

Guide for Alumni

1. The Common Application Activities & Academic Honours Sections

The Activities & Honours Sections (10 activities + 5 academic honours) are important components in your Common Application. The key question to answer: How do my activities and honours show my uniqueness as an individual?

1

List 5 academic honours you have achieved from Year 3 to now. Any academic-related awards can be considered. E.g. book/subject prizes, academic competition awards, etc. Do this in 100 characters or less. In selecting what to present, consider:

- Which honours best represent your talents and accomplishments?
- Which you are personally proudest of?



Review all the activities you have done, which capture your growth and reflect your interests and passions as a unique individual. Include activities which are academic and non-academic, within and without school, from Year 3 to now. Then in shortlisting, consider:

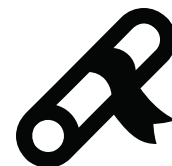
- Which activities most represent your values and what you stand for?
- Which activities helped you grow as a person?
- Which had a wider, positive impact on the people around you?

2

3

Writing about your activities. You will do this in 150 characters or less.

- You should select 10 activities which mean the most *to you*.
- Have you explained what you accomplished in a clear and succinct manner?
- Leave out minor details; focus on the big picture.



Final review.

- Have I used phrases or acronyms which require further explanation?
- Are my titles and descriptions universally understandable?
- Does my list of activities show what means the most to me as a person?
- For the boys: do not neglect NS! You need to at least at least talk about what you have done after leaving school.

4

2. The Essays: 5 Tips for Writing

1. Avoid generalisations and clichés. The story you tell should be so unique, only *you* can tell it.

2. Each school you apply to is different. Your essays should likewise be different. Spend time and effort in understanding the schools you are applying for, and in writing for them.

3. In telling your story, know your purpose. Three things to avoid: unnecessary detail, losing track of your key message, repetition.

4. It is good to seek feedback from friends, particularly when trying to make sense of your experiences, or as a helpful check on grammar and language. However, friends do not dictate *your* story. *You* make the choice of what to write, and how to write it.

5. A good US application takes lots of time, effort and research. Thus, start writing early. Do NOT wait until the last minute. Adhere to all deadlines as required by the universities and us.