These are more common at private liberal arts colleges. Like early action, ED1 students typically apply by 1 November in anticipation of an admissions decision by 15 December. Early decision is also **somewhat restrictive** in that you cannot apply to more than one university early decision, but you may be able to apply to others early action at the same time. (Unless as stated above, the university you would like to apply to via early action has restrictions.)

Early decision applications **are binding**. **You should think very carefully before applying to a university early decision.** You, your school counsellor and your parent will sign an early decision agreement certifying that you understand the terms of early decision. The early decision university should be your first choice (**worldwide**) and if accepted, you will withdraw all other applications (**worldwide**) and attend that university. The only exception is if you apply for financial aid and do not receive sufficient aid to take up your offer.

You may only submit one early decision application in the ED1 and/or ED2 rounds. You should certainly apply to other universities in the UK at the same time to keep all options open, **but know that you will need to decline your UCAS offers if admitted early decision in the US.**

Once you select "Early Decision" as your "Preferred Admission Plan", you will be prompted to sign the Early Decision (ED) Agreement.

Yes, I have read and understand my rights and responsibilities under the Early Decision Process. I wish to be considered as an Early Decision candidate at Amherst College. I also understand that with an Early Decision offer of admissions, this institution may share my name and my Early Agreement with other institutions.\*

Yes

No

[Clear](#)

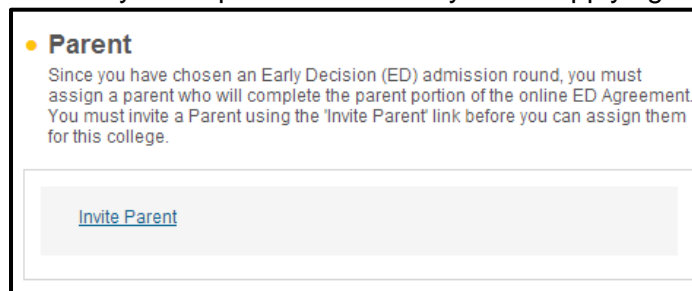
ED Signature\*

Once you've submitted your ED signature, your counsellor will receive a prompt in their account, letting them know you are applying Early Decision. This prompt will ask them to



confirm that as your counsellor, he/she has advised you to abide by the Early Decision commitment.

Also, in the “Assign Recommenders” tab, you will now see a new section at the bottom for your parent. Again, this will only be required to do this if you are applying Early Decision.



Please note that each university can set their own application deadlines but generally follow a common pattern:

- Early admission applications: October – November (for entry the next autumn)
- Regular admission applications: January – March (for entry the next autumn)
- Spring admission applications: October – November (for January entry)

Also in the “General” section, you may find a question about **need-based financial aid**. Some universities do take financial need into account when making their admissions decision for international students, and we encourage you to be honest so that you are considered for financial aid if you need it to study in the United States. Only tick ‘yes’ if the institution does provide financial aid to international students and you are expecting to apply for it.

If asked, you will also select that you intend to be a **full-time student**, since you must be full-time if you are studying on an F visa.

Some universities will have a “Preferred residence during your first year” question which is just to help the university with planning, and you will have a chance to explore housing options more fully upon admission.

2.) The second subcategory under the “Questions” section is titled “Academics”. Again these questions will vary from university to university, but they will likely ask what major/course/academic interest you are likely to pursue. It’s OK to be undecided about your major under the liberal arts philosophy followed in the US system. If you have multiple academic interests, you can do a double major or complete minors alongside your major.

3.) The next subcategory is likely “Contacts.” This section will ask if you applied to the university previously. If you answer “yes,” you will be asked to provide additional information about when you did so.

4.) The next subcategory under the “Questions” section is likely “Family.” This section will ask if any of your siblings are currently applying to that university as well and if any family members have previously attended or worked at that university. If you answer “yes” to any of the questions, you will be asked to provide further details.

5) There may be additional sub-categories under the “Questions” section, but they are likely to be optional.

### **Assign Recommenders:**

This section will be where you give information about your two teachers and guidance counsellor (see above information in step #8 for an explanation of differences between

teachers and counsellors) who will recommend you and provide your school forms to the universities to which you are applying. After authorising your schools to release your academic information, we recommend that you waive your right to access in the Privacy Notice to maintain credibility of the letter in the eyes of the university. Then sign and date the form.

**Release Authorization**

1 ✓ Instructions > 2 Form

I authorize every school that I have attended to release all requested records and recommendations to colleges to which I am applying for admission. I also authorize employees at these colleges to confidentially contact my current and former schools should they have questions about the information submitted on my behalf

Please select one:

I waive my right to review all recommendations and supporting documents submitted by me or on my behalf.

