

College Application Handbook

US, UK & Canada



Collège Notre-Dame de Jamhour

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WELCOME LETTER

Searching for the right college or university is a family affair, but the primary responsibility (and most of the work) rests with the student. It is YOUR future, and the more effort you put into the college search and application process, the more likely you are to get the most appropriate and exciting result for you.

It is not an easy commitment--when done properly, it will feel like you have a full-time job in addition to the demands of Terminale. But a good result will be worth every effort you make. The road leading to your future begins right here and now.

This handbook has been designed to inform you and help you maintain a timeline which respects the many requirements of the application process. With the support of our guidance counseling team, you will:

- 1) Perform critical self-assessment—know what you want
- 2) Produce your first resume and brag sheet
- 3) Research colleges and universities which are best suited to your interests and abilities
- 4) Narrow your choices down to a final list of Match, Reach, and Safety schools
- 5) Prepare the elements of the Common App, including essays and supplemental materials
- 6) Schedule and prepare for necessary standardized tests
- 7) Complete your application checklist
- 8) Submit your applications
- 9) Wait for results

Every applicant is unique. Colleges and universities seek students who they believe will add to the enrichment and diversity of their incoming freshman class. Therefore, the key to a successful application is never one element alone—not just stellar grades, an impeccable essay or outstanding extracurricular activities. Instead, you should focus on showcasing all these elements in your own story, with emphasis on your individuality.

It's important to remember that there is no such thing as a “best” college. What you are searching for is a school which is the *best for you*. Of the thousands of options available, both in Lebanon and abroad, your search will narrow in on schools which offer the program of study you want in an environment where you could feel happy and fulfilled.

By April of next year, you'll know where you are heading and we hope you'll be proud of the effort it took to get there.

Good luck! We look forward to supporting you during this very exciting time of transition.

The Jamhour Guidance Counseling Team

SELF-ASSESSMENT

It's time to think about what you have accomplished during your high school career and where that might lead you in the future. The questions below are intended for your own reflection, but share them with your parents or someone who knows you well if you feel that another opinion might be valuable. Consider the following:

- What do I want from a college education?
- What career options seem most interesting to me?
- What academic subjects would I like to explore?
- What are my major activities and interests outside of school?
- How motivated am I?
- Am I using my potential and capacities to the fullest?
- How do I respond to challenges? To setbacks?
- In what ways have I shown leadership potential?
- How am I unique?

CREATING YOUR RESUME/CV

Preparing a resume during Premiere will give you an enormous head start on the application cycle. It can help you to understand your passion, talent, initiative and the impact of your experiences, putting them into the context of the unique story you will tell in your application.

Your first resume is a document that will grow and change as you do—you'll rework it throughout university, job-hunting and professional employment. It can have many forms, but certain content is critical. Be sure to include sections on Education, Extracurricular Activities, and Hobbies/Interests. Include information about things which illustrate who you are and what goals you have set for yourself.

You can find easy to use resume templates online. We also recommend that you allow an adult to review your resume drafts.

THE BRAG SHEET/PARENTS' BRAG SHEET

This is another important tool in your quest for self-knowledge. Complete it during the summer before Terminale, and give a copy to your guidance counselor and recommending teachers as the school year begins.

The Brag Sheet has two main purposes: it will help us know you as more than just a name on paper and a set of grades. The Brag Sheet may also inspire you as you begin to work on the very important Personal Essay. This is a critical exercise in self-reflection which should not be undervalued. Your answers will, of course, be kept confidential.

The Parents' Brag Sheet allows recommenders another perspective on your personal growth and development. Encourage your parents to submit it to your guidance counseling team as they prepare a valuable letter of recommendation on your behalf.

BRAG SHEET QUESTIONS CAN BE FOUND UNDER "OTHER RESOURCES" AT THE BACK OF THE HANDBOOK.

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A COLLEGE

One common misconception we see in students and in their parents is the belief that the Ivy League schools (plus MIT, Stanford and a handful of others) are the only great options out there. This thinking couldn't be more wrong for two reasons: first, because the acceptance rates at these institutions are ridiculously low, it actually limits your chances of studying abroad; and second because many of the best schools for specific fields of study are not widely known in Lebanon.

