COMMON APP AND CIALFO FOR STUDENTS

HIGHER EDUCATION OFFICE
RAFFLES INSTITUTION
AUGUST 2021

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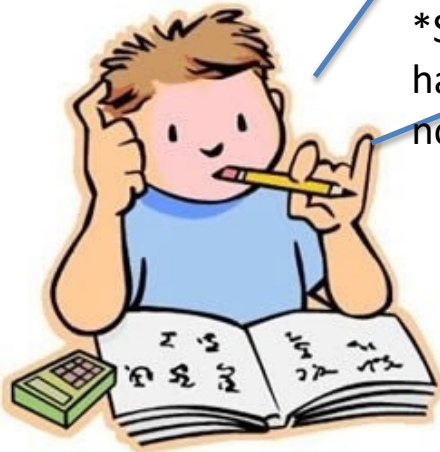5) Early Application Programs vs Regular Decision
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COMMON APP AND CIALFO

Your apps are sent once payment is made

Submit applications (educational info, PS, activities and honors)

*Some colleges like MIT and UCs have a separate portal that does not use CA and Cialfo

Your transcripts and evaluations are sent by the Higher Ed Office
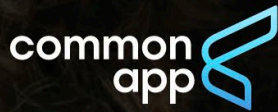
Request recommendations

Deposits recommendations and evaluations

COMMON APPLICATION

It is an undergraduate college admission application portal that you will use for applying to its member colleges (mainly US, although it also includes some Canadian, European, Japan and HK schools).

COALITION

COALITION for COLLEGE

It is another undergraduate college admission application portal. However, we cannot support the transmission of your transcripts and teacher recommendations over Coalition at the moment.

For schools with a choice of CA/Coalition, you should choose CA.

Important: For coalition-only schools, inform us in advance of the specific materials required, and the postal address we can send them to. We will deliver your transcripts and recs via post. **As the office will be closed from 3rd Dec, you are to inform us before this date if any documents are required to be sent on your behalf.** All late requests will only be processed when school reopens in Jan 2022.

COMMON APPLICATION ACCOUNT (CA)

COMMON APP ACCOUNT

Creating an account:
Goto www.commonapp.org

Do note that you will need to be very clear about the following two terms:
- **First Name** (what people call you by, follow your IC/passport please)
- **Last Name** (this is your surname)

as they have to match with that of Cialfo for matching purposes.

You should also use your <u>PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESS</u> for both Common App and Cialfo. This ensures that colleges can reach you via email after your graduation in Dec 2021.

COMMON APP ACCOUNT

Once you have created your account and you have logged in, you will need to fill up some personal information under the "Common App" tab.

COMMON APP ACCOUNT

"PROFILE" and "FAMILY"

Pretty self-explanatory.

Note that some questions are not compulsory. Respond to the compulsory questions truthfully, for example, questions pertaining to your parents' education level, degree and year of obtaining the degree(s). Your application may be voided/rescinded if you are found to have provided false information.

For financial assistance in application, check with Ms Joyce Tan at joyce.tan@ri.edu.sg on your eligibility for the Common App Fee Waiver.

COMMON APP ACCOUNT

"EDUCATION"

Current or Most Recent School: School CEEB Code: 687241
Graduation Date: 12/2021. Amend the year according to your year of graduation from RI.
Counselor's first name/last name: Your CT's first name/last name.
Grades:
- Class rank reporting: None
- Graduating class size: 1200
- GPA: Leave this blank as we do not calculate GPA

Current or Most Recent Year Courses:
- Course Title, etc: List all H1, H2, H3 subjects. For example, GCE Advanced Level Higher 2 Mathematics, GCE Advanced Level H3 Economics, etc.

Course Level: N/A, as none of the options are applicable
Course schedule: Full Year
Honors: Refer to supplementary materials on IVY (current students) or WWW (alumni).

COMMON APP ACCOUNT

<u>"TESTING"</u>

Self-report SAT/ACT/TOEFL scores. (Only where relevant and available, as many colleges are test optional this year).

Then request for the official score report to be sent to the universities **via the Collegeboard website, on your own**, before the universities' application deadline.

For "Is promotion within your educational system based on standard leaving examinations given at the end of lower and/or senior secondary school by a state or national leaving examinations board?", select "**Yes**".