I DO NOT waive my right to review all recommendations and supporting documents submitted by me or on my behalf.

I understand that my waiver or no waiver selection above pertains to all colleges to which I apply and that my **selections on this page cannot be changed once I invite my first recommender.**

Signature  Date

[Back](#) [Save](#)

After clicking “Save”, you will be taken back to the page shown below. Click “Invite Counselor”.

Amherst College [Manage Recommenders](#)

Questions ✓

**Assign Recommenders**

Submission - Common App

Writing Supplement

Submission - Writing Supplement

Harvard College

Harvey Mudd College

Haverford College

Northwestern University

Williams College

✓ **FERPA Release Authorization**  
I have authorized release of all requested records covered under the FERPA act and have waived my right to access. [show details](#)

● **Counselor**  
You must invite a school Counselor who will complete the School Report and other forms for you.

[Invite Counselor](#)

● **Teacher**  
Please select and assign the Teacher(s) below whose recommendation will be submitted to this college on your behalf. You must first invite a Teacher using the 'Invite Teacher' link before you can assign them for this college.

**Required: 2      Allowed: 3**

[Invite Teacher](#)

Remember, most students use the same three individuals for each university. Note **the guidance counsellor and the teacher cannot be the same person, and they will have access to different forms.**

The guidance counsellor will submit a school profile and comment on the students' performance in a broader manner through the School/Final Reports. Teachers will submit a more specific recommendation letter about your academic and extracurricular potential.

We recommend that you use your Head of Careers, Head of Sixth Form or Housemaster/mistress as the counsellor and two current teachers to complete your references. Make sure to inform them ahead of time that you will be asking them to write a reference, and make sure that their **email address is correct**. Login information for the forms will be sent out to them via email (you do not have to send the forms to them) automatically from the Common Application system, so it is vital that you have the correct information.

Again, we suggest you tick the box to release authorisation to maintain the credibility of the letter in the eyes of the university.

After you have imputed your counsellor information, click “Send Invite”.

Before closing the pop-up screen, you can also invite your teachers. Simply change the “Type” of recommender from “Counselor” to “Teacher” and input their details. Be sure to click “Send Invite” after each teacher. Once you have invited your counsellor and two teachers, you can close the pop-up window.

**Recommender Invitations**

Type \*  First Name \*   
 Subject \*  Last Name \*   
 Title \*  Email Address

**Add Recommender**

*Please note that this individual will only receive an invitation email once you assign him or her to a college.*

Type	Name	Email	Status
Counselor	Jamie Dunn	[REDACTED]	Invited
Teacher	Vivian Chen	[REDACTED]	Invited

Once you have invited your counsellor, you will be able to see their progress on the school forms they must complete.

Tip: Put a note in your diary to remind your counsellor to submit your Mid Year Report. This is likely due in early spring, but be sure to check with each university for their deadlines!

**Amherst College** +

**Cornell University** +

**Harvard College** -

**Application**  
(0 of 3 Completed)

Questions

Recommenders and FERPA

Review and Submit - Common App

**Writing Supplement**  
(1 of 2 Completed)

Questions

Review and Submit - Writing Supplement

[Manage Recommenders](#)

*Note: All dates are Eastern Time*

**✓ FERPA Release Authorization**

I have authorized release of all requested records covered under the FERPA act and have waived my right to access. [show details](#)

**✓ Counselor**

**Jamie Dunn** Invited: 08/04/2014

School Counselor

---

School Report Not started

---

Optional Report

---

Mid Year Report

---

Final Report

Once you send your teachers the invites, you will have to go back to the “Assign Recommenders” page to select the teachers from the drop down menu to assign to that application (one at a time). Because each university may have different requirements for the number of teachers they will accept reference letters from, this step requires you assign which of your teachers’ reference letters should be part of your application to this specific university.

Do this again for the second teacher. Please remember that you **must assign your teacher recommendation letters for each of the universities you want to apply to.**

The sidebar shows the following progress:

- Harvard College** (+): Application (0 of 3 Completed), Writing Supplement (0 of 2 Completed)
- Haverford College** (-): Application (0 of 3 Completed), Writing Supplement (0 of 2 Completed)
- Northwestern University** (+): Application (0 of 3 Completed), Writing Supplement (0 of 2 Completed)
- Williams College** (+): Application (0 of 3 Completed), Writing Supplement (0 of 2 Completed)

#### ✓ FERPA Release Authorization

I have authorized release of all requested records covered under the FERPA act and have waived my right to access. [show details](#)

#### ✓ Counselor

<b>Jamie Dunn</b> School Counselor	Invited: 08/04/2014
School Report	Not started
Optional Report	
Mid Year Report	
Final Report	

#### • Teacher

Please select and assign the Teacher(s) below whose recommendation will be submitted to this college on your behalf. You must first invite a Teacher using the 'Invite Teacher' link before you can assign them for this college.

