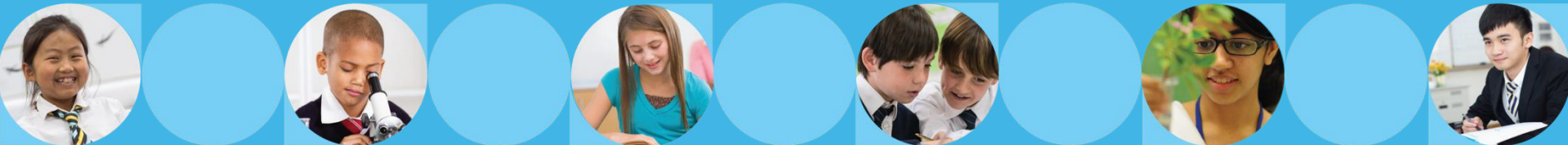


# Applying to the US and the UK with Cambridge International qualifications

Presenter Name: Shamim Chowdhury

Job title : Recognitions Manager, South Asia

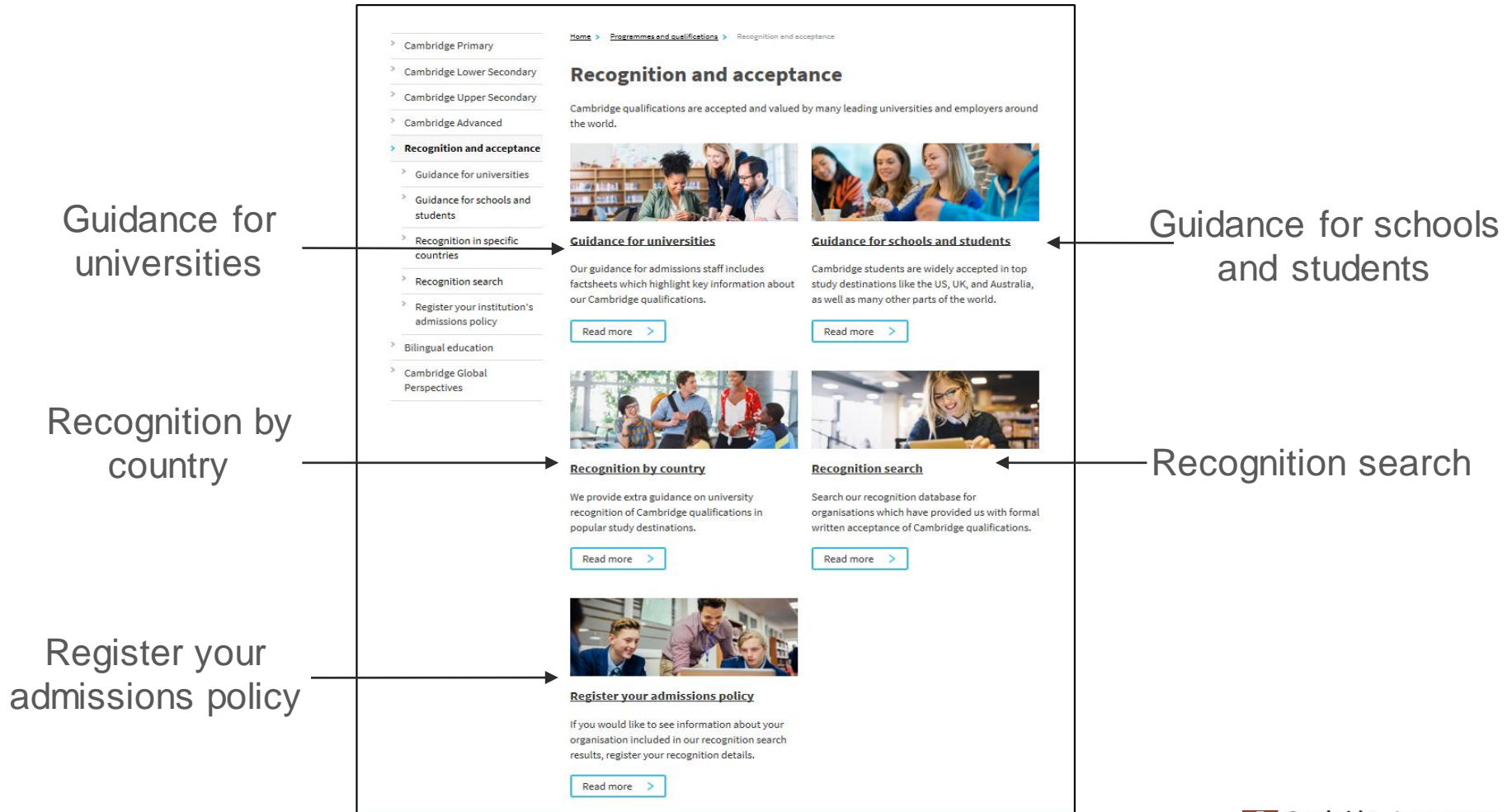


# Contents slide


- ▶ Finding information on recognitions
- ▶ International mobility trends
- ▶ Undergraduate admissions in the UK
- ▶ Undergraduate admissions in the USA
- ▶ Understanding what universities want
- ▶ How you can support students better
- ▶ Q & A