We challenge you to explore broadly, carefully considering all factors that are meaningful to YOU, to uncover a final list of colleges that reflect your needs and desires for higher education. Do your research online and using the Fiske Guide or similar journals. See the Resources section at the back of the Handbook for help starting your online research.

- ❖ Does College X offer the **program of study** I want?
- ❖ Is there **academic pressure/competition** amongst the students?
- ❖ What is the **average class size**? Number of **students per professor**?
- ❖ What percentage of graduates get **jobs** immediately? Go to **graduate school**? Do they get their first choice?

Other Important Factors:

Selectivity: Compare your standardized test scores, grades and class ranking with the admissions statistics provided. Your numbers should be in the range of their accepted students.

Location: Urban school or campus in a forest? Close to a relative? Distance to a major airport? Autumn leaves and snow or palm trees?

Reputation: Check rankings with US News and World Report or similar. Research important students' perspectives on campus life or academics. Are students happy there?

Size: Very small (less than 1500 students), Small (1500-3000), Medium (3000-6000), Large (7000-15,000), Extra Large (15,000+)

Percentage of International Students: Often between 8%-11% of enrolled students

Aspects of Residential Life: Is on-campus housing available all four years? How is the food service rated? Is there an active social scene? Do most students get involved in clubs and organizations? Is Greek life important?

HOW MANY SCHOOLS SHOULD I CONSIDER?

It is advisable to apply to **6-9 universities** at least, with the following breakdown:

- ✓ 2-3 **Reach** schools
 - ✓ 2-4 **Match** schools
 - ✓ 2 **Safety** schools

“Reach”

A reach school is one where your academic credentials (SAT and GPA/class rank) are in the bottom half of the school's range for admitted students. Reach schools are long-shots, but they should still be possible (and not a dream). Any school with an acceptance rate below 12% should be considered a reach school.

“Match”

A match school is one where your academic credentials (GPA, SAT scores, and class rank) are in the top half of the school's range for admitted students. There are no guarantees, but it's not unreasonable to be accepted to several of your match schools.

“Safety”

A safety school is one where your academic credentials are equal to or surpass the top 25% of admitted students. You should be reasonably certain that you will be admitted to your safety schools. Like the rest of your list, these should also be colleges you'd be happy to attend.

NB: If your research yields a clear favorite college or university—one to which you would almost certainly say yes if admitted—consider applying to its Early Action, Restrictive Early Action or Early Decision program (explained in the Glossary). Note that your grades, test scores, and class rank should be within the range of its admissions standards. Applying early has many benefits, and if you have identified a good match you can show an extra level of commitment by submitting by November 1st.

Be careful, though. Choosing an Early Decision program represents a binding agreement to attend, should you be accepted in December. Only apply Early Decision if you are completely convinced that you want to attend and can afford tuition regardless of any financial aid package you might hope to receive.

PLANNING FOR TERMINALE

Completing your applications accurately and on time is critical. Be very aware of all deadlines and keep a checklist of all upcoming requirements.

- 1) Meet with a counselor one-on-one to discuss your plans.
- 2) Plan ahead—be aware of all deadlines. Create a calendar for August-December. Hang it in full view of your desk or as the background on your computer.
- 3) Create your first resume.
- 4) Attend visits with college representatives. (during lunch hour at school)
- 5) Finalize your college list by mid-summer. Decide where to apply early.
- 6) Be aware of the requirements of each school (supplemental material, separate app?).
- 7) Keep track of passwords/login information for each school.
- 8) Create a Common App account.
- 9) Submit essay drafts to your counselor for feedback.
- 10) Request recommendation letter(s) from teacher(s).
- 11) Submit your Brag Sheet to college counselor to facilitate your recommendation letter.
- 12) Take all necessary standardized tests and have official results sent to your universities.
- 13) Complete your applications one by one, beginning in August.
- 14) Schedule interviews/auditions or plan to submit DVD's or portfolio.
- 15) Investigate scholarship and financial aid possibilities.
- 16) Check whether you must submit a certificate of finances to your universities.
- 17) Edit and proofread EVERYTHING. Twice!
- 18) Make copies of all documents you submit.
- 19) Stay organized.
- 20) Avoid senior slump. Colleges care about your final grades, and hold the right to revoke your acceptance if they are not consistent.