Required: 2      Allowed: 4

The interface shows:

- Vivian Chen** (English) - Assigned: 08/04/2014
- Teacher Evaluation** - Not started
- Dropdown menu: Penny Egan (Foreign Lan...)
- Assign** button

## 14. Submitting your Application

In the “My Colleges” section, you will see that below “Questions” and “Assign Recommenders” there is a tab called “Submission – Common App”. If you click on this while your application is in progress, you will see the following:

### Application Submission

In order to begin the submission process, you must first have the following items completed:

- ➔ All sections of the Common Application
- ➔ All of this College's Questions
- ➔ All required Recommender assignments

Please refer to the [Dashboard](#) to view the status of these components. Once all required components are completed, you will see the option to begin your Application Submission from this screen.

However, if you click on this once you have completed all sections of the Common Application, the Questions, and the Recommender assignments, the text will change to the following:

### Application Submission

You are ready to complete submission for Georgia Institute of Technology! The submission process will walk you through the following steps:

- ➔ Final review of your application
- ➔ Application fee payment (if not waived)
- ➔ Signature

*The submission process will not be complete until your signature has been submitted. Please be sure to complete all steps of the submission process.*

Start Submission

After you click “Start Submission”, there is a three-step process.

- 1) The Common Application will generate a PDF of your final application. You should print this out and read it over fully. **Once an application or writing supplement has been submitted to any institution, you cannot make any changes to it**, so it is vital that you preview your final submission and ensure that it is 100 percent how you want it to be.

The screenshot shows the 'Application Submission' page with a progress bar at the top. The first step, 'Final Review', is highlighted with a red circle and a number '1'. The second step, 'Payment', is in a grey circle with a number '2'. The third step, 'Signature', is in a grey circle with a number '3'. Below the progress bar, there is a text box with the following text: 'Please confirm the PDF presented on the prior screen looks exactly as you intend for submission to Georgia Institute of Technology. To make corrections, return to your [Common Application](#) or [College Questions](#) to make changes. You may also return to your [Dashboard](#) and complete your submission at another time.' At the bottom of the text box, there is a checkbox with the text 'I have reviewed the PDF copy of my application and wish to proceed with my submission.'

At this point, you have the option to return to any part of your application to make edits.

- 2) Once you tick the box saying you’ve reviewed the PDF, you can continue with your submission. You will then have to submit payment using a credit card or e-cheque.

If the application cost is prohibitive, you may contact the individual university admissions office for information on how to request a fee waiver and if you qualify.

- 3) In the signature section, you will be prompted to confirm that you completed the application honestly and completely.

**Only submit your application after you have checked it, rechecked and triple checked it for any errors!** You cannot undo a common application submission. Do not wait until the night

The screenshot shows the 'Application Submission' page with a progress bar at the top. The first step, 'Final Review', is in a grey circle with a number '1' and a checkmark. The second step, 'Payment', is in a red circle with a number '2' and a checkmark. The third step, 'Signature', is in a red circle with a number '3'. Below the progress bar, the section is titled 'Signature' and contains the text: 'Please affirm the following before you submit your application.' There are four checkboxes with the following text: 'I understand that once my application has been submitted it may not be altered in any way; I will need to contact the institution directly if I wish to provide additional information.', 'I certify that all information submitted in the admission process -- including this application and any other supporting materials -- is my own work, factually true, and honestly presented, and that these documents will become the property of the institution to which I am applying and will not be returned to me. I understand that I may be subject to a range of possible disciplinary actions, including admission revocation, expulsion, or revocation of course credit, grades, and degree should the information I have certified be false.', 'I acknowledge that I have reviewed the application instructions for the college receiving this application. I understand that all offers of admission are conditional, pending receipt of final transcripts showing work comparable in quality to that upon which the offer was based, as well as honorable dismissal from the school.', and 'I affirm that I will send an enrollment deposit (or equivalent) to only one institution; sending multiple deposits (or equivalent) may result in the withdrawal of my admission offers from all institutions. [Note: students may send an enrollment deposit (or equivalent) to a second institution where they have been admitted from the waitlist, provided that they inform the first institution that they will no longer be enrolling.]' At the bottom, there are two input fields: 'Signature' and 'Date' (with the value '08/16/2013' and a calendar icon). At the bottom right, there are two buttons: 'Back' and 'Submit'.

before an application deadline to submit your form.