# Finding information on Recognition

<http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition>



# University recognition worldwide brochure

 Cambridge Assessment  
International Education



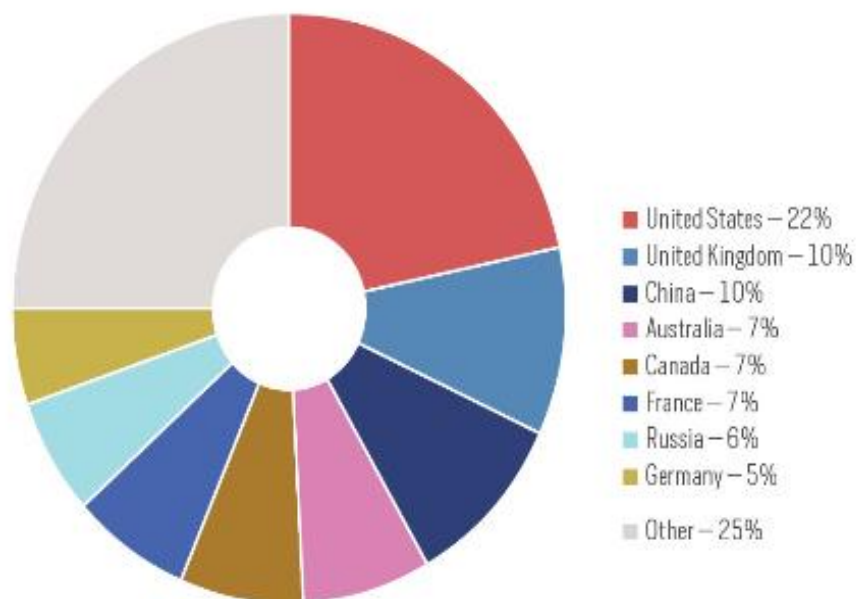
## University recognition worldwide

Guide to the recognition  
and acceptance of  
Cambridge qualifications

Guide to the recognition and acceptance of Cambridge qualifications

- ▶ Outlines university recognition of Cambridge qualifications by global regions.
- ▶ Helpful advice on **general** university admissions policies by country

