

# **COLLEGE GUIDEBOOK**

**AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL  
KUWAIT**

**CLASS OF 2018**

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# CALENDAR FOR COLLEGE PLANNING

## Junior Year

- Take the PSAT in October.
- Continue working on achieving your best possible academic record.
- Continue your involvement in school and community activities.
- Watch the announcements for college visits and talk to representatives for colleges which you have an interest in.
- Begin a resume of individual membership in school organizations, leadership positions held, noteworthy in and out school achievements, and other pertinent information for use in the college application process. **See the sample resume at the back of this book.**
- Register by mid-March for the May or June SAT.
- Take an SAT Prep Class before the May Test. **One is offered at AIS twice a year.**
- Plan to take SAT II's in subject areas, which you have completed.
- **Take the TOEFL.**
- Start an active search for colleges. Develop a list of possibilities.
- Go online and download information and applications for colleges you are interested in applying to.
- Plan any summer college visits if at all possible.

## Summer after Junior Year

- Visit colleges if possible.
- Refine your college list to select serious options (between six to eight colleges is a good choice number).
- Download applications.
- **Take your TOEFL!!**

## Senior Year

- Read, work hard and participate in school and community activities.
- Make an appointment with your college counselor early in the school year to discuss your college choices.

## Fall

- Early Decision, Early Action applications and some rolling admissions applications are to be completed by the end of September.
- Begin gathering paperwork and working on applications. If colleges have provided forms for recommendations, give them to the teachers. Complete the essay(s) for your applications. Although questions on each application may differ, you can frequently use the same essay outline.
- **BE AWARE OF DEADLINES!!! You are responsible to know the deadlines for the colleges for which you are applying.**

- Make arrangements to have your TOEFL test again if necessary. Make sure you have TOEFL send your scores to colleges on your list.
- Register by mid-September for the November SAT I. (If you scored well on the May test this may not be necessary). Be sure that you request that test scores be sent to all colleges on your list.
- If needed, register in September for the October and December SAT II's. Most competitive colleges that you are interested in require the SAT II. It is your responsibility to find out which tests are required. You may need to do some review work before the test. Be sure that you request that test scores be sent to all colleges on your list.
- Complete all applications and verify that all documents under each college's checklist are complete and mail through the counseling office no later than early December. Apply earlier if possible.

## Winter

- Check with the counseling office to make sure that mid-year reports were sent if your colleges require them.
- Remember that you are still a student and your grades for the second semester do count. **COLLEGES REQUIRE A FINAL TRANSCRIPT.**
- Reply promptly and completely to any requests for additional information you may receive from colleges
- Keep your counselor and your parents updated on the status of your applications.

## Spring

- Receive notification of decisions on college applications. Colleges will begin responding in March. Be prepared with your responses and your deposits. Be sure to meet all deadlines. Most colleges will notify you in April as to whether or not you have been accepted. Before making a decision, look over your materials and be sure that your choice is a solid one.
- Do not worry if you are not accepted to a college of your choice. You should have applied at a number of schools; not every college is right for every person. Non-acceptance is not an indicator of your ability to succeed in college.
- Be sure to send your reply and deposit by the acceptance deadline or May 1<sup>st</sup> to the one college or university you have selected to attend.
- Plan for your Student Visa for schooling in another country.

# HOW YOUR APPLICATION IS EVALUATED

## School Record (Most Important)

Your application is much more than just your test scores. Test scores reflect only three hours of work. Your transcript reflects years of academic work.

Your school record includes not only grades you earned but also the courses you took. IB courses indicate a student who is challenging him/herself rather than just sliding through regular courses with good grades. Colleges and universities are interested in students who are taking the most academically challenging program available at their school. Improvement in grades is important. Lower grades in 9<sup>th</sup> grade followed by improvement through 11<sup>th</sup> grade can offset those initial lower grades. The converse is true. A downward trend from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade can be a very negative factor for an admission decision. **The greatest error a student can make is to opt for an easy senior schedule.** Colleges and universities are looking for students, not slackers.

## Recommendations

Recommendations can provide information about you that is not included elsewhere in the application. Make sure that the teachers you ask for recommendations know you. Get to know your teachers as well as your counselor so that they have a better picture of you. It seldom helps your application to submit recommendations from people who cannot speak of you academically. There is such a thing as “too many recommendations”.

### Guidelines to Follow for Recommendations

1. Allow teachers at least two weeks notification.
2. It is highly recommended that recommendations be confidential since colleges put less validity on non-confidential recommendations.
3. Choose your references wisely. The selected teachers should know you and your work.
4. No student should need more than three references from teachers.
5. Most colleges require a counseling recommendation and a school profile.
6. To facilitate the recommendation writing, **prepare a student resume.** See the sample at the back of this guide, page 30 or refer to Naviance.

### Activities

Avoid just listing activities. Use your activities to provide a picture of who you are. Sustained involvement over several years in one or a few activities is more important than just joining lots of groups for shorter periods of time. The nature of the interest is less important than your commitment to it.

## Test Scores

Test scores are used to compare and evaluate students but they are not the number one most important criteria for admission. Admissions officers say that it is generally only very high or very low scores that affect decisions. It is better to concentrate on hard work in your courses that impact the grades you earn.

Be sure to be rested when you take any admission test. Make sure to eat a good breakfast and even take a candy bar or two with you for some fast energy. A sweater in case the room is too cold might make you more comfortable.