COMMON APP ACCOUNT

"TESTING"

For Y6s, key in "0" as you have Yet to take your A Level Exams.

For alumni, key in the same number of courses as listed in your "Education" section.

Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations

Number of Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations you have already taken*

0

Continue

Date taken*

November 2018

Date should be entered in the Month Year format.

Examination board*

GCE A-levels

Academic subject*

H2 Mathematics

Score*

A

Score type*

◉ Actual

◯ Predicted

COMMON APP ACCOUNT

"ACTIVITIES" AND "WRITING"

Refer to supplementary materials on IVY (current students) or WWW (alumni).

COMMON APP ACCOUNT - FERPA WAIVER

Under "My Colleges" section in CA, add at least one college you are applying to in order to be able to match your CA account with Cialfo.

You also need to complete the 'Current or Most Recent Secondary/High School' question in the <u>Education section</u> of your Common App.

You can add colleges via "college search".

FERPA WAIVER

Once you have added a school, under the "My Colleges" tab, under 'Recommenders and FERPA', you need to sign the FERPA waiver and authorization to release transcripts.

FERPA WAIVER

Your teachers will only complete the recs after you have waived your right. Confidential recommendations are viewed by admission officers as more candid and carrying more weight than open letters. Tick the boxes carefully as you will not be able to change the FERPA status once it is submitted.

Release authorization

some key information before you respond. We encourage you to learn about FERPA by reading our FAQ. We also suggest discussing FERPA with your counselor, parent, guardian, or other school official to be better informed about your rights.

1. **How does FERPA relate to your college application?**
   - FERPA regulates the privacy of student education records, which could include your application to the college where you enroll. FERPA also gives you the right to review confidential letters of recommendation provided as part of that application after you enroll.

2. **In a moment, you'll be asked if you want to waive the right to review confidential letters of recommendation. What should you know about this waiver?**
   - Waiving your right lets colleges know that you do not intend to read your recommendations, which helps reassure colleges that the letters are candid and truthful.
   - Some recommenders may decline to write a letter for you if you do not waive your rights. Check with your counselor or teachers to see if any of them follow such a policy.

3. **Still unsure how to respond?**
   - That's OK. Many students are. Before you move on, take a moment to discuss your decision with your counselor, another school official, or your parent/legal guardian. For more information about FERPA, visit the Help Center.

   ✅ I have read and understood the FERPA Release Authorization explanation above.*

Continue

Release authorization

FERPA Form

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

Please select one: *

◉ I waive my right to review all recommendations and supporting documents.

◯ I DO NOT waive my right to review all recommendations and supporting documents.

✅ I understand that my waiver or no waiver selection above pertains to all colleges to which I apply and that my **selections on this page cannot be changed once I sign and click Save below.***

Signature *

Type your Name

Date *

August 9, 2021

Date uses "month day, year" format (e.g. August 1, 2002)

Back   **Save and Close**

FERPA WAIVER & RECOMMENDERS

Do not fill in this section. We submit all our teacher recommendations on Cialfo, not Common App. Refer to the following section for instructions.

CIALFO ACCOUNT

CIALFO ACCOUNT

It is a college guidance platform which we use to send off your teacher recommendations and transcripts to the colleges you are applying to.

Note that Cialfo and CA are separate entities.

Syncing the two accounts allows us to send off your transcripts correctly.

When adding/deleting specific colleges, you will need to do it on <u>both</u> platforms.

CIALFO ACCOUNT

Activate your Cialfo account by filling up the following form. Please wait a week for your request to be processed. You will receive an email with sign-in details:

Current Year 6 students:

http://forms.ri.edu.sg/CialfoActivation_2021

ALL former students:

https://forms.ri.edu.sg/Exstudent_Cialfo_Activation_2021

Former students who already have an existing Cialfo account from the previous cycle:
1. You must still submit the activation form above for your account to be updated and synced rightly.
2. Thereafter, log into your Cialfo account without having to wait for new sign-in details. Simply use the 'forget password' feature if you have forgotten your password.