# Top host destination countries 2018



**2018**  
5.0 million students

Source: Project Atlas, 2018; UNESCO, 2018

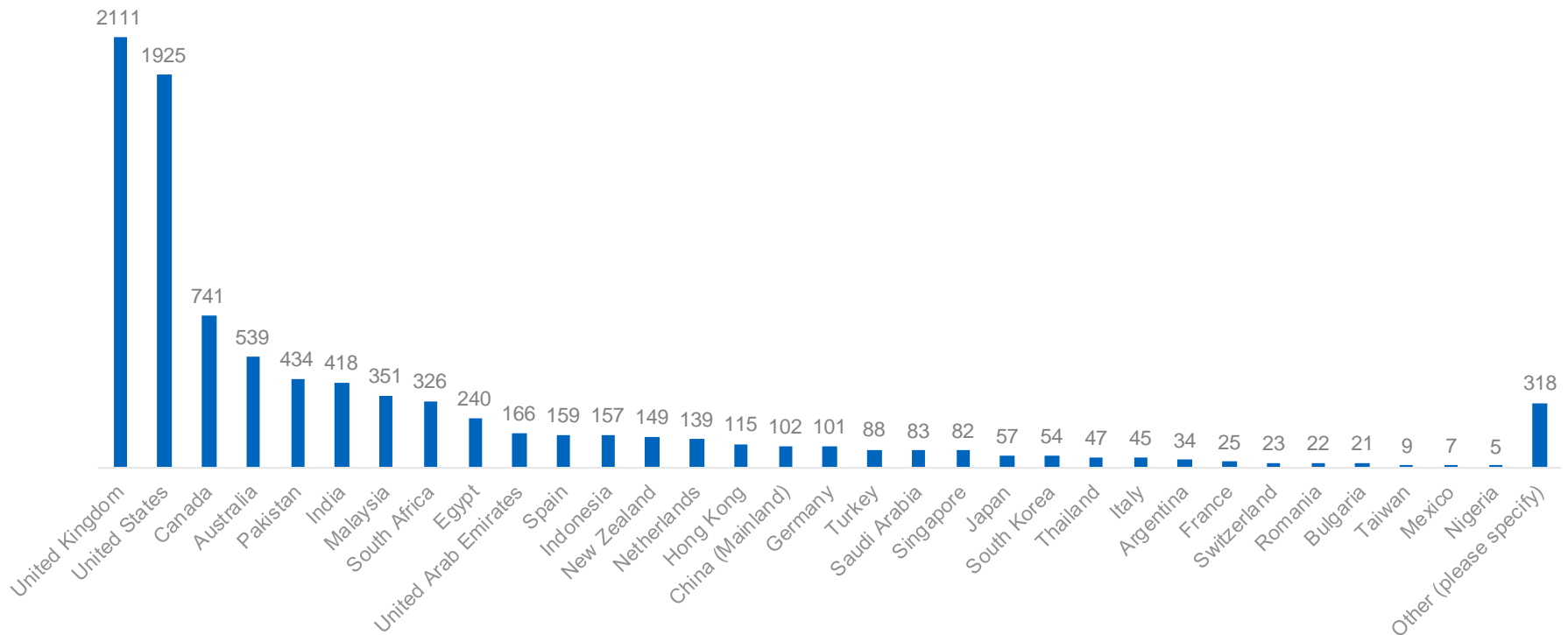
## INBOUND STUDENTS IN SELECT COUNTRIES

	2017 release	2018 release	% change
United States	1,078,822	1,094,792	1.5%
United Kingdom	501,045	506,480	1.1%
China	442,773	489,200	10.5%
Australia	327,606	371,885	13.5%
France	323,933	343,386	6.0%
Canada	312,100	370,710	18.8%
Russia	296,178	313,089	5.7%
Germany	251,542	265,484	5.5%
Japan	171,122	188,384	10.1%
Spain	94,962	109,522	15.3%

Source <https://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Insights/Project-Atlas/Explore-Data/Current-Infographics>

# Most popular international destinations for Cambridge students – for 2017

- ▶ Respondents were asked to identify the top three international destinations for students going to university outside their own country
- ▶ The three most popular destinations are: **UK, US and Canada**



# DESTINATION: UK



# UK undergraduate courses

## Types of undergraduate course

- Bachelor degree course
- Sandwich courses
- Foundation degree (2 years)
- Higher National Diploma

*Some undergraduate degrees, such as a science and engineering, take up to four years to complete*

- Almost all subjects are offered in the **UK somewhere**, but very rarely everywhere!
- Some subjects are specifically state licensed / approved and can be extremely competitive.
  - Medicine
  - Dentistry
  - Veterinary Science
  - Architecture
  - Actuarial Science
  - Engineering
- Some subjects taught differently in the UK to elsewhere
  - Law



# UK university admissions requirements

- ▶ Cambridge International AS & A Levels are recognised by universities in the UK
- ▶ Competitive courses require three A Levels with competitive grades
- ▶ From 2017 onwards, universities will accept three A levels but may no longer require AS Levels
- ▶ Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge O Level are accepted as a direct equivalent of the UK GCSE, for example in English and Maths
- ▶ Some universities require an additional English language test to meet visa requirements



# UK university admissions requirements

## Subject selection

- ▶ Exact entry requirements will vary by programme
- ▶ Some courses will specify certain compulsory subjects or grades, or state preferred subjects e.g. Mathematics for Economics
- ▶ Non-preferred combinations e.g. Economics and Business Studies
- ▶ Facilitating subjects include: Maths and further maths; Physics; Biology; Chemistry; History; Geography; Modern and classical languages; English Literature
- ▶ Russell Group 'Informed Choices' guide for information on subject combinations:

- <http://russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college/>

- <http://russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/for-teachers-and-career-advisers/>

# UK admissions system

[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

- ▶ Centralised system run by **UCAS** (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) for admissions in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
- ▶ Each student can make a maximum of five choices on their application.

## What UCAS does:

- Process applications
- Information, advice & training
- Fraud & verification
- Education sector engagement

## What UCAS doesn't do:

- Suggest courses/universities
- Make decisions/offers
- Advise on finance/immigration or visas

# UK admissions system

## Deadlines for 2019 entry

- ▶ Two UCAS Undergraduate equal consideration deadlines for 2019 entry:
  - **15 October 2018** – courses in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine/science, and all courses at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge
  - **15 January 2019** – all other undergraduate courses

For 2018 January cycle, UCAS reported (as compared to 2017)

- 11% increase in non-EU applicants
- 4% increase\* in EU applicants excluding UK
- 21% increase in applicants from China
- 36% increase in applicants from India

# UK admissions system

## National Admission Tests

- ▶ Biomedical Admissions Test (BMAT) – used in some universities in the UK, Singapore and the Netherlands as part of the admissions process for Medicine, Veterinary Medicine or Biomedical Sciences.
- ▶ The UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) – used by a consortium of UK university Medical and Dental Schools as part of the admissions process.
- ▶ The Law National Aptitude Test (LNAT) – a national admissions test for Law applicants used by some universities in the UK, Ireland, and Spain.
- ▶ Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Admission Tests - Information about the relevant admission assessments can be found on the Universities' websites.