A little review can make you familiar with the testing format (i.e. taking sample tests) but don't become obsessed.

## Essays

This is the one part of the application you can control-try to do a good job. An essay permits you the opportunity to express yourself so take advantage of it. You are very different from the typical U.S. high school applicant and the essay can be used to convey the difference.

Even more important than what you write is how you write it. Have parents, teachers, counselors, or friends read your essay for grammatical and expression errors. However, make sure you do the writing.

## Be Neat

Make sure that you submit a neat and tidy application. Make sure to do your own work. Secretarial-perfect applications are not advised. Use **BLACK INK** UNLESS OTHERWISE TOLD. Essays on a computer are usually acceptable but follow directions.

## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

### Meet Deadlines

Missing a deadline is not good. It reflects poorly upon you and it is possible that your application will not be accepted. Applications that arrive the day of the deadline via “courier” do not make the best impression. Mail your materials EARLY and in plenty of time to arrive before the deadline. An application received early sometimes is given a more positive evaluation than those received at the last minute. **NOTE: THE SCHOOL RECOMMENDS THAT ALL COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY CORRESPONDENCE BE SENT THROUGH THE SCHOOL. THE SCHOOL WILL TNT THIS INFORMATION FOR A SMALL FEE.**

### You Must Request Your Transcript and Recommendations

Every application must have a complete and official high school transcript. You must make a formal request to have the school send this to each college. Be sure to give your teachers and counselor plenty of time to write your recommendations. Give them the appropriate forms as soon as you have them. Do not provide more recommendations than are required. **All transcripts and letters of recommendation must be sent by A.I.S.**

### You Must Register for SAT I/II and TOEFL

**AIS is a test center, students must register to take the SAT I or II at AIS. Out test center number is 52925.** You are responsible for registering for these tests. Registration deadlines are absolute and are the dates on which the registration form must be at the testing agency. SAT I/II allows you to pay with a major credit card. **REGISTRATION IS ON-LINE AT [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). THOSE WHO REGISTER ON LINE WILL RECEIVE THEIR ADMISSION TICKET AFTER ON LINE VERIFICATION OF PAYMENT.** If English is not your first and only language you must take the TOEFL. For anyone who has lived outside the U.S. for a long time, it can be useful to have a TOEFL score. To take the TOEFL register on-line at [www.ets.org/toefl](http://www.ets.org/toefl). **TOEFL testing seats are limited so try to take your TOEFL during the summer between your Junior and Senior year.**

### You Must Request Official Scores

Colleges require an official score report sent directly from SAT and/or TOEFL. You must send an official request form directly to the testing company. You are provided forms with your student report. Requests can be made on line to both testing agencies.



## TESTING INFORMATION

**PSAT/NMSQT** (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Examination):

Taken by all juniors each October. The PSAT/NMSQT measures verbal and reasoning abilities and produces a verbal and math score. Scores are used to determine National Merit eligibility for U.S. citizens and permanent residents.

**TOEFL** (Test of English as a Foreign Language):

Required by all students who are not citizens of the U.S. and for whom English is not the first and only language. TOEFL is a test measuring one's ability to academically function in English. Registration should be done at AMIDEAST.

**SAT I** (Scholastic Aptitude Test):

The SAT is a three hours test which will primarily assess verbal reasoning, math reasoning and writing skills. The test is primarily multiple-choice. Students should register on line for this test. Use the school code and center number: **Code # 683086, Test Center #52925 to register.**

**SAT II:**

Subject tests are one hour, primarily multiple-choice in specific subjects. This test measure knowledge of particular subjects and the ability to apply that knowledge. Students may take up to three tests, matching the test choices to fit the college requirements. Registration is possible on line. Use the school code to have your scores reported to AIS: **Code # 683086**

**ACT:**

A college admission test that measures skills in four major curriculum areas: English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning. For students overseas, the ACT is given three times each year (December, February, and April). Registration materials are available at AMIDEAST. Use the school code to have your score reported to AIS: **Code # 683086**

The testing dates and registration deadlines for SAT I, SAT II, and TOEFL vary a bit from year to year. Students should visit the guidance office for details or log onto [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

# TYPES OF COLLEGE ADMISSION PLANS

## **Deferred Admissions:**

This option allows students once accepted, to defer or postpone their enrollment for one semester or up to one year. A student may wish to defer admission for a number of reasons including: finances, work, travel, sports, volunteer opportunities, and family or health issues. The application process and timetable are the same as regular admission, but students must notify the college that they will be deferring their enrollment until the following semester or year. Students will be required to pay a non-refundable deposit by May, the Candidate's Reply Date, to reserve a space for the following semester or academic year.

## **Nonrestrictive Application Plans**

*All of these admission options still allow students to wait until May 1 to make their final decisions.*

- **Regular Decision:** A student submits an application to an institution by a specified date and receives a decision within a reasonable and clearly stated period of time. A student may apply to other institutions without restriction. **Students have until May 1 to notify their college of choice that they plan to enroll and to decline all other offers of admission.**
- **Rolling Admission:** An institution reviews applications as they are completed and renders admissions decisions to students throughout the admission cycle. A student may apply to other institutions without restriction. If you are applying to a college with this plan you should apply well in advance of all stated deadlines. Rolling admission colleges fill available spaces on a first-come first-served basis.
- **Early Action:** Students apply to an institution and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date. Students who are admitted under Early Action are not obligated to accept the institution's offer of admission or to submit a deposit prior to May 1. Under Nonrestrictive Early Action, a student may apply to other colleges.