WHAT US UNIVERSITIES WILL EXAMINE IN THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

- 1) Your grades from 3^{ème} to Terminale
- 2) The rigor of your chosen curriculum
- 3) Your academic class rank (Top 10%? Top 25%?)
- 4) Activities and leadership background, including volunteer service
- 5) Teacher/Counselor recommendations
- 6) Personal Essay and supplemental essays
- 7) Secondary School Report (submitted by your counselor)
- 8) Standardized Test Scores (SAT I and II, TOEFL or IELTS)
- 9) Your Art Supplement (Music, Performing or Visual Arts), should you choose to submit one.
- 10) Your ability to pay fees. Universities will often require a bank guarantee or a signed statement of financial responsibility from your parents, though for many schools your eligibility is not reliant on your ability to pay.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The Application

The application is a reflection of you—it is important to make a good impression. If you can't visit the campus in person, this may be your only chance to introduce yourself. Answer every question thoughtfully.

Most colleges and universities encourage students to apply online. Many US universities use the Common Application, which allows you to enter basic information (including your Personal Statement) only once. (NB: Most universities will require you to complete supplemental material which is unique to their school.) You can register with the Common App at any time, but certainly start your account by early August.

Schools which are not on the Common App will have their own online platforms.

If you apply online, do it early, read directions carefully, check the status of your applications often. Applying typically costs around \$75 per school, which can be paid online when you submit your finished application.

Other things to keep in mind

Meet deadlines: Missing a deadline reflects poorly on you and will automatically get rejected. Keep in mind the reality of living overseas and the time mail takes to get from place to place (a minimum of ten days). An application received early will get a more positive evaluation than one received at the last minute.

Transcripts and Recommendations: Every application must have a complete and official high school transcripts. These will be uploaded by your counselor. You must request recommendations from your teachers and counselor. Be sure to give them plenty of time to write your letter. **Do not** provide more recommendations than required unless there are very special circumstances. It is not to your advantage.

Official Score Reports: Universities will require an official score report from all SAT I, SAT II (if required), TOEFL or IELTS exams sent directly from the testing center. Keep track of which colleges need score reports—you can request free score reports each time you take a test, but the request should be made when you register. It is your responsibility to send scores to your selected colleges. Again, watch your deadlines. For EA/ED applications, the final testing period is November. For regular admission, December and sometimes January tests are possible.

Common Application: Used by most US colleges and universities. Caution: supplemental material and/or essays need time and attention. The supplemental material is an opportunity to show you've done your research on a particular school; thus you should make your answers as school-specific as possible. Treat every application as a unique entity. Rank your school preferences, and complete the applications one by one.

CRITICAL TASKS DURING THE SUBMISSION PROCESS

- Make sure your spelling, grammar and punctuation are flawless.
- If you declare a major, be certain the college offers that major. Though "undecided" is appropriate for US schools, for the UK you must commit to a major.
- Do not leave items on the application blank. If the item does not apply to you, use a dash or N/A.
- Carefully consider your activities--it is unnecessary to have a long list. The quality of your participation (measured by your involvement and commitment) is more important.
- If asked for work experience, be honest and explain that summer jobs are not part of the Lebanese cultural background and that employment opportunities are scarce for those under eighteen.
- Be honest and do not exaggerate.
- Maintain a college file of all paperwork received and sent.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR APPLICATIONS

- 1) Create a Common App account.
- 2) Download an application from any university not on the Common App.
- 3) Use the Jamhour CEEB code 54350 when registering for any SAT test.
- 4) Request that scores are sent directly to your chosen universities, if desired.
- 5) Inform your counselor of your college list. Update regularly with any changes.
- 6) Request teacher recommendations early. Follow up so they are submitted in good time.
- 7) Submit applications at least one week before any deadline.
- 8) Submit relevant financial aid documents.
- 9) Contact your universities to make sure the application is complete.