# UK admissions system- points to consider

- ▶ Each university has its own way of assessing an application.
- ▶ Students are well advised to check the guidance given by their chosen institutions very carefully before applying.
- ▶ University websites give minimum entry requirements. The *minimum* is just that; higher grades could form part of an offer.
- ▶ For popular courses, additional academic or non-academic achievements are often considered.
- ▶ Students who need a visa to study in the UK, should check whether visa status allows part-time course, and/or work in the UK.

# Applying with Cambridge qualifications

## Meeting English Language requirements

- ▶ Our advice: students should take all 4 skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) - will be beneficial for their university studies
- ▶ Cambridge students can take one of the below:
  - ❖ IGCSE First Language English syllabus 0500 & including optional Listening and Speaking Component
  - ❖ IGCSE English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> language syllabus 0510 or 0511: the speaking test is compulsory
- ▶ Grade for listening and speaking (0500) and for speaking (0510) is recorded separately on a student's final IGCSE Certificate. This makes it clear to universities that the student has taken all 4 skills
- ▶ Students who require Tier 4 visas **should include** all 4 language skills
- ▶ **EU** students do not require visas but should **check** whether **all 4 language skills** are required with their chosen institutions

# Applying with Cambridge qualifications

## Certifying statement for CEFR

- ▶ IGCSE certificate does not include a breakdown of all four skills
- ▶ **A *Certifying Statement for CEFR* is an additional document** that
  - can be used as part of a student's university application
  - **provides evidence of proficiency in all 4 language skills** (speaking, listening, writing and reading) **according to the CEFR**
  - shows grade achieved (A-G) in each component & the corresponding CEFR level
- ▶ **No expiry date** - students can apply for this certificate as soon as they receive IGCSE certificate (i.e. during the first term/semester of their AS Level studies)

*\*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*



# Applying with Cambridge qualifications

UCAS

Contact us | [Help](#) | Print

2018 apply All references

Search (by name): Æ  ? search

<Log out

- Welcome
- Applications
- References
  - > All
  - > In progress
  - > Needing approval
  - > Applicants requesting reference only
- Link applications to centre
- Send to UCAS
- Delete applications
- Security
- Setup
- Adviser Track
- Training and development
- Help
- Options/Opsiynau

## Key

Completed

Welcome

[return to list](#)

[next >](#)

View: Reference

go

**James Durant** ✉

Application in progress; Reference not started

Action: View application

go

Qualifications checked

Reference

Referee details

Full title and name of referee\*

Please select...



Date(s) unavailable

August



Predicted grades

Select / enter a predicted grade for each pending qualification.

UCAS Training London (09/2017 - 07/2018) FT

GCE Advanced Level

Chemistry

A

Practical grade

Please select...

Please select...

Pass

Not classified

Not relevant

Reference Æ

After pasting in text, click 'save' before doing any editing as some of the text may be lost. Only text up to the character limit will be saved.

For a student who is still studying, the **referee** must enter an overall predicted grade in the reference area.

When entering the predicted practical grade, select '**not relevant**'.

# What do UK universities say about Cambridge?

*‘Cambridge International A Levels are an excellent technical qualification. They provide really good core knowledge and help to build aptitude. They also provide a really good bedrock for the move – the transition to university in the first year of study.’*

**Richard Partington, Senior Tutor, Churchill College, University of Cambridge**



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

*‘We think that Cambridge qualifications are a really good preparation for university study. They allow students to specialise in particular subjects and to develop lots of other skills which are really useful for university study – things like communication skills, research skills and problem-solving skills.’*

**Roseanna Cross, Head of Undergraduate Admissions, University of Bristol**



“

The qualifications I took required consistent hard work throughout the two years. However, I soon realised the efforts had been well invested: not only did Cambridge International A Levels allow me to be accepted at LSE, they also provided me with excellent skills to deal with all the courses of my undergraduate programme. This included both the essay-based and the mathematically-oriented subjects present in a hybrid science-arts undergraduate course like Economics.