## **Restrictive Application Plans**

*These plans allow institutions to limit students from applying to other early plans.*

- **Early Decision:** students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if accepted, the definitely will enroll. While pursuing admission under an Early Decision plan, a student may apply to other institutions, but may have only one Early decision application pending at any time. Should a student who applies for financial aid not be offered an award that makes attendance possible, the student may decline the offer of admission and be released from the Early Decision commitment. Usually a nonrefundable deposit must be made well in advance of May 1. The institution will respond to an application for financial aid at or near the time of an offer of admission.
- **Restrictive Early Action:** Students who apply to an institution and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date. Institutions with Restrictive Early Action plans place restrictions on student applications to other early plans. Institutions will clearly articulate these restrictions in their Early Action policies and agreements with students. Students who are admitted under Restrictive Early Action are not obligated to accept the institution's offer of admission or to submit a deposit prior to May 1.

For more info, see [www.nacanet.org](http://www.nacanet.org)

**Open Admissions:**

Public institutions that are state funded most often use this admission plan. Open enrollment colleges have a published set of admission standards and students who meet or exceed these standards are typically admitted. These admission standards may include a certain grade point average, class rank, or SAT score.

**Priority Deadline:**

Many public universities state two application deadlines. There is a closing date for the receipt of all applications and an earlier priority date. Applications at these institutions are usually acted on in the order in which they are received with priority given to those applications received before the first deadline. Students applying to these types of institutions should send in their application material well before the priority closing date. Applicants are then notified on a rolling basis.

**University of California System:**

All applications to the University of California are due by November 30<sup>th</sup>.

## ESSAYS

The essay section of the application is one of the most important factors in admission to selective and highly selective schools. You should **use your essay as a way to express who you are**. Aside from an essay proving that you are capable of writing in English, it should be used to show how **you are “different”** from the other applicants. You have two things to prove:

- That you can write.
- That you are interesting.

The essay is a personal and very important aspect of your application-use it to your advantage.

### **IT IS NOT THE TOPIC YOU CHOOSE THAT MAKES AN ESSAY WORK, IT IS HOW YOU TREAT THE TOPIC THAT COUNTS**

The essay can either strengthen or weaken your application but it will not be the sole reason that you are accepted or rejected. Your topic can reflect your personal interests but this is not what is important. It is how you deal with the topic that creates the impact your statement will make.

The first thing you need to do is to read each essay question (combine the essay questions from all of your applications) and see what common factors might exist. If you can recycle an essay and use it more than once, do it. You cannot write acceptable essays though, in one sitting. **BE SURE TO ALLOW TIME TO THINK AND WRITE.**

The most important aspect you have to address is that a good essay involves good writing. Do not submit an essay that is technically inferior. Misspellings, incorrect punctuation, tense shifts, and inappropriately used language indicate that you couldn't care less about your application. Have lots of people read your work and comment on content, format, and structure. However, make sure that you do not edit out the essence of *you* in the process.

There are many reasons that schools require an essay. Some of them are:

- To determine if you can write coherently
- To learn something interesting or useful about you that is not in the application.

Some guidelines that you might keep in mind as you plan and write are:

- Do not use vocabulary just to impress the reader. Be you, put away the thesaurus, or use it sparingly.
- Length does not improve your essay. Stick to the topic and to the length requirement. If you are asked to write one page, write one page. If the essay requires 500 words, write 500, not 501.
- Have other people read your essay and proofread.
- Check your spelling and punctuation. Errors can spell doom for you.

- Don't be defensive. Don't use your essay to try and explain low grades nor test scores. If there is something that needs relating, let the counselor recommendation do it.
- Don't be trite. Don't tell the admissions committee what a wonderful school they have and why you will be an excellent student there.
- Try to be interesting and specific. You want the reader to have enjoyed your essay rather than having just survived reading it.
- Be neat. Use a word processor when you can. Make your work easy to read.
- Don't try to be cute. Avoid using exclamation point (Never!). Don't put quotation marks to try to make a word "a word". Just use the right word.
- Put yourself in the place of the reader. Is your essay going to be interesting and fun to read for someone who has been reading essays all day?
- Don't repeat information that is found elsewhere in your application.
- Don't submit extra materials unless they are called for.

There are many methods that can assist you in writing an essay that will enhance your application as you put thoughts and words to paper. It is essential that you make sure to allow yourself ample time for essay writing. **Don't put this off.**

You may be asked to include a self-description in some of your applications. Here are a few ideas you can use as a guide.

1. **Academic Qualities:**

Tell about yourself as a student. Mention what you feel are your strong areas and how you feel you have performed as a student.

2. **Personal Qualities:**

Describe how you feel about yourself as a person including those qualities that you feel comfortable with, the traits that you like in yourself.

3. **Your Values:**

In a few sentences, mention the things that you feel are important to you in your life, those things about which you feel strongly.

4. **Special Talent:**

Note any talent or abilities that you may have which have not been mentioned and which may not otherwise be known.

5. **Special Qualities:**

Are there any traits of which you may be aware, that you may possess, that you could recognize as unique, special, or different?

6. **Things About Which You Are Enthusiastic:**

Describe those things about which you are particularly interested, things you enjoy doing and in doing them, you receive satisfaction.

7. **Contributions:**

What would you consider to be important contributions you have made to your home, school, and community?