JAMHOUR'S RESPONSIBILITY IN THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- 1) Submit student's transcripts and predicted grades (when necessary)
- 2) Submit school profile.
- 3) Submit mid-year grades.
- 4) Submit end-of-year grades.
- 5) Submit counselor recommendation.
- 6) Assist and advise when possible.
- 7) Maintain strict confidentiality.

CALENDAR: COLLEGE SEARCH AND APPLICATION PROCESS

January to June, Premiere— Begin college research. Create a resume. Get to know your guidance counseling team. Take your parents to the information session for interested students and their families. Be prepared to ask questions. Prepare and register for all standardized tests. Register with the Common App. Begin to organize a preliminary list of interesting universities.

June — Continue college research. Identify teachers who could write a recommendation and chat informally about approaching them for a letter in September. Study for the TOEFL/IELTS and SAT subject tests if necessary.

July/August — Identify your top universities and make contact with their admissions teams to show your interest. (Try to target the specific counselor who reads applications for Lebanon or the region.) Sign up for October SAT I or II. *Be aware that some SAT II subjects may need extra preparation.* Take a prep course or use a study guide to prepare. Take the TOEFL or IELTS to get it out of the way. Complete the Personal Information section of the Common App. Consider essay topics and begin a draft of your Personal Statement. Complete the Brag Sheet.

September — Meet with your counselor and present your final college list, resume and brag sheets. Discuss whether you want to submit an application for either Early Action or Early Decision. Invite your counselor to the Common App as both “Counselor” and “Advisor”. Formally request recommendations from your teacher(s), with a date for completion. Register for October and November SAT dates. Attend lunch hour college presentations at Jamhour. Continue working on the common app and essays.

October — Meet with your counselor. Submit a draft of your personal essay for review. Request transcripts and school report to be sent by Jamhour to your chosen universities. Register for December SAT test dates, if necessary. Early Action/ Early decision dates are fast approaching. Essays should be nearing your final draft, including supplemental essays for each university. October 15th deadline for Oxford/Cambridge applications.

November — Meet with your counselor. Confirm that your transcripts, recommendation letters and school report have been submitted. Finalize your essays. November 1st and 15th are deadlines for some US early action and early decision applications. Take SAT I or II and have scores sent directly to your chosen universities. November 30th is the deadline for University of California applications.

December — Final opportunity to take SAT I or II. Filing deadlines for UK and most US universities. Early Action/Early Decision applicants will have a reply around the middle of December. US applicants must file FAFSA documents to receive financial aid. International students should check which financial documents are required and prepare them.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Most schools will ask for a guidance counselor recommendation and one (or maximum two) teacher recommendations. You can approach the teacher(s) you would like to ask by the end of Première. Ask politely if your teacher would be kind enough to accept your request. You may offer your teacher a version of your “brag” sheet and your resume to help him/her write an appropriate letter of recommendation. If possible, have a quick meeting to explain your goals for college and beyond, and set a date for completion. Once the letter is written and signed, it will be translated (if necessary) by a member of staff and given to the guidance counselor for submission. **You will not have access to the letter at any point in time, so make sure to choose a recommender who knows you and your work very well.**

How to Choose a Recommender

- 1. Choose teachers who know what you can do:** Your most insightful supporter should be someone who is familiar with your critical thinking and communication skills. Note that someone who taught you recently (i.e. a teacher from Première) is preferable to admissions teams.
- 2. Give your counselor and teachers the courtesy of time:** Your recommenders need time to think about and prepare the letter. Allow them at least three weeks to prepare your recommendation, and an extra week if it needs to be translated into English.
- 3. Talk with your recommenders about why college is important to you:** Make sure your recommenders are sufficiently informed so they can help you tell your "story." Give them the necessary information and insight so they can write a thoughtful, well-balanced letter on your behalf.
- 4. Share your brag sheet and resume:** While your teachers know you well from your work in their respective classrooms, they may not have the benefit of the big picture that defines you. Your parents should contribute their Brag Sheet questions as well. (See the final page of the Application Handbook.
- 5. Provide a list of your application deadlines and the appropriate forms:** Most recommendation letters can be filed online through the Common Application. If not, your recommender will need to provide a signed original copy (and translation if necessary) to Ms. Nathalie Sherfan to be sealed and stamped in a Jamhour envelope. You will then send it (along with transcripts and the school report) by mail or FedEx to the relevant admissions department.