CIALFO ACCOUNT ACTIVATION

1. Activate your account (Y6 students and former students who had not activated your Cialfo account before)

Look for your onboarding email, **please note this may be in your Spam/Junk folder.**

Should you not receive your sign-in credentials within a week, please email Mr Lu at shangyi.lu@ri.edu.sg

For ex-students, please email Ms Tan at joyce.tan@ri.edu.sg

CIALFO ACCOUNT

2. Create your account Password

Click on the **'Setup Password'** button in your email. This will take you to a webpage to create your password. Your username will be your personal email address.
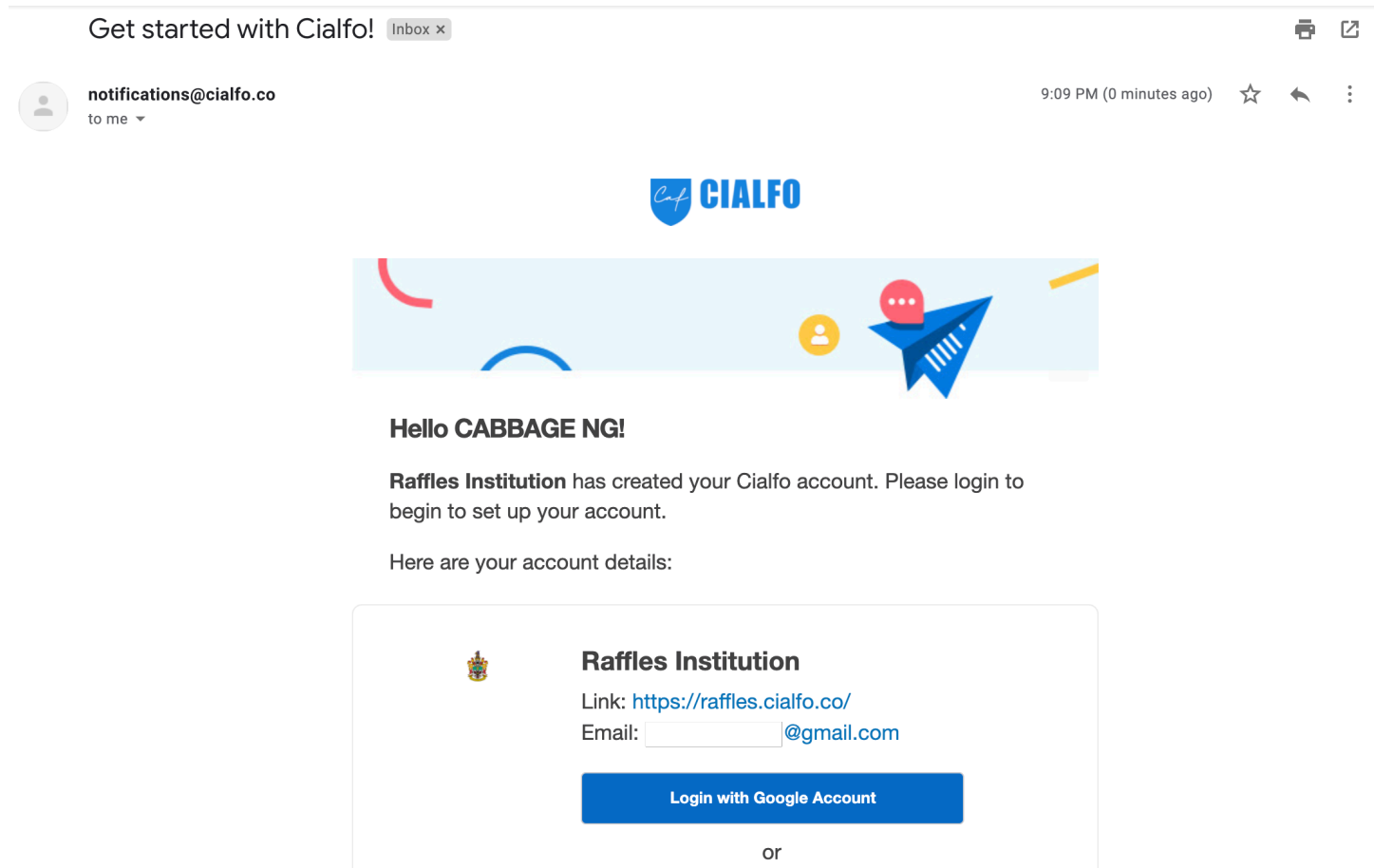
CIALFO ACCOUNT
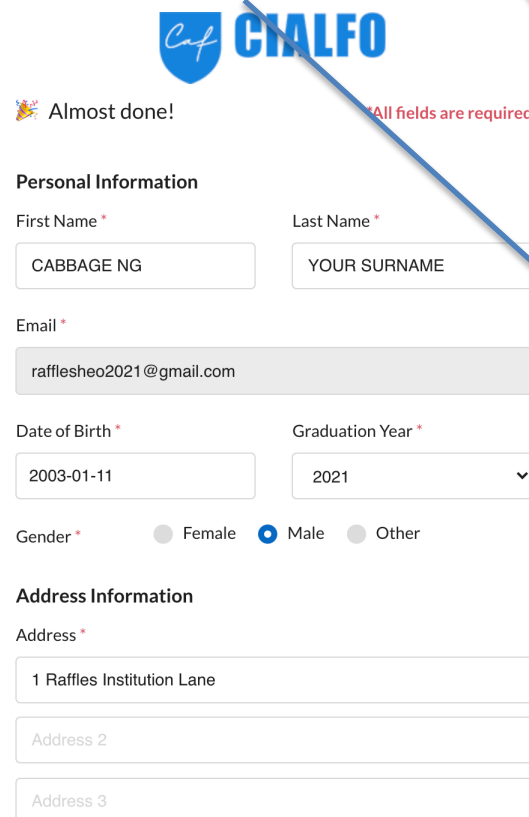
3. Update your Personal Information