Without being egotistical, tell the college or university why you are more attractive as a candidate for this school than the person who has basically the same qualifications as you. The fact that you are living in Kuwait is not unusual unless you explain how it has affected you and how the experience has added to your personal growth. Remember, you are trying to let the university know about you and how you will add to their campus. They are also examining your writing style, creativity, and organization.

## Commonly Asked Essay Questions

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

(Common Application, 2013-2014, used by over 500 schools)

Pick one of the following topics and write a one-page essay on a sheet of paper:

1. A conclusion you have reached about a question with no provable answer.
2. An idea, value, or cause to which you have lost your heart and head.
3. An experience that changed your view of life in a deep and significant way.

(Cornell University)

Please answer one of the following (guideline: 250 words or less):

1. Which book or books have affected you most and why?
2. Discuss the academic experience (course, project, paper, event) that has meant the most to you.

(Harvard University)

While we are very interested in your intellectual abilities, your sense of imagination and creativity are also important to us. With this in mind, please respond to one of the following two requests. We're interested not so much in whom or what you choose to write about, but in how you use your choice to illustrate something important about yourself and your values.

1. If you were given the opportunity to spend an evening with any one person, living or deceased, or fictional, whom would you choose and why?
2. You have just completed your 300-page autobiography. Please submit page 217.

(University of Pennsylvania)

Diversity among people contributes to a unique blend of cultures and enriched the university community. Briefly describe the environment in which you grew up and how it influenced your interests, your values and your thinking about sexism, racism, and prejudice.

(Tufts University)

1. What prominent person (past or present) do you particularly admire? Why?
2. What idea has most influenced your life? Explain.
3. Describe a situation in which your values or beliefs were questioned by someone you respect. How was it resolved? (Dartmouth)

## WORDS OF ADVICE FROM FORMER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Students are often asked what advice they would give to the next class or classes. They are often very good at verbalizing the things that CAN and WILL make a difference. All of the following statements are direct quotes from students.

- Take SAT I/II and TOEFL in Grade 11 so that they are out of the way.
- Don't take it easy in Grade 11, thinking there's plenty of time to get sorted out in Grade 12-there isn't!
- Get into the habit of doing schoolwork after school. If you plan it properly you can get your work done and play.
- Socialize with a wide variety of people.
- If you speak a language other than English, try not to hang around with others with the same language all the time. It cuts you off socially and doesn't do your English any good either.
- Start thinking about planning your Extended Essay early (IB folks).
- Try to participate in extra-curricular activities-they're fun and you need them.
- If you don't understand something in a lesson, ask the teacher because, if you don't, you probably won't understand the next point either.
- Don't let work pile up. It will only make you feel guilty and miserable.
- Use private study periods constructively-you don't get back time you waste.
- Don't make hasty judgments about teachers. They know what they're talking about and the best way to learn is to cooperate with them. Make sure YOU know what YOU need for your IB and academic diploma courses-it avoids problems later.
- Don't moan about something if you haven't tried to do anything about it.
- Keep smiling.

# WHERE TO FIND INFORMATION

Remember that among the world's approximately 6000 colleges, there are dozens at which you can make the most of your abilities and interests. And that is what admissions officers are looking for, people who will be happy and productive on their campus.

## Websites for Colleges and Careers

### Popular Search Engines and Portals

Naviance

Noodle: [www.noodle.org/colleges](http://www.noodle.org/colleges) Excellent for determining "best fit".

ROI: [www.payscale.com/college-roi](http://www.payscale.com/college-roi) This site will allow you to measure the long term value of your university education against the cost.

College Factual: [www.collegefactual.com](http://www.collegefactual.com) Excellent search engine for university match, major, cost, along with independent rankings.

### College Admissions

In the Guidance Office you can find the school code number (683086), and testing dates for SAT I, & II. Websites, which offer a plethora of information, are the following:

### College Board Online

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) – The most comprehensive college information site. College Board Online includes College Board Tests, programs, and online registration, a "Test Question of the Day," a searchable database of colleges, financial aid information (including a financial aid calculator), career planning information, a fee-based essay evaluation service, online shopping, and more. **All 12<sup>th</sup> graders should have registered on My College Quick Start on College Board.**

### College Net

[www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com) – Search from a database of over 2500 2-year and 4-year colleges, universities, technical schools, law schools, and medical schools in the U.S. Canada, and New Zealand. Students can read college search related articles, take a 3-D campus tour, and apply for certain colleges online. There is also a scholarship search and information about financial aid.

### College View

[www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com) – Profiles over 3400 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities in the United States. Search the database by: major, state, student body size, type of college, athletic programs, city size or name. Find out about career planning, financial aid, or take a virtual college tour and then file electronic applications.



**Peterson's Online**

[www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com) – Peterson's includes information about educational programs at all levels and provides searchable databases of colleges and academic programs.

**Princeton Review Online**

[www.review.com](http://www.review.com) – This extensive college and career information site includes timed tests, essay hints, an internship database, job hunting hints, career lists by salary and industry, career profiles, and more.

## Identifying Potential Colleges Online

**College Net**

[www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com) – College Net provides separate databases for 4-year colleges and also for technical, community, and junior colleges and takes you to the actual web sites of the colleges. The 4-year college database is searchable by geography, tuition, enrollment, and potential college major.

**College Search**

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) - From the College Board. This college search can help students identify potential colleges. This site contains a searchable database of over 3200 institutions.

**U.S. News and World Report**

<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/home.htm> - This comprehensive site includes college and university rankings, reprinted articles from the print edition, listings of women's colleges, black colleges, and more. Features from the top 25 schools in several categories taken from the magazines current edition of America's Best Colleges.