THE ESSAY/PERSONAL STATEMENT

Colleges ask you for an essay so that they can learn about you as a person. Transcripts, test scores and recommendations give the college a profile of your abilities and your accomplishments, but to get to know the person behind the numbers, the lists and the scores, they want to see something personal. Decide what else the admissions team should know, then write about yourself as clearly, interestingly and honestly as you can. The Common Application offers you many different prompts. Choose the one which inspires you the most.

Very important “dos” and “don'ts” for writing college essays

Do display skills. High school graduates are expected to have a certain proficient level of writing. This is no place for misspelled words, incorrect punctuation, tense shifts, incomplete sentences, or disagreement between subject and verb. A good essay will have variation in sentence lengths and structure, and will have a captivating introduction, demonstrative middle, and conclusive end. Begin working on your essay as early as possible, so you are sure to leave ample time for several drafts. Then proofread and have someone else proofread as well.

Do realize that words count. Try to avoid overused words such as "very", "a lot", "awesome", "interesting", "nice", and all forms of the verb "to be". On the other hand, do not use vocabulary just to impress the reader. It will show. Sound natural.

Don't exaggerate. Be yourself. Admissions officers have seen it all and they'll recognize exaggeration or falsehood immediately.

Don't play it safe. Admission committees read thousands of essays. Choose a topic you care about and your essay will be creative. And if your essay stands out, chances are your application will as well.

Don't recycle old work. Be careful that your supplemental essay for Boston College doesn't mention how you love the weather in San Francisco. Recycle essays with great care.

Do view the essay as a marketing tool. *It should make the reader want to accept you.* This is your chance to shine and share with the committee a part of you that they haven't had the opportunity to see yet.

Do let your essay should reflect the writer. "Show, don't tell" is a phrase you'll hear repeated by admissions counselors everywhere. A pianist could write about the act of composing. An eagle scout could discuss how challenging it is to lead a group of eager 10 year-olds. You could describe the moment when you knew you wanted to become a doctor. The opportunities are endless. **NO ONE CAN OR SHOULD WRITE THIS VERY PERSONAL STATEMENT BUT YOU.** Your words, your voice and your opportunity to show the admissions counselor what you have to offer. Make the most of this chance.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

Whether you plan to study in Lebanon or abroad, chances are that you'll need to take at least one standardized test, and you will need to prepare.

SAT I (Scholastic Aptitude Test, Part One)

The SAT I measures a set of skills deemed to relate to successful performance in college. It is **not** an intelligence test.

You can prepare to take the SAT I by enrolling in a prep class or by using study guides which are readily available. (Check out the Khan Academy for online prep options.) Make an effort to read in English as often as possible. This should be done well in advance of your test date. You cannot prepare for the SAT I overnight or even in a week.

Colleges use the scores as a supplement to secondary school grades. Your results help them place your performance as an individual, as well as the preparation you've received at Jamhour, in a larger context. It is advisable to take the SAT I in spring of Première and perhaps again in the fall of Terminale.

SAT II: The Subject Tests

The Subject Tests are designed to measure knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge within specific subject areas. Not all schools require subject tests, though you'll find that competitive US schools usually require two or three subject tests. Check each school's admission procedures to see which tests are required. Some universities will not require you to submit SAT II scores, but only *recommend* it. **Be advised that if this is the case, you absolutely should make the extra effort to take the requested number of subject tests and do very well.** The SAT II subject tests help showcase a student's strengths.

Each subject test is one hour long.