You will be able to update your Personal Information after setting and confirming your new password. Your Last Name has been set to 'YOUR SURNAME' by default. Please change it to your surname. Your First Name has been set to your full name by default. Please change it accordingly. Please also update your graduation year accordingly.

<u>IMPORTANT</u>

Make sure that your entries for the following are identical for Common App and CIALFO:

- Last and first names

- Personal email address

- Date of Birth

CIALFO ACCOUNT

4. Navigating Cialfo

Once you log into Cialfo, you will be greeted with the Dashboard which contains most information regarding your application process. The tabs which are of interest to you are circled as shown.

CIALFO ACCOUNT

4. Navigating Cialfo

Your Profile

- Where you can edit your personal information

Schools

- Where you can shortlist schools, choose which schools you are applying to

cDocs

- Where you can specify which round (Regular/ED/etc) you are applying for

Recommendations

- Where you can request for recommendations

At the top right hand corner, click on the blue user icon to bring up 'Chat with Cialfo/Help Center' – where you can look for FAQs and guides as well as video tutorials for other technical features of Cialfo

CIALFO ACCOUNT

5. Setting up your personal information

From your dashboard, you can now update your personal information, but the following is the most important: Under '**Your Profile**', '**Application Details**', make sure that the Application Year is set to 2021 (it should be by default), and set the Enrolment Year to the best of what you know. You can further communicate this with the colleges separately.

CIALFO ACCOUNT

5. Setting up your personal information

Under '**Personal Information'**, make sure the compulsory information are consistent with the information in your Common App account. Do change your preferred name (default is your CT group), leaving it empty if you wish to.

LINKING CA AND CIALFO

The next thing you need to do is to link your Common App and Cialfo accounts. Only by doing so, your transcripts can be sent to the colleges you are applying for.
To link, first go to 'Recommendations' on the left tab:

Click on "Link Account". You will be brought to CA.

LINKING CA AND CIALFO

You will be prompted to login to your CA account, and finally, click on Connect to link CA and Cialfo
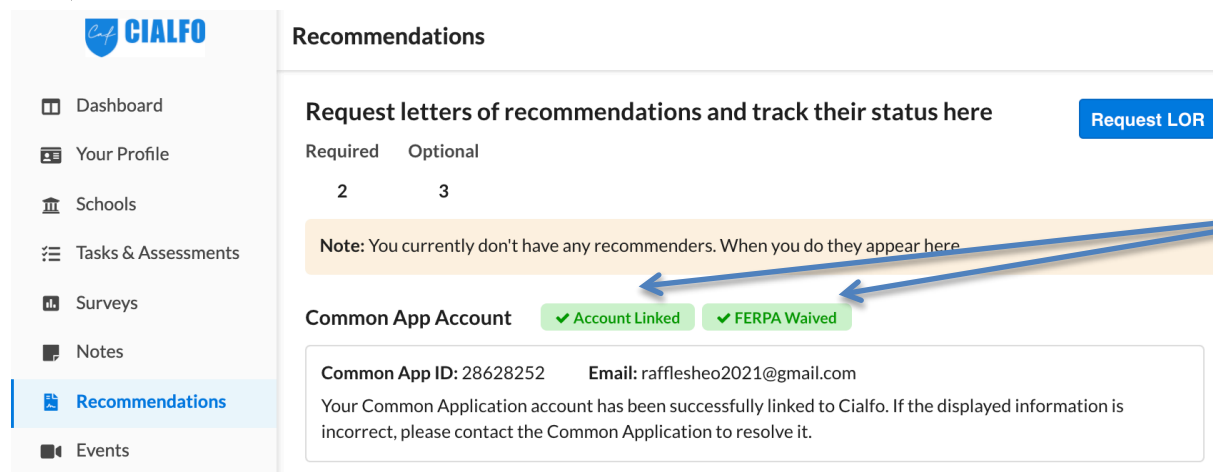
LINKING CA AND CIALFO