## Financial Aid Information Online

**Fastweb**

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) – Students may register for scholarship information at Fastweb, one of the Internets largest free scholarship search sites.

**FinAid: The Financial Aid Information Page**

[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org) – This page (sponsored by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators) provides links to many sources of information about student financial aid.

## Planning Your Future Online

**Career Assessment**

[www.careerccc.org/careerdirections](http://www.careerccc.org/careerdirections)

[www.careerccc.org/destination2020](http://www.careerccc.org/destination2020)

**Naviance**

**College Board: My Road**

**The occupational Outlook Handbook**

[www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco) - When considering potential college majors, students may check out employment trends in the electronic version of *The Occupational Outlook Handbook*. The entire handbook, searchable by keyword, is included.

## COLLEGE VISITS

Each year a wide variety of representatives, who are actively recruiting qualified applicants for their campuses, visit our school. This is an excellent opportunity to speak to knowledgeable people who can answer questions accurately with current information. These visits are announced in the daily bulletin, and students may sign up in the guidance office if they are interested in meeting with the college representative.

If you plan to attend a college visit make a photocopy of the college visit information sheet found at the back of this handbook. You should take advantage of this opportunity to ask specific questions about the school. Some questions you may find useful:

### **Characteristics:**

Where is the campus located?

What is the surrounding community like? Does it support the school?

Is the college private, public, or church-affiliated?

What is the current student enrollment?

Does the college have a core course requirement? What is it?

Are library resources accessible by computer?

### **Academics:**

What is the average class size? Largest? Smallest?

What is the student to teacher ratio?

What percent of freshmen return for their sophomore year/

How are faculty advisors assigned/

What type of advising will I receive throughout my education-not only in the area of my major, but in career planning, interview techniques, resume writing, etc.?

What services are available for undeclared students?

What percent of students graduate in four years?

Do professors, graduate assistants, or both teach classes?

What percent of the faculty have their doctorate?

Is there an honors program? What are the requirements?

What percent of the student body participates in the honors program?

Are there any special programs available for my chosen major-honors, internships?

What is the job placement rate in a particular program?

What types of career placement services are available?

What would you consider the strongest program at the school? Why?

What are the most popular majors?

### **Student Life:**

What percentages of students are from out of state?

What percentage of students are international students?

Where do the majority of students come from?

What percentage of students lives on campus?

Is housing guaranteed for freshmen? For four years?

How are roommates chosen the freshman year?

What student activities are offered? Which ones are the most popular?

Is there a Greek life on campus? What percentage of the students participates?

What intramural programs are offered?

What is the male to female ratio?

Are freshman allowed to have cars? What is the parking situation like?  
What transportation is available for students who don't have cars?  
Are resident halls coed or single sexes?  
What do most students do on the weekend?  
What are some of the traditional social events on campus?  
Do the students have a choice of meal plans? How is the food?  
What safety measures are used on your campus? Are crime statistics available?  
How close is your campus to a major airport? How is the transportation to and from the airport?  
What do students say they like most about your university?

**Admissions:**

With regards to admission requirements, do you accept SAT and/or ACT?  
Do you require SAT II for admission? Which ones?  
What are the grade point averages and SAT/ACT score requirements for admission?  
What do I need to do to apply? What criteria will be used to judge my application?  
Do you require an essay?  
What is the most important factor in admission?  
What type of admission procedure do you have?  
What are the standards of admission for the typical student?  
Is there an early decision or early action plan?  
What percent of applicants were accepted?  
Are personal interviews required? Are they available?  
Are letters of recommendation required?  
Do certain majors have special admission requirements?  
Do you accept AP/IB credit? What is the school policy?

**Cost/Financial Aid:**

Do you offer financial aid to international students? What is available?  
What is the total cost to attend your university? (Tuition, room, board, and student fees)  
What percent of students receive need-based financial aid?  
Is there a tuition payment plan available? Is it interest free?  
What percent of students have college work-study?  
Are campus jobs available to those who do not receive work-study?  
Are merit based scholarships offered? What percent of students receive merit based awards?

You should not take this form into your interview or meeting. You **should** take some time before you visit a campus or before a college visit or interview to determine which questions are most important to you. Make a list on a separate sheet of paper with space to write in the most important information that you receive in response to your question.

## HINTS FOR COLLEGE VISITS

The following hints are a way to increase the value of a college visit, whether you visit the campus or a representative visits the school.

1. If you are in the U.S. over a vacation period, try to visit as many colleges and universities as you can. Find out what time tours and orientation sessions take place. If possible, make an appointment with an admissions counselor.
2. Take notes. You will never remember facts, impressions, and names unless you write them down.
3. Ask questions. Your tour guide will probably be a student. If it is a college representative, this person will have first-hand knowledge of the campus. These people will be able to inform you how the school is as a place you might live for four years.
4. Make sure to get the name of the admissions person with whom you speak. It is a good idea to write a thank you note after your trip. If it is a college representative visiting our school, be sure to thank her/him/them on your way out.
5. If there is an interview, just be you.
  - a. Don't ask questions that are covered in the Orientation Session (size, programs, admissions procedures, etc. if covered by the presentation).
  - b. Be neat and presentable. Casual clothes are fine.
  - c. Don't talk about your grades or SAT scores unless asked. If you have a copy of your high school transcript, at the end of the interview you might ask if the admissions person would like to see it. It is best NOT to mention SAT's unless you are directly asked. It is definitely okay to talk about being an IB Diploma student, the courses you take, and the courses you like.
  - d. Have some questions prepared to answer, i.e., what you want to study, why you have an interest in this school, "tell us more about yourself".
6. Be a good observer. Look at students, buildings, the physical maintenance of the campus, etc. Think about how you might fit in here and want to live. It is a good idea to spend some time just sitting and people-watching if possible.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS AT AISK