AUB and LAU no longer use subject tests in the admissions process. Keep in mind, however, that if you would like to have your freshman year at AUB or LAU equated with the Lebanese Baccalaureate, you must take three SAT II tests. Be sure to put the AUB (0902) and LAU (2595) codes as well as the codes of schools you are seriously contemplating each time you take an SAT test. It is your responsibility to send your scores to colleges.

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)

The TOEFL measures your ability to use and understand English at the university level. It evaluates how well you combine your listening, reading, speaking and writing skills to perform academic tasks. More than 30 million people from all over the world have taken the TOEFL test to demonstrate their English-language proficiency. The average English skill level ranges between Intermediate and Advanced.

We advise that you register to take the TOEFL during the summer before Terminale. If you need to retake, you can take the TOEFL up to once a month. Register through Amideast (01 789 901) or at <http://www.ets.org/toef> . NB: if you know the schools to which you want to apply, you can elect to send up to five test scores for free when you register.

IELTS (International English Language Testing System)

IELTS is a three-hour exam which will assess your English skills—reading, writing, listening and speaking. The IELTS is recognized by top universities all over the world (including all eight Ivy League schools).

You must register through the British Council, which currently organizes three testing sessions per month at their office near USJ. Registration can be done at their office or online using the following link: <http://www.ielts.org/>

We advise that you register to take the IELTS during the summer before Terminale. Places are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis, so it is recommended to register at least two months prior to the test date you want. Results are available less than two weeks after taking the IELTS.

For the US, many universities accept both exams, though TOEFL is the sure bet. The UK leans more towards IELTS, which is a British-based examination.

NB: It is advisable to take either of these English proficiency exams during the summer before Terminale. Get it over with.

GLOSSARY

Early Decision (ED)

Early Decision is the application process in which students **commit** to attend their first choice institution if admitted. Offers are made in mid-December to students who apply by the Early Decision deadline. Enrollment for those accepted is **mandatory** unless a student who applies for financial aid from the university is not offered an award that makes attendance possible. In this situation only, the student may decline the offer of admission and be released from the Early Decision Commitment.

Only students with excellent grades and excellent scores should apply early, and then only if you feel your application is at its very best by the end of October. Unless you are absolutely sure of your choice, it is better to take the time to perfect all the elements of your application. Note that AUB's early decision program is non-binding.

Early Action (EA)

Early Action is the application process in which students apply to a preferred university and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date, usually in mid-December. Students who are admitted under Early Action are not obliged to accept the institution's offer of admission or to submit a deposit until the regular reply date (i.e. not prior to May 1). The benefit of applying Early Action is that, if accepted, you have much less stress waiting for the April 1st decisions. This is a situation where it really pays to be organized and ahead of the game.

Restricted Early Action (REA) or Single Choice Early Action (SCEA)

Some schools have recently applied REA or SCEA programs. Read each school's requirements carefully, because they can vary greatly from school to school. Typically REA/SCEA schools allow a single early submission but offer students the flexibility of making a final choice after all Regular Decision responses have been received.

Regular Decision (RD)

Students submit applications by a specified date (normally around January 1st) and receive a decision in late March or early April. A student may apply to multiple colleges without restriction. Regular admission gives you more time to prove yourself during the first term of Terminals, both academically and in extracurricular activities.

Rolling Admission

Rolling Admission is the application process in which an institution reviews applications as they are submitted and renders admissions decisions to students throughout the admission cycle. It is not a common practice among selective universities.

Deferral

One possible result of applying early is to receive a Deferral. It is not a rejection—rather, the admissions team prefers to review your application alongside others in the Regular Admission pool of applicants. If you do receive a deferral, notify your guidance counselor for appropriate follow up measures which will send a clear message of your continued interest to the university of your choice.