To successfully match CA and Cialfo, you must ensure:

On CA side:

1) Your CA account is created (make sure DOB is correct)
2) Signed the CA FERPA
3) Completed the Education section in CA
4) Included at least one college you are applying to in CA

On Cialfo side:

1) Key in correct email address of your CA account
2) Last name matches with CA
3) DOB matches with CA

SUCCESS!
(It may take time for FERPA Waived to be reflected)

SCHOOL LIST

You need to add the schools you are applying to in Cialfo as well. Make sure they are the same as your CA school list as we can only send your transcripts to the schools listed on your Cialfo school list.

SCHOOL LIST

Under 'Applications' in the 'cDocs' tab, click on any of the colleges you have added to edit the details of your application.

SCHOOL LIST

You should set the Application portal to <u>Common Application</u> whenever possible. For schools without the Common Application option, choose <u>Other.</u>
<u>Refer to the section on non Common App schools for more information.</u>

Select 'Common Application' if available, 'Other' if not

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

For US schools, you will generally need

1) **Counselor Recommendation** from your <u>Civics Tutor</u>
   - Classes with 2 CTs, your CTs will tell you who to list. Note that your CT is your 'counsellor' on Cialfo for US applications.

2) **2 Subject Teacher Recommendations** from <u>2 subject tutors</u>
   - Read colleges' admissions websites thoroughly. Some colleges like MIT require contrasting (arts and science) recommendations, while other colleges only require 1 recommendation.
   - In general, you should approach STs who know you better (not necessarily the subject you do better at)

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The counselor recommendation is required by almost all schools, even if schools do not mention it in their application requirements. i.e., when schools state that they require 2 academic references, it's a given that they are asking for 1 counselor recommendation and 2 subject tutor recommendations.

Note that your CT's counselor recommendation does not count as a subject tutor recommendation. You generally require 3 unique teachers to write for you, including your CT. Some colleges only require 2 (1 counselor and 1 subject tutor).

If a school only requires 1 subject tutor recommendation, email us at collegeadmissions@ri.edu.sg to let us know which of the 2 ST recommendations you want us to send off.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

By default, teacher recommendations are meant for all colleges. **Do not invite individual recommendations** for each school you are applying to.

We send all our teacher recommendations via CIALFO. **Do not fill in the 'Invite Recommenders' section on your Common Application.**

My Colleges	
Carnegie Mellon University	▲
College Information	
Application	
Questions	
✓ Recommenders and FERPA	
Review and Submit - Common App	

Recommenders & FERPA

✓ **FERPA Release Authorization**
View Details ⌄

Invite Recommenders
Recommenders are people who will submit forms and information to colleges on your behalf.