**Pelayo Méndez, Spain**



”

# Further information on UK

- ▶ Destination UK [brochure](#) and [video](#)
- ▶ [www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition)
- ▶ [Cambridge for universities and colleges](#)
- ▶ [UCAS website](#)



**DESTINATION: USA**



# Type of Institutions in USA

Institution Type	Duration	Qualification
Community or Junior College	2 years	Associate degree
Technical or Vocational School	2 years	Technical certificate
Specialized Academy	2-4 years	Associate or Bachelor's degree
College	4 years	Bachelor's degree
University	4 years	Bachelor's degree

# USA university admissions

- ▶ Over **610** universities officially recognise Cambridge qualifications for entry
- ▶ Five grade Cs in Cambridge IGCSE/ Cambridge O Level meet **minimum** freshman level entry requirements for some colleges & universities (including Maths and English)
- ▶ A Levels are required for competitive universities such as Yale, MIT and Harvard
- ▶ Advanced credit is available for A Levels in most universities
- ▶ Advanced credit is available for AS Levels in some universities



# USA university admissions

## ▶ **Credit and advanced standing**

Cambridge International AS & A Levels are considered college-level courses of study. Good grades in carefully-chosen Cambridge International A Level subjects can result in up to one year of university course credit.

Receiving Advanced credit means that Cambridge students are already ahead in their undergraduate programme before they even begin their college enrolment.

For more information on credit policies, please check with universities directly.



# US admissions systems

## Application procedures vary:

- ▶ [Common Application](#) with A Levels specifically included from August 2013
- ▶ Supporting documentation and full high school transcript from school
- ▶ Individual application forms or supplements to the Common Application for each university



## Deadlines vary:

- ▶ Usually mid-December to mid-January
- ▶ 1–15 November for early decisions

Universities that do not use the Common Application may use:

The Universal Application

The Coalition Application

Individual institutional or system-wide application

# US admissions systems – points to consider

- ▶ Applications are made to the **university**, not to a particular course
- ▶ Undergraduates do not specialise until Years 3 and 4 of their degrees, with some subjects only available at postgraduate level
- ▶ Medicine, pharmacy, veterinary science and law are only available as postgraduate courses.
- ▶ Some community colleges offer two year associate degrees. These can count towards entry to a university at a later stage.
- ▶ Grade Point Average (GPA) is **not** always required. In some cases universities may require a student to use an external credential evaluator.
- ▶ Cambridge does not calculate a student's GPA. There is no official grade conversion between US marks and UK grades.

# US admissions systems – points to consider



IERF provided this unweighted GPA table to Fulbright in London as a rough guide for an A level grade to GPA conversion

Advanced Level	United States		
A*	A+	=	4.00
A	A	=	4.00
B	B+	=	3.30
C	B	=	3.00
D	C+	=	2.30
E	C	=	2.00
No Grade	F	=	0.00

# US admissions systems – points to consider

- ▶ Standardised tests (SAT or ACT) are often required
  - ▶ Students with AS & A Levels may be exempt from the SAT subject tests (SAT-II)
  - ▶ Check list of test optional institutions at [www.fairtest.org](http://www.fairtest.org)
- ▶ Applicants may require IELTS or TOEFL but a good grade in Cambridge IGCSE English (First or Second Language) is often accepted instead
- ▶ Scholarships are often available (but highly competitive)

***Check the university's specific requirements***

“

I took Cambridge International AS Level Biology, and I have since had a very successful career in the biological and natural sciences at Stanford University. The same applies with Mathematics and English. I can't recommend the Cambridge programme highly enough. It got me into one of the top universities in the world and in the US.

**Chris Hanson, Florida**



”

# Further information on USA

Cambridge International resources:

- ▶ [Destination USA page of our website](#)
- ▶ [Cambridge for universities and colleges](#)
- ▶ Destination USA [video](#) and [brochure](#)