Wait List

The wait list is an admission decision option utilized by institutions to protect against shortfalls in enrollment. Wait lists are sometimes made necessary because of the uncertainty of the admissions process. Students submit applications for admission to multiple institutions and may receive several offers of admission. By placing a student on the wait list, an institution does not initially offer or deny admission, but extends to a candidate the possibility of admission in the future, before the institution's admission cycle is concluded. **Note that it is rare for the most competitive colleges and universities to accept students from their wait list. We recommend that you turn your focus to a school which admitted you outright.**

CEEB -- College Entrance Examination Board

CEEB Number/High School Code: Six digits number used to identify high schools.

Jamhour's CEEB is: 54350

FAFSA Free Application for Federal Student Aid form, required by all US colleges for US nationals and Green Card holders; available on line.

GPA Grade point average.

National Reply Date May 1. The date by which students must notify colleges of their decisions.

CSS Profile Financial aid form required by colleges for institutional aid.

Test Center Code

This is a five-digit code used to identify CEEB test sites. Register early to take the test in your desired location.

UCAS

Universities and Colleges Admissions Services. This is the central application system for all UK universities. You can submit a paper application or online.

OUAC -- Ontario Universities' Application Center. This is a must for all Ontario Canadian schools. You can submit it online or in paper format.

OTHER RESOURCES

www.collegeboard.org

SAT registration and college planning information.

www.unigo.org Scholarship and college search tool featuring student reviews.

www.princetonreview.com

Use this for all-important research on possible majors: click on “college” tab at top, then click on “research”, scroll down to click on “search for a major”, and browse alphabetically.

www.ucas.com

Start with the Course Search and find everything related to your UK application.

www.finaid.org

Start here for financial aid possibilities and information.

www.fulbright.sk/data/Doug-Thompson-Scholarships-list-2013.pdf

A comprehensive list of colleges offering the best financial aid and scholarship opportunities for international students.

www.womenscolleges.org

www.ctcl.org Colleges that change lives database.

www.college-scholarships.com

www.cappex.com

Learn your chances of being admitted to almost all US schools.

www.youvisit.com/colleges

www.Bigfuture.collegeboard.org

A MUST FOR MOST SCHOOLS

www.commonapp.org –a tool which allows you to apply to 700 schools online

WHAT'S YOUR MAJOR?

www.college.upenn.edu/curriculum/major_choosing.html – some factors to consider when choosing a major

FINANCIAL AID

www.fastweb.com one of the best for scholarship information

www.finaid.org –excellent info and connections to other sites

www.dfee.gov.uk –site for department of education and employment. Find information about financial arrangements at UK universities.

www.fafsa.ed.gov –the main US financial aid application on line

www.iefc.org –Financial aid for international students

OTHER useful links

www.linkmag.com/news/CNEWS.html – links to online college newspapers

www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/college/corank.htm – US News and World Report rankings

www.yearoutgroup.org/organisations.htm – thorough list of organizations providing gap year experiences

www.unitedstatesvisa.gov

SUMMER PROGRAMS

www.summerfun.com

<http://highered.cois.org/students/summersprograms.htm>

www.enrichmentalley.com

<http://www.wheretherebedragons.com> gap-year and summer programs

TESTING

www.collegeboard.org - for **SAT question of the day**: once on the College Board Web Site go to the “**For Students**” section and click on Sat question of the day.

www.kaplan.com

www.testprep.com

www.toefl.org

THINKING ABOUT UNIVERSITY IN THE UK?

www.ucas.com

www.ucas.com/studyuk --specifically for International Students

www.hotcourses.com

www.studyintheuk.org

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/parents-and-guardians>

- Let the college counselor know that you plan to apply to the UK
- Typically, the 3-year programs are looking for students who have completed or will complete the IB diploma.
- As a French Bac candidate, you may need to apply for a foundation year.
- Go to www.ucas.com to create an account. We recommend applying as an independent.
- Click on “register/apply for 2018-2019”
- If you are planning to apply for medicine, dentistry or veterinary science – the deadline is October 15th. Be sure to confirm the date and plan accordingly.
- If you plan to apply to either Oxford or Cambridge, the deadline is also October 15th.
- You may choose to submit your application to 5 universities in total.
- You must input your data, including your educational information on the UCAS form
- The college counselor or a teacher who knows you well must write a reference letter (student must complete a Brag Sheet) and input the predicted grades.
- Once you have completed the form and paid, you “send it” via UCAS to the college counselor. The college counselor will review and send back to you if needed. When the application is complete, the college counselor will submit it on your behalf.