Invite Recommenders
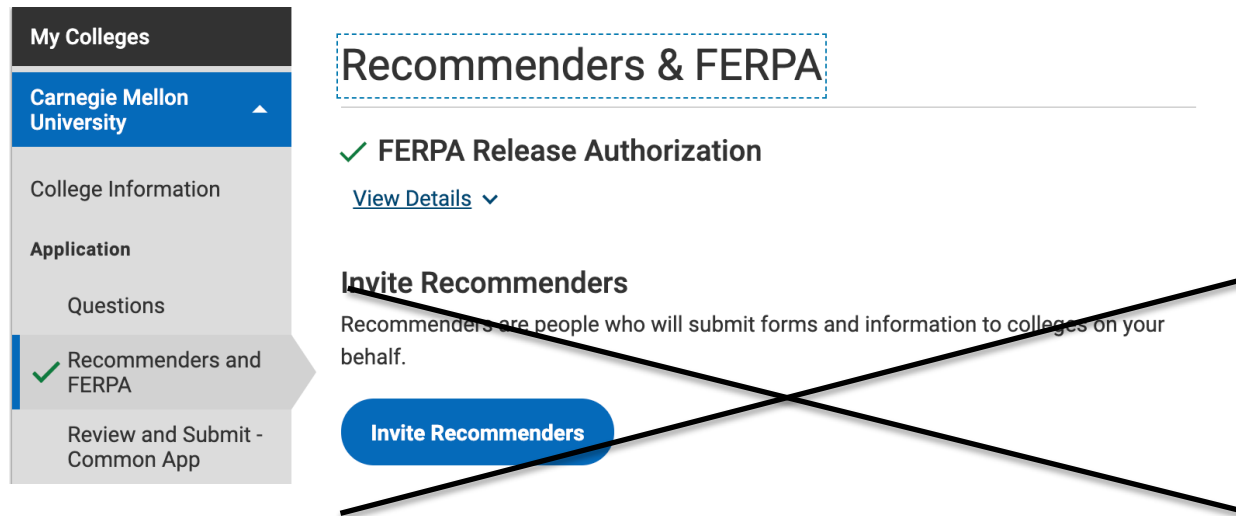
TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Once you have approached your tutors, go to Cialfo. Under the left tab, click on "Recommendations" and you should see the following:

STEP 2

Recommendations

Request letters of recommendations and track their status here

Request LOR

Required	Optional
2	3

STEP 1

Note: You currently don't have any recommenders. When you do they appear here.

Common App Account   ✔ Account Linked   ✔ FERPA Waived

Common App ID: 28628252   **Email:** rafflesheo2021@gmail.com

Your Common Application account has been successfully linked to Cialfo. If the displayed information is incorrect, please contact the Common Application to resolve it.

Request Recommendation   ✖

Recommenders 2/3 **+ Add Recommender**

Albus Dumbledore ✖   Teacher Demo ✖

You should see your CT and 2 STs' names here

Survey   ∧ Hide questions

Note: Survey questions have not been provided by your counselor.

B *I* S̶ 🔗   ☰ ☰ ☰

Dear teachers,
This is Cabbage. Thanks so much for agreeing to write references for my university applications for regular decision. You can contact me should you need more information.

Upload

File   **Google Drive**

1) Click on Request LOR
2) Then click on 'Add Recommenders'
You can only add up to 3 (CT + 2 STs)
3) Send Request when you are done (You can't edit the list once you send the request)!

STEP 3

Send Request

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

Request letters of recommendations and track their status here

Request LOR

Required   Optional

2   3

Once you have added 3 tutors, the Request LOR button will no longer be available

Common App Account   ✔ Account Linked   ✔ FERPA Waived

Common App ID: 28628252   **Email:** rafflesheo2021@gmail.com

Your Common Application account has been successfully linked to Cialfo. If the displayed information is incorrect, please contact the Common Application to resolve it.

Name	Survey	Uploaded : Recommendations & Forms
Albus Dumbledore	✔	None
Teacher Demo	✔	None

If you have already requested from 3 teachers, the Request LOR button will not be available.

Email any supporting documents to your teachers directly, instead of uploading them here.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

You should only approach your <u>Y5-6 civics/subject tutors</u> as this is an academic reference, ideally from your most recent high school years.

You SHOULD NOT be approaching your Y1-4 teachers, CCA teachers, coaches, external/research mentors, lab staff, etc. This is as your teachers have to specify the A-level subject they taught you, in a classroom context, for the recommendation to be useful.

External H2 teachers (MOELC) can write for you.
1. Approach your external teacher directly to request for a recommendation. Ask for his/her official email address.
2. Email collegeadmissions@ri.edu.sg with your teacher's official email address and we will connect directly.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Adhere to our internal timeline to give your teachers time to prepare for your recs:

For early admission programs: **Request before 8 Oct**
For regular decision: **Request before 12 Nov**

Approach them **PERSONALLY** before sending the requests via Cialfo.