**Listed below are the steps you will need to follow in order to apply to college. The steps are listed in chronological order. Please read all items carefully and follow instructions. If you do, the application process will proceed smoothly.**

1. Meet with your college counselor in order to finalize where you will be applying to school. This should be done, if possible in May of your junior year. If not, then the process will take place in late August or early September of your senior year. Ask teachers for recommendations in May, especially if the teacher is leaving Kuwait.
2. In September you need to ask teachers for recommendations, preferably three. Ask the teachers to deliver the recommendation to the counseling office
3. Apply and pay online if possible. Make a copy of your application for your records. **Make sure you have printed and completed the financial verification form for each school if you are not a U.S. citizen.**
4. Set aside a safe place for any “Mid-year” forms that may be in your applications. These will need to be sent after the 1<sup>st</sup> Semester
5. Don’t forget to contact SAT and TOEFL if you need a score report sent to a college.
6. Check to see if any of your colleges require an interview. Contact the college to make arrangements for the interview.
7. Make sure you have all relevant documents for each college you’re applying to clipped together, give to your college advisor.
8. Request the number of transcripts you need based on the number of colleges you are applying to.
9. Once you have submitted the application on line your advisor will send transcripts, school profile, recommendation letters, and counselor/school reports if necessary. A small fee will be charged to express mail the completed application. Once you have submitted the application electronically print the confirmation sheet and keep in a safe place. **It is always wise to copy the application checklist to make sure that all relevant information is sent.**
10. Inform the Guidance Office of all admission decisions as soon as you receive them.

### **Other Important Points to Remember:**

1. The name of our school is The American International School-Kuwait and it is a private school with an American-based curriculum.
2. The school’s address is: P.O. Box 3267  
Salmiya, 22033 Kuwait
3. The school’s **CEEB** number is **683086**.
4. When a college application requests the name of your counselor, use Ms. Randa Abouchacra or Mr. Mark Ray.

### Useful Web Sites

1. **Common Application:** [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) Good for applying to over 500 universities and colleges.
2. **csumentor:** [www.csumentor.com](http://www.csumentor.com) Good for applying to all universities in the California State University system.
3. **University of California:** To apply to any U. C. school go to apply on the school's website. This will bring you to the common application for the U. C. system.
4. **Colleges That Change Lives:** [www.ctcl.org](http://www.ctcl.org)
5. **OUAC:** [www.ouac.on.ca/105/](http://www.ouac.on.ca/105/) Good for applying to any university in the province of Ontario, Canada.

### Student Visa:

Non U.S. citizens/non-permanent resident students attending school in the U.S. must have a student **F-1 Visa**. When a college admits a student, it sends an **I-20 Form** to that student. This form contains information about the student's intended major, length of course and the reporting date for that school. By law, schools may not send I-20's unless they have received an **Official Certification of Finances**; this is why most schools will not admit students without financial certification. After receiving the I-20, the student should go online to the U.S. embassy and complete the necessary forms for the F-1 visa and make an appointment for their visa interview. **More information concerning this process is available at the U.S. Embassy website.**

# SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

## Local Resources for Non-U.S. College Information

Students planning on attending colleges and universities in countries other than the U.S. need to check specific entrance requirements for that country. Many embassies have information regarding higher education in their country. Information about national systems of education is very general and can vary from year to year.

### Australia/New Zealand

Work needs to begin no later than September for the March entry date. The Australian Embassy provides information and applications.

### Canada

Applications are usually due between January and April prior to the September entry date. Check individual schools concerning TOEFL, SAT 1&II requirements. The Ontario General Application (OUAC), [www.ouac.ca/on](http://www.ouac.ca/on), is available online. Information is available in the Guidance Office.

### Egypt

For entry requirements to Egyptian public universities please refer to the following web site: [www.tansik.egypt.gov.eg/](http://www.tansik.egypt.gov.eg/).

**When applying to Egyptian public universities you must request that your SAT scores are sent directly to the Ministry of higher Education in Egypt. The CEEB code is 6134.**

### Europe

Most universities accept applications after school has finished in June. You need to have a clear understanding of what documentation you need before returning to your country and applying for admission.



**Kuwait: Kuwait University:** [www.kuniv.edu](http://www.kuniv.edu)

**When to Apply:**

Application to KU is usually after mid-June. The exact dates are announced in the local newspapers.

**What Can I Study?**

The University is divided into nine colleges. At present there are about 35 majors.

**Admission Requirements:**

The University of Kuwait is **not** an open-enrollment university. In almost every college it is necessary that the student take and complete Arabic in high school. The grade should be a “C” or better. Likewise, to be admitted to Medicine (3.0 GPA), Science, Engineering and Petroleum majors the students has to have a “C” or better in these classes: **Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus or Calculus.** The Science College is taught in English. The college of Education and Arts has classes taught in Arabic. You need to know Arabic to attend the University.