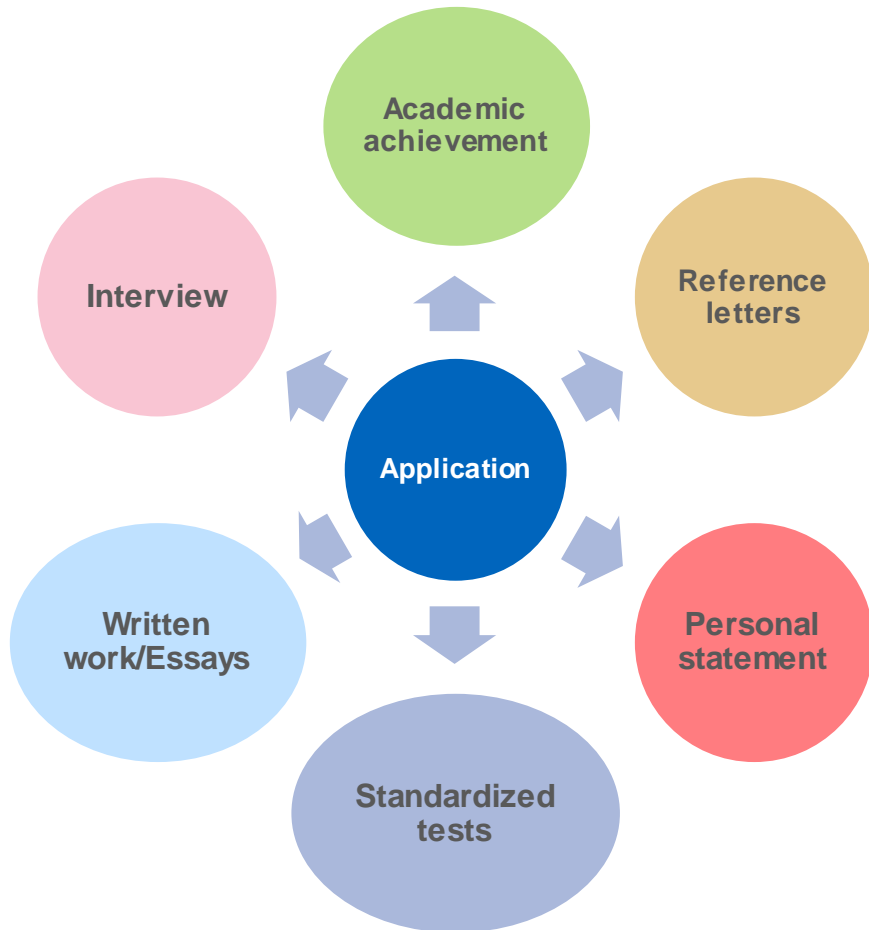
Other resources:

- ▶ Fulbright Commission
- ▶ [Common application tips and hints](#)

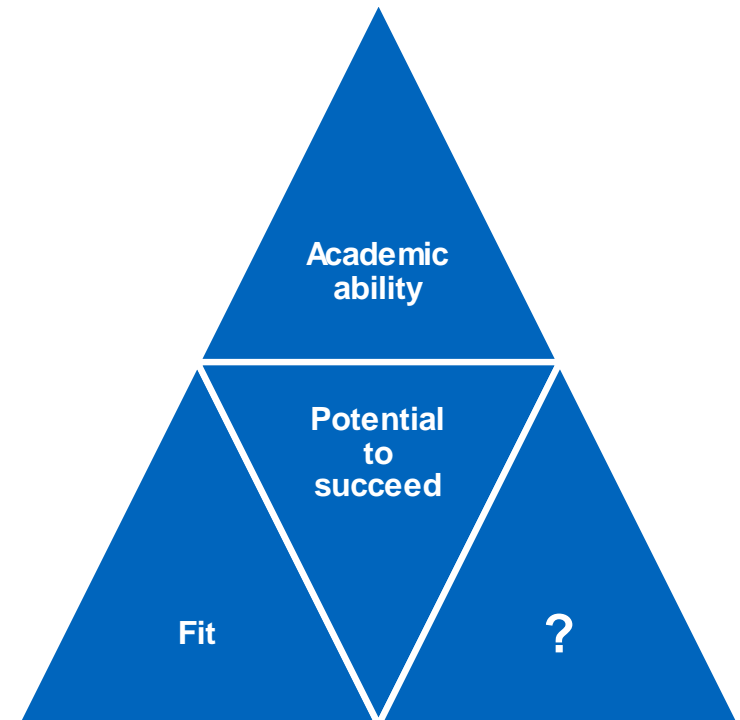


# Understanding university applications

## What universities ask for



## What universities look for



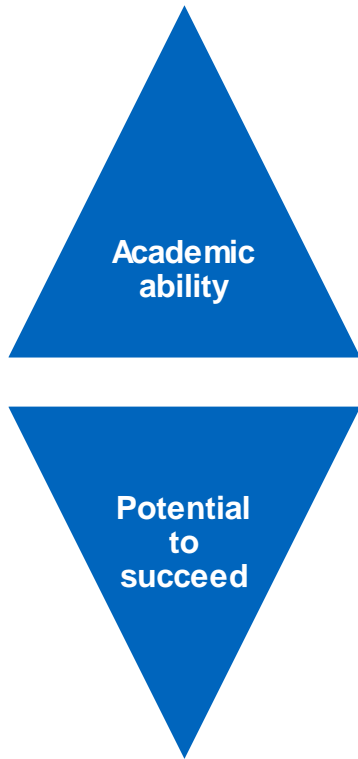
# Key differences

- ▶ UK university applications focus on a student's desire to study a specific subject; UCAS requires one personal statement with no mention of any one university. In the US, applications are tailored to individual universities. US applications are university focused.
- ▶ Who assesses applications?
  - UK: applications are assessed by members of academic staff in the relevant department.
  - US: all applications to a university are assessed by the same admissions office
- ▶ Different expectations from personal statement for UK universities and College Application Essay for US universities.