Remember not to request via Common App!

EARLY APPLICATION
VS
REGULAR APPLICATION

EARLY APPLICATION VS REGULAR APPLICATION

A college can offer many application programs.

REA: Restrictive Early Action
EA: Early Action
ED1/2: Early Decision
RD: Regular Decision

Early programs means early deadlines (typically 1 Nov, but some schools are 15 Oct). All standardized testing, where necessary, and applications must be completed by then.

Check with individual colleges websites on deadlines for their early programs as well as standardized testing policy.

EARLY APPLICATIONS

BINDING (EARLY DECISION)

ED1/2 (Early Decision 1, 2): These are <u>binding applications</u> which require, if you are accepted, that you attend that particular school. You must withdraw applications to all other schools (incl. ALL UK Schools and Oxbridge) once accepted and cannot apply to any additional schools in any part of the world.

You receive admissions decisions and commit to attend the school in December, before RD applications kick in. If you require financial aid, it makes sense to apply during RD in order for you to compare aid packages from various schools.

An ED application cannot be made lightly. You should only apply via ED if a school is your choice school and <u>you are positive you are able to attend</u> if successful.

EARLY APPLICATIONS

BINDING (EARLY DECISION)

You can only apply to <u>one</u> ED school.

You and your parents will have to acknowledge and send the <u>ED Agreement on Common App</u> before your application can be processed. Note that there are consequences from the US schools if you break the ED Agreement.

By our internal timeline, all ED applicants (current and former students) are to indicate your ED school in Cialfo by <u>18 Oct 2021, 2359hrs.</u>

EARLY APPLICATIONS

NON-BINDING

<u>EA (Early Action)</u> : Offers early decisions, but you do not need to commit until May

<u>SCEA</u> (Single Choice Early Action)/REA (Restrictive Early Action): **You cannot apply to any other EA/ED programs.** REA is less restrictive, and allows you to apply to some other state school EAs. Check with college websites.

Similar to EA, you get early decisions, but you do not need to commit.

EARLY VS REGULAR (IMPORTANT)!

From 'cDocs' on the left tab, go to Applications.
Please make sure in CA (and Cialfo), your apps are listed correctly (EA/REA/ED/RD), and that the submission method is listed correctly (Common App).
This is to ensure your apps are sent off correctly!

Ensure the portal is reflected as Common App

Do check the round you are applying for is correctly reflected

EARLY VS REGULAR (IMPORTANT)!

When you click on the individual schools, you will be able to edit the application details. You will need to

1. Ensure that the Application Portal is set to <u>Common Application</u>
2. The Round is correctly reflected (ED/EA/RD/REA, etc)

1. Always set to <u>CA</u> for all schools with CA Set to <u>Other</u> otherwise

2. Set to ED/EA /REA/RD

EARLY VS REGULAR

For <u>early applicants</u>, remember to inform your recommenders by **8 Oct;** and confirm your Early school(s) on Cialfo by **18 Oct, 2359 hrs.**

You cannot make any more changes to your **early** schools after **18 Oct** as we need a confirmed list to prepare the necessary forms and transcripts to support your application. **Cialfo will be locked*** after 18 Oct and will reopen after 3 Nov for regular decision)

When we say the system is locked, it means you cannot edit your school list or request for recommendations on Cialfo. You can, however, still work on your application materials on CA. You submit your CA portion to the colleges directly by their stated application deadlines.

EARLY VS REGULAR

For <u>regular decision</u>, remember to request your recs by **12 Nov**. The deadline for you to confirm your school list is **17 Dec, 2359 hrs**.

After this deadline, Cialfo will be locked* for the year, for us to prepare and send off transcripts. No new schools can be added nor new US applications initiated.

When we say the system is locked, it means you cannot edit your school list or request for recommendations on Cialfo. You can, however, still work on your application materials on CA. You submit your CA portion to the colleges directly by their stated application deadlines.

NON COMMON APP SCHOOLS

NON CA SCHOOLS

Some schools have their separate systems. If you are applying, follow their instructions on <u>applying and requesting for recommendations via their school portals</u> directly.

You should still add these schools onto your Cialfo school list so that we can support your applications when required.

Here are some schools with their own application portals:

- University of California schools (Note that teacher recommendations are not necessary.)
- MIT
- Georgetown,
- Sciences-Po,
- Etc.