When you try to submit your next form, all that is repeated will be greyed out so that you only need to complete questions which are particular to that school. That is, once you put in the work to submit the Common App once, it will be much easier for all other universities. Each time you submit your application, your school forms, if done online, will automatically be submitted as well, so you do not need to alert your high school if you decide to add schools on the Common Application once they have completed your forms.

## 15.) Supplements

**Writing Supplement:** Check to see if the universities you are applying to require supplements, additional information or essays, that you will need to submit along with the Common Application form. You will only be able to submit your writing supplement after you have submitted your Common Application. Some universities will let you submit the supplements online or by email, and others may ask that you mail your materials to the university. Supplements will differ from university to university.

If there is a red dash in the "Writing Supplement" column, you do not need to complete a supplement in order to apply.

My Colleges (6)	Deadline	Application	Writing Supplement
▶ Amherst College	11/15/2014	●	●
▶ Cornell University	—	●	—
▶ Harvard College	01/01/2015	●	●
▶ Haverford College	—	●	●
▶ Northwestern University	—	●	●
▶ Williams College	—	●	●

Like the university-specific Questions, the Supplements will vary significantly from university to university. Some will ask you to write about why you want to attend that institution, and others may ask you to talk about your extra-curricular activities in more depth.

**Art Supplement:** All universities may "host" their own arts forms if they choose to do so. If so, they will have a space for you to upload your work or links to it online. In the "Questions" section, there may be a question that asks if you intend to submit an art supplement. If you select "yes," an "Art Supplement" tab will appear on the menu under the writing supplement.

**Amherst College**

Questions ✓

Assign Recommenders ✓

Submission - Common App

Writing Supplement

Submission - Writing Supplement

**Art Supplement**

Georgia Institute of Technology

Harvey Mudd College

### Art Supplement

- You have indicated in your application answers for this college that you intend to complete the Art Supplement.
- This college has chosen to integrate its Art Supplement with the Common Application using a service called SlideRoom.
- The button below will redirect you to the SlideRoom website where you will be able to complete your Art Supplement for this college. It will be your responsibility to ensure successful submission of the Art Supplement via SlideRoom.

[Amherst College Art Supplement Site](#) →

**Athletic Supplement:** The Common Application no longer has an Athletic Supplement. If you are applying for a sports scholarship to a school using the common application, you need to contact the coach directly and send them relevant information including a sports CV,



coach letter, national team verification letter and if relevant link to video. Information about athletic participation will also be collected from the activities section on the application and available to coaches if admissions offices choose to forward it. You can find additional information about Sports Scholarships, visit Fulbright's webpage on Sports Scholarships (<http://fulbright.org.uk/study-in-the-usa/undergraduate-study/funding/sports-scholarships>).

After you have completed all parts of the supplement, you can then submit the supplement. After doing so, your application should be complete.

## 16. Monitoring your school's submissions

Even when you have completely submitted your Common Application to all your universities, it is very important that you make sure that your school submits all of your forms. **If your school representatives do not submit the required forms to the universities where you apply, your applications will NOT be considered complete and will not be assessed.**

It's important to remember that because many deadlines for US colleges and universities are over the December holiday season, counsellors and teachers should be given plenty of notice ahead of the holidays to submit the forms on time. You will be able to monitor your counsellor's and teacher's progress under the Assign Recommenders tab for each university. In the example to the right, you can see that one teacher recommendation has been completed while the other has not been started.

To help your school throughout this process, please refer teachers and counsellors to our Guidance for Common Application School Forms.

### ✓ FERPA Release Authorization

I have authorized release of all requested records covered under the FERPA act and have waived my right to access. [show details](#)

### ✓ Counselor



Jamie Dunn School Counselor	Invited: 08/04/2014
School Report	Submitted: 08/04/2014
Optional Report	Submitted: 08/04/2014
Mid Year Report	Submitted: 08/04/2014
Final Report	

### ✓ Teacher

Please select and assign the Teacher(s) below whose recommendation will be submitted to this college on your behalf. You must first invite a Teacher using the 'Invite Teacher' link before you can assign them for this college.

Required: 2

Allowed: 3

Vivian Chen English	Assigned: 08/04/2014	
Teacher Evaluation	Not started	
Penny Egan Foreign Language	Assigned: 08/04/2014	
Teacher Evaluation	Submitted: 08/04/2014	
<a href="#">Add Another</a>		