UCAS on personal statement: "It's a chance for you to articulate why you'd like to study a particular course or subject, and what skills and experience you possess that show your passion for your chosen field."



# Understanding university applications



## What universities look for

- Academic and test results
- Enthusiasm for chosen subject
- Knowledge of chosen subject
- Evidence of forethought & research
- Intellectual interest & initiative
- Confidence & ability to cope with demands

*In 2016, out of 2000+ applicants with A\*A\*A\*, a top UK university made offers to approximately 900 applicants only.*

# How to support your students

## Reference letters

- ▶ One/two recommendation letters from Cambridge AS or A Level teachers
- ▶ Summary of overall academic & extracurricular performance and any other personal qualities or circumstances from head teacher or higher education adviser from school

Caution: *“Admissions officers have developed special powers to sniff out ‘cut and paste’ paragraphs. Make sure everything teachers write is relevant to the individual student.” – UCAS*

Note: *There are free resources and guides for teachers on how to write reference letters.*

**Teachers/subject specialists should be aware of their crucial role in the admissions process**

# How to support your students

## Reference letters

Universities don't want to read that an applicant is “an outstanding student”. They want to see

- ▶ evidence of a willingness to explore and discuss ideas outside the confines of the subject specification, if applying for a subject studied at school/college
- ▶ evidence of steps taken to find out about the subject, for a non-school/college subject
- ▶ reasons for underperformance in qualifications, if applicable
- ▶ updated information about an applicant's progress or personal circumstances

*Suggestions and best practices:*

# How to support your students

**It's never too early to get your students thinking about what they want to study.**

Personal  
statement

Written  
work/Essays

- ▶ Workshop for students
- ▶ Practise in writing effective essays to train students
- ▶ Encourage super curricular learning activities to help students confirm subject choice, critically engage with a subject, show commitment.

Super  
curricular

+

Extra  
curricular

Note: Students often worry that they don't do enough extra-curricular activities to talk about on their personal statements. There is more to extra curricular activities than running marathons or playing music.

Caution: UCAS scans personal statements with a Copycatch system – if a statement shows a similarity of 10% or more, it is flagged!

# How to support your students



## Standardized tests

- ▶ Free high quality test prep for SAT in Khan Academy.
  - ▶ An educator account can be linked to student accounts to monitor progress
- 
- ▶ Reach out to institutions like the British Council and Education USA for unbiased and reliable information and resources that can be shared with students
  - ▶ Reach out to universities directly

# How to support your students

- ▶ Become a registered UCAS centre for free to access a suite of tools to help manage student applications, latest information and advice services.
- ▶ Applicants who apply through a UCAS registered centre (your school) sets its own buzzword and will UCAS to link your students' applications to your centre when they register.
- ▶ Use Tools and Resources for UCAS Advisers. It includes some great ideas and resources for classroom activities – highlighting essential information and helping them refine their choices to make informed decisions

- ▶ Request a CEEB Code: CEEB Codes and associated information (school name, address, etc.) are assigned and maintained by The College Board.

## Role of high school counsellors

# How to support your students: School profile

- Many universities find a school profile valuable in their admissions process as it provides the context for each student's application. It gives universities the chance to look at the whole student, rather than just a series of grades and numbers.
- Create a web page and include the URL in your UCAS reference if you want to give more information about qualifications available at your school or college. On the web page, give information about the curriculum offered at your school or college, including the awarding bodies offering the qualifications, and the choice and number of subjects they have to select from.
- A school profile is commonplace for US schools. Cambridge has developed a school profile template, which can help schools to present key information to US institutions.
- A school profile should include a summary of a school, including demographics and details of the school community, the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, exam results and university outcomes. This helps universities understand the context of the applicant.

# How to support your students: School profile

NAME OF HIGHER SCHOOL/ COLLEGE, PLEASE ONLY NEED TO BE FILL IN
CAMBRIDGE Website address, if any

## HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

### CLASS OF 2017–2018

Director:

Principal:

Guidance Counsellor:

Cambridge Coordinator:

CEED

Centre no

UCAS No.

#### SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

- <Insert information about your school background>
- <Insert information about your school staff (quantity, teacher student ratio, etc.)>
- <Demographics (if applicable: % by ethnicity, % receiving financial aid or merit scholarships)>
- <Insert information about international student population>
- <State what language (s) classes are taught>

#### GRADING AND RANKING

- <Explanation of how class rank is calculated>
- <Explanation of how GPA is calculated>
- The school year is divided into <semesters/trimesters/quarters>. Evaluations are given each <semester/trimester/quarter>.
- <Insert name of schools> uses a < > grading scale.