THE PERSONAL STATEMENT

This is an important component of the application. The personal statement is your opportunity to sell yourself. You should include:

- Reasons for wanting the course
- Your relevant experience
- Evidence of your interest and/or skills in this field
- Address your motivations for studying in the UK
- Include any activities that show your dedication or readiness
- Discuss your English language level

Online Support for the UK

For the UK, instructions will be given on how to actually apply online: www.ucas.ac.uk

www.ucas.co.uk – extensive search information about UK universities

THINKING ABOUT CANADA?

<http://www.universitystudy.ca/>

www.studyincanada.com

www.ouac.on.ca - Ontario University Site

www.ocas.ca – Ontario College Site

Applying to Canada?

- Copy of passport sent with application.
- IB predicted grades are important for the admission process.
- SAT scores should be sent.
- An application number should be attached to your transcript.
- Apply early
- Ontario Universities Application Centre - www.ouac.on.ca

Brag Sheet Questions

- 1) How long have you been a student at Jamhour? If you transferred in, please explain where you came from and why you changed schools.
- 2) What makes you different from other students? Everyone is “hard-working”, so go further.
- 3) What is your most significant contribution to your community?
- 4) List 2 or 3 teachers (specify the specialty and the grade) who know you well and could speak confidently about your academic achievements.
- 5) What activities (in school or out) have you participated in since 3^{ème}? Tell us about the impact of your participation—what has it meant to you?
- 6) Have you travelled abroad? In what way did that impact your perspective?
- 7) What languages do you speak? Please indicate your level of fluency, including English.
- 8) Do you have any hobbies or interests outside of school? If not, what do you do in your free time?
- 9) What have you done the last two summer? (i.e. camp, paid employment, volunteering, internships, scouts, Red Cross, etc.)
- 10) In what ways have you grown intellectually during the last four years of school?
- 11) What do you believe are your greatest academic strengths and weaknesses? Don't list school subjects—tell us what qualities define you as a student.
- 12) What do you consider to be your greatest personal strengths and weaknesses?
- 13) Describe a personal achievement which gave you satisfaction—preferably something unrelated to academics.
- 14) Tell us about any volunteer experiences you have had. Did this help shape your perspective in any significant way?
- 15) List any awards you have received since 3eme.
- 16) What academic areas are you interested in pursuing at university? Is there a subject you have never learned about formally, but are eager to explore?
- 17) If you have long-term career goals, please tell us about them. The sky is the limit—if you could do anything in the world, what would it be?
- 18) How do you think your parents would describe you?
- 19) How do you think your friends would describe you?
- 20) Describe something or someone who inspires you. Why?
- 21) What's the best advice you've ever been given?
- 22) What is your favorite book or movie?
- 23) Did you experience any unusual circumstances during your high school career?
- 24) Is there anything else we should know about you? Please use the space below to add anything that will help us to know you as an individual.

The Brag Sheet (Parents' Version)

Why? Your student's teachers and counselor will soon need to write an important letter of recommendation on behalf of your child. A rich and balanced perspective of life outside the classroom will help us craft a valuable portrait, and ultimately a more helpful letter. The Brag Sheet (Parents' Version) will offer added insight to our efforts. Forward your responses directly to us using the contact details below.

1. During the past three or four years, what do you consider to be your child's most outstanding accomplishments? Please explain these accomplishments and their impact on your child.
2. During the past four years, in what areas has your child shown the most development and growth?
3. What personality traits set your child apart from others?
4. Describe your child in five adjectives, and explain briefly why you chose these particular words.
5. Tell us about any unusual or personal circumstances which may have affected your son or daughter's educational, extracurricular, or personal experiences.

--CONTACT US--

Parent Volunteers

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Jamhour Guidance Staff

Ms. Nathalie Sherfan: nathalie_sherfan@ndj.edu.lb