A placement test must be taken. The test is given in December, April and June. The importance of the test has grown each year to help stabilize differences in grading systems from one school to another in Kuwait. There are three exams all taken on the same day. Juniors may take it. The test can be taken more than once and the best score is the one used. A sophomore may take it for practice only. A composite index score is used which includes the score on the test and your GPA. The cut-off points for scores for admission are published in the paper with the names of those accepted. The conversion formula for your GPA is as follows:  $GPA + 1 \times 20$ .

Other Universities In Kuwait

**American University of Kuwait:**

Admission requirements are similar to other American universities. For more information visit their web site at [www.auk.edu.kw](http://www.auk.edu.kw) or visit the Guidance Office.

**American University of the Middle East:** [www.aum.edu.kw](http://www.aum.edu.kw)

**Australian College of Kuwait:**

[www.ackonline.com](http://www.ackonline.com) Visit the web site for more information or visit the Guidance Office.

**Gulf University of Science and Technology:**

[www.gust.edu.kw](http://www.gust.edu.kw) Visit the web site for more information.

## Lebanon

**A STUDENT WHO IS Lebanese** must take the SAT I and three SAT II tests to gain admission to the Lebanese American University or the American University of Beirut unless the student is pursuing the IB Diploma.

For more information about these universities contact:

Lebanese American University

[www.lau.edu.lb](http://www.lau.edu.lb)

American University of Beirut

[www.aub.edu.lb](http://www.aub.edu.lb)

## AMERICAN COLLEGES IN OTHER COUNTRIES

There are many colleges and universities throughout the world which are patterned on the American system of higher education and which require only a U.S. high school diploma for admission. The language of instruction in these schools is English.

### United Kingdom

**Use websites and e-mail addresses for the following schools in the U.K.**

American Intercontinental University in London

[www.aiulondon.ac.uk](http://www.aiulondon.ac.uk)

[admissions@aiulondon.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aiulondon.ac.uk)

British American College, Regent's College

[www.bacl.ac.uk](http://www.bacl.ac.uk)

[bacl@regents.ac.uk](mailto:bacl@regents.ac.uk)

Huron University

[www.huron.ac.uk](http://www.huron.ac.uk)

[admissions@huron.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@huron.ac.uk)

Richmond, the American International University in London

[www.richmond.ac.uk](http://www.richmond.ac.uk)

[enroll@richmond.ac.uk](mailto:enroll@richmond.ac.uk)

American College of Dublin

[www.amcd.ie](http://www.amcd.ie)

[degree@amcd.ie](mailto:degree@amcd.ie)

### France

Parsons Paris School of Design

[www.parsons-paris.com](http://www.parsons-paris.com)

[admissions@parsons-paris.com](mailto:admissions@parsons-paris.com)

American University of Paris

[www.aup.edu](http://www.aup.edu)

[admissions@aup.edu](mailto:admissions@aup.edu)

### Switzerland

International University in Geneva

[www.iun.ch](http://www.iun.ch)

[info@iun.ch](mailto:info@iun.ch)

Franklin College

[www.fc.edu](http://www.fc.edu)

[info@fc.edu](mailto:info@fc.edu)

Webster University in Geneva

[www.webster.ch](http://www.webster.ch)

[admissions@webster.ch](mailto:admissions@webster.ch)

## Swiss Hotel School Association

Ecole Hoteliera Lausanne (French)  
Le Chalet-a-Gobet  
1000 Lausanne 25

Ecole Hoteliere de Geneve (French)  
12 av. De la Paix  
CH-1202 Geneve

Swiss Hotel Association (English)  
Hotel Management School Les Roches  
3975 Bluche (Crans-Montana) Valais  
[www.lesroches.edu](http://www.lesroches.edu)

Schweizerische Hotelfachschule Luzer  
CH-1823 Glion-sur-Montreux

Swiss School of Hotel Mgmt & Tourism  
Im Bongert  
CH-1854 Leysin (English)

International College of Hotel Mgmt.  
Days Road  
Regency Park  
South Australia 5010  
Australia (only one outside Switzerland)

# HOW THE UCAS SYSTEM WORKS

## **January-August**

### Find Out About

1. The courses
2. Universities/colleges
3. Qualifications
4. Leisure facilities

## **September-November**

APPLY ONLINE: [ucas.com](http://ucas.com)

1. Make your final choice up to six courses. (Four if applying to med.)
2. Take enough time to get it right-but remember DEADLINES.
3. Make sure your referee has time to Write your reference and look over your form.
4. Ask your counselor for the “buzzword”.

## **October 15**

### FIRST DEADLINE-FORM

1. ONLY if applying to Oxford & Cambridge
2. ONLY if applying for Medicine Dentistry or Vet. Medicine.
3. Note: Students cannot apply to both Oxford and Cambridge at the same time.

## **December 15<sup>th</sup>**

### SECOND DEADLINE

1. To be certain that each of your chosen universities or colleges will consider your application, you should submit your form by this date.

## **November-April**

### Offers and Interviews

1. You may be contacted for more information.
2. You may be invited for an interview if you are in the U.K.
3. May be given “conditional offers” if still waiting for final grades.

## **May**

1. If you have been given “conditional offers” for places, you now have to make “one” firm choice.
2. You can also make 1 reserve or “insurance” choice.