CAMBRIDGE GRADE	DESCRIPTOR	AMERICAN CONVERSION	
A*	Outstanding	A*	
A	Excellent	A	
B	Very Good	A-B*	Credit given
C	Good	B	
D	Satisfactory	C+	
E	Average	C	
U	Ungraded	F	Credit not given

<INSERT GRADING CHART HEADING HERE>

<INSERT GRADING CHART HEADING HERE>

#### CURRICULUM AND ACCREDITATION – GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- <Insert accreditation information>
- <Graduation requirements>
- <Academic tracks or streams; requirements for selection>
- <Average number of IGCSE, AS, A-levels or other advanced courses taken per student>
- Preparation for Cambridge exams is offered in the following subjects:
  - o Art & Design
  - o Biology
  - o Business Studies
  - o Chemistry
  - o Dutch
  - o Economics
  - o English Language
  - o English Literature
  - o French
  - o Geography
  - o German
  - o History
  - o Information Technology
  - o Mathematics
  - o Music
  - o Philosophy
  - o Physics
  - o Spanish

HIGHER SCHOOL PROFILE
Cambridge Assessment International Education  
Cambridge International School

#### EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

##### CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

During the <Insert month> <Insert year> testing session, <###> Cambridge students took <###> exams.

XX students took the IGCSE exams and XX passed with an E or above; XX passed with a C or above, XX received an A or A\*.

XX students took AS exams and XX passed with an E or above; XX passed with a C or above, XX received an A or A\*.

XX students took A-Level exams and XX passed with an E or above; XX passed with a C or above, XX received an A or A\*.

#### OTHER ADVANCED PROGRAMS (AP)

In <Insert month> <Insert year>, <###> students of the Class of <Insert year> took <###> exams; <###>% of students scoring 4 or 5, <###>% of students score 3 and above. <###> exams were graded at 3 or higher.

#### SAT Summary

SAT	99	10	MEAN	11	13
Class (Grade)	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>
Verbal Reading	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>
Math	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>
Writing	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>
Students tested	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>

#### ACT Summary

ACT	99	10	MEAN	11	13
Class (Grade)	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>
English	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>
Math	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>
Reading	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>
Science Reasoning	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>
Composite	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>
Students tested	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>	<###>

#### FURTHER SCHOOLING OF GRADUATES

Student from the Class of <Insert month> <Insert year> have enrolled in the following colleges, universities, professional schools:

<INSERT COUNTRY>

<Insert School or University name>

<Insert School or University name>

<Insert School or University name>

<INSERT COUNTRY>

<Insert School or University name>

<Insert School or University name>

<Insert School or University name>

<INSERT COUNTRY>

<Insert School or University name>

<Insert School or University name>

<Insert School or University name>

<INSERT COUNTRY>

<Insert School or University name>

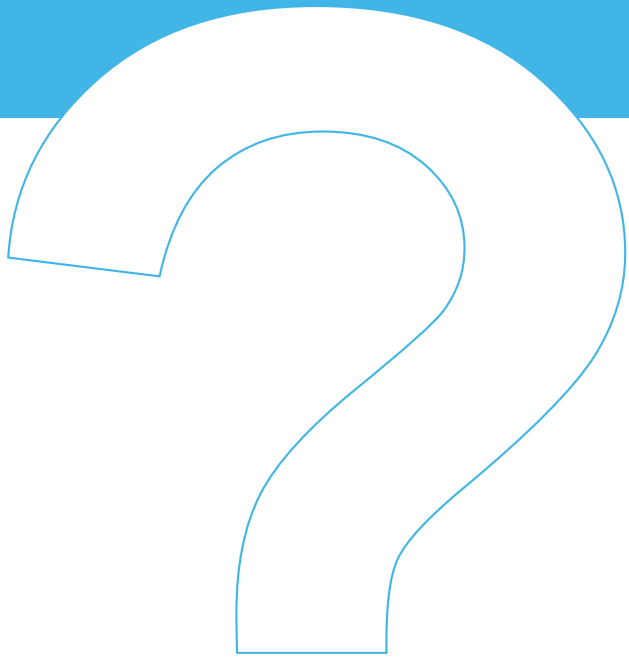
<Insert School or University name>

<Insert School or University name>

Some students will travel, pursue a gap year, work or fulfil military obligations.

HIGHER SCHOOL PROFILE
Cambridge Assessment International Education  
Cambridge International School





**Any questions?**



Cambridge Assessment  
International Education

# THANK YOU

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