NON CA SCHOOLS

To see which schools you are applying to are not under CA, when you first wish to add the school, you will notice that they do not have the CA icon.

Schools / Search & Lists

| Search | Columns | | List ⓘ | All | Longlist | Shortlist | Applying |

Search ✖

School Name

| chicago | ✖ |

Courses & Majors

| Search courses & majors | ✖ |

Filter Results   Clear Filters

☑ Expand Search ⓘ NEW

Regions Available

☑ Application Countries / Regions / Territories ⓘ

United States

Add Application Countries / Regions / Territories...

Environment & Location

☐ State ⓘ

☐ College Size ⓘ

☐ College Setting ⓘ

☐ College Type ⓘ

☐ City Type ⓘ

Sports & Athletics

40 schools match of 6255   Filters Expand Search Matched name: "chicago" Application Countries / Regions / Territories

School Name	List	Portals ⊗	Lil
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology at Washington DC	➕ Add		
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology at Xavier University of Louisiana	➕ Add		
The Illinois Institute of Art - Chicago	➕ Add		
Toyota Technological Institute at Chicago	➕ Add		
University of Chicago	➕ Add		
University of Chicago Collegiate Scholars Program	➕ Add		
University of Illinois at Chicago	➕ Add		
University Of Illinois Chicago - FAST PROGRAM	➕ Add		

CA Icon

NON CA SCHOOLS

When you click on the school under the 'Application' list, you will also see that there is no option for 'Common App' under the Application Portal.

No 'Common App' Option, only the 'Other' option is available

NON CA SCHOOLS

For all non CA schools, where transcripts are necessary, the Higher Ed Office will have to send in hard copies or via other means, as instructed by the universities themselves. In the event we have to send hard copies, please have a clear headstart on deadlines to factor in extra time for mailing.

Email collegeadmissions@ri.edu.sg at least 3 weeks in advance for us to do the necessary. **All requests for sending of documents should reach us by 3 Dec, after which the Higher Education Office is closed for the year.**

If you are unsure, drop as an email.

WE ONLY USE CIALFO FOR US APPLICATIONS. DO NOT LIST OTHER/UK SCHOOLS OR REQUEST FOR UK RECS VIA CIALFO.

NON CA SCHOOLS: MIT

Students apply directly on the MIT portal.

You request for your counsellor recommendation (which includes the school report and transcript) and 2 subject tutor recommendations directly from the MIT portal. After you have approached your teachers personally, key in your CT and 2 STs' email addresses on the portal. Your teachers will receive notifications directly from MIT and take care of the rest.

Note that MIT requires subject recommendations from <u>contrasting</u> tutors. You need 1 Humanities Tutor and 1 Science/Maths Tutor as your subject recommenders.

Should you be in the situation where your only Humanities/Science and Maths tutor is also your CT, email us at collegeadmissions for instructions on how to proceed. Otherwise, adhere to the same list of CT + 2 subject tutors as in your CIALFO recommenders list.

NON CA SCHOOLS

The Higher Education Office is happy to assist you with your university applications. However, to put in a strong application and to ensure that recommendations and transcripts are sent on time, it is **your responsibility to contact us and your teachers/recommenders well in advance about your applications and to keep track of all internal deadlines.** If the university you are applying to has an earlier deadline, you will need to inform us earlier as necessary.

FURTHER GUIDANCE

All timelines, guidance and materials on how to fill up CA will be posted on IVY (current students) as well as the WWW (former students).

(Goto www.ri.edu.sg, on the top tab, select School Life > Higher Education Office)

OVERVIEW OF TIMELINE

8 OCT	Last day for Early applicants to request for recommendations from teachers on CIALFO
18 OCT 2359hrs	Last day for Early applicants to confirm Early school list and application plan on CIALFO
1 NOV	Deadline to submit your application package for most Early application plans
1 NOV – 30 NOV	UC application period on UC portal
12 NOV	Last day for Regular applicants to request for recommendations from teachers on CIALFO
3 DEC	HEO closes for the year to process applications
17 DEC 2359hrs	Last day for Regular applicants to confirm Regular school list on CIALFO
EARLY JAN	Deadline to submit your application package for most Regular application plans

The detailed timeline is available on IVY (for current students) and our open RI website (for alumni).