## **May 15<sup>th</sup>**

### THIRD DEADLINE

1. You must send FINAL form and insurance offer decisions to U.C.A.S.

## **Late August Clearing**

1. Unsuccessful applicants may be offered Last-minute places on other courses.

The UCAS application is done entirely online through “apply” at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

**Students interested in studying medicine in the U.K. must take the UKCAT. This is a required test for entering medical universities in the U.K. The exam is generally given in the spring and summer. More information is available from the guidance office.**

## Sample Resume

Your Name	American International School-Kuwait
Address	P.O. Box 3267
City	Salmiya
State/Country, Zip	Kuwait 22033
Phone	CEEB #683086
Email Address	Expected Date of Graduation

### Personal data

- Date of Birth
- Place of Birth
- Social Security Number (If Applicable)

### Athletic Involvement

- JV Softball (9)
- Varsity Softball (10, 11, Captain-12)
- Dance Team (10, 11, 12)

### Clubs and Activities

- Forensics (9, 10, 11, 12)
- Debate (11, 12)
- Academic Games (9, 10, 11, 12)
- Student Council (9, 10, 11, 12-Treasurer)

### Volunteer/Community service

- Special Olympics (9, 10, 11)
- Volunteer at hospital (11, 12)
- Volunteer at International Red Crescent (9, 10, 11, 12)
- Peer Tutoring (11, 12)

### Honors and Awards (School and Community)

- Principal's List (9, 10, 11, 12)
- National Honor Society (11, 12)

### Work Experience

### Summer programs and summer experiences

### Hobbies and Interests

### Church, Mosque, Youth Group Involvement

This is a model only to give you an idea of what to include in your resume. Use bullet points but if you are not sure the reader will know what your activity is – explain! (i.e. Serious Discipline Committee or Prefect) This is not a time to be humble!

Your resume is an effective tool and can be placed in all applications, given to perspective employers, teachers writing recommendations, etc. When you come to the part of the application that asks for activities, etc. you can put "Please see Resume" unless the application specifies otherwise. You may also want to include the time that your activity takes on a weekly basis (i.e. 4 hours, etc.).

## College Visit Information Sheet

Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Admission Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enrollment \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Special Programs or Courses

Admission Procedure

Average Class Rank \_\_\_\_\_

Average SAT: V \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ W \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage Accepted \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage Graduating \_\_\_\_\_

Campus Setting/Location/General Ambience

Other Information/Descriptive Data

Use the back of this sheet to record notes and list specific questions you have for the college admissions officer.

## Application Planning Form

College Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number/Web Page \_\_\_\_\_

### DEADLINES

Application \_\_\_\_\_

College Reply Date \_\_\_\_\_

Achievement Tests Requested \_\_\_\_\_

Date Test Scores Sent to College \_\_\_\_\_

### INTERVIEW

Required? \_\_\_\_\_

Campus Appointment: On \_\_\_\_\_ At \_\_\_\_\_

Alumni Contacts \_\_\_\_\_

### APPLICATION FORM

Essay Written On \_\_\_\_\_

Application, Essay and Fees Mailed On \_\_\_\_\_

Transcript Request Form Turned In On \_\_\_\_\_

Completed and Signed Secondary School Report Given to Counselor On \_\_\_\_\_

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Mid Year Report Given to Counselor On \_\_\_\_\_

### TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

#1 Given To \_\_\_\_\_ On \_\_\_\_\_

#2 Given To \_\_\_\_\_ On \_\_\_\_\_

#3 Given To \_\_\_\_\_ On \_\_\_\_\_

### DECISIONS

Letter of Acceptance/Denial/Wait List from College Received on \_\_\_\_\_

Letter Sent to College Notifying Whether You Plan to Attend Sent On \_\_\_\_\_

**College Counseling Office  
Class of 2015  
Student Biography Form**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

The following questions and answers will be used in the preparation of your letter of recommendation. We want to provide colleges with an overview of your academic and extracurricular life. We also want to present some sense of your promise for personal and intellectual growth. In order to convey the qualities that make you “you” on paper, and to make your letter as comprehensive as possible, we need candid responses to all of these questions.

We hope that you will reply in an honest and thoughtful manner. As you complete the questionnaire, please keep the following items in mind....

- All responses are confidential
- If you do not take this exercise seriously, your letter will inevitably suffer
- Do not limit your responses to school and school-related events
- Consider all parts of your life
- Feel free to include additional sheets of paper, or do the whole thing on computer. That’s fine!

Thanks,  
Ms. Randa Abouchacra, Mr. Mark Ray  
College Counseling

**For each question, use the space provided or attach additional sheets.**

When did you begin school at AIS?

Describe your academic interests. For which course(s) would you do the work regardless of the grades? Why have these interests developed?

Is your transcript an accurate reflection of your ability? If not, why?

Are there outside circumstances that have affected your academic performance? For example such factors as: after school job, home responsibilities or difficulties, illness or emotional stress.

On a scale of 1-10 (low-high) how competitive of a person do you consider yourself?

Academically speaking, how challenged do you want to be in college? (BE HONEST)



At this point in time, how strong a preference do you have for a particular field of study or career? Why? (It's OK to be undecided!)

How have you changed during high school?

How do you think your parents, friends, and teachers would describe you as a person?

What are your strengths/weaknesses as a person?

What are your strengths/weaknesses as a student?

What do you consider your most significant contribution to AIS? What are you most proud of?

What extracurricular activities do you enjoy most?

Are there new activities that you might like to explore in college?

After a long, hard day, what do you enjoy doing the most?

Describe your family. How do you see your family relationships affecting your college search and going away to college?

How much involvement do you anticipate your parents having in your search for and final choice of college?

How have you spent your high school summers?