

COMMON APP AND CIALFO FOR STUDENTS

HIGHER EDUCATION OFFICE
RAFFLES INSTITUTION
AUGUST 2023



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#HEOprotip: Be aware that activation of Cialfo can take up to a week. To avoid last-minute rush, **set up Cialfo asap**, whether you are applying Early or Regular. This means slides #1- #9, #16- #23. Don't procrastinate on this.

Before you go further, words of counsel

- Good US apps take **months** of time, effort and work. It should **not** be initiated out of FOMO, or on a whim.
- It also involves your teachers. Be considerate thus in adhering to deadlines, so that you give them sufficient time to help you to your desired destinations. The next slide shows the **deadlines to adhere to**.
- For Y6s, consider well what you can cope with during the A-levels. HEO's recommendation is 5-8 schools, so that quality of writing or your A-levels are not compromised.
- HEO closes **1 Dec**. Any requests thereafter to open CIALFO accounts will **not** be accepted. **Students reading this only in Dec are strongly advised against applying**. Apps are not likely to yield meaningfully at such a late stage. *Timelines* and the US writing guide was published since May for this reason.

KEY US DEADLINES TO ADHERE TO

6 OCT	Last day for Early applicants to request for recommendations from teachers <u>on CIALFO</u>
20 OCT 1700hrs	Last day for Early applicants to confirm Early school list and application plan <u>on CIALFO</u> .
1 NOV	Deadline to submit your application package for most Early application plans
1 OCT - 30 NOV	UC application period on <u>UC portal</u>
17 NOV	Last day for Regular applicants to request for recommendations from teachers <u>on CIALFO</u>
1 DEC	HEO closes for the year to process applications
18 DEC 1700hrs	Last day for Regular applicants to confirm Regular school list <u>on CIALFO</u>
EARLY JAN - FEB	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).

COMMON APP AND CIALFO

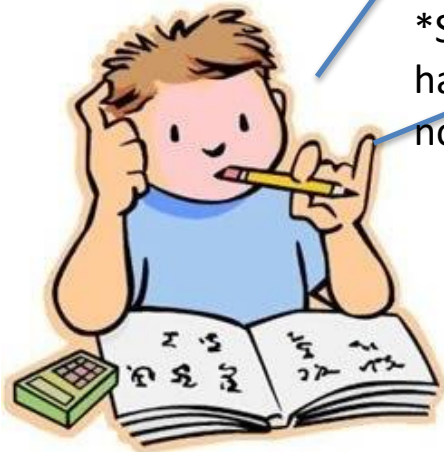
common
app



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



CIALFO



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).



FIND A COLLEGE [Plan for college](#) ▾ [Apply to college](#) ▾ [Support your students](#)

[Sign in](#)

[Create an account](#)

Your future starts here

Apply to college for the first time or transfer to complete your degree. Navigate your entire college application journey with Common App.

COALITION



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

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 exactly how your documents are to be delivered, if required. We will facilitate according to the instructions of the university. **As the office will be closed from 1st Dec, please 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 2024.**

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)

You should use First and Last Names as in official records, as they should match those on your official school transcripts which are sent to the colleges.

You should also use your PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESS for both Common App and Cialfo. This ensures that colleges can reach you via email after your graduation from RI.

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.



Welcome, Stamford!
CAID
@gmail.com [Sign Out](#)

Dashboard My Colleges **Common App** College Search Financial Aid

Common App

- Profile
- Family
- Education
- Testing
- Activities
- Writing
- Courses & Grades
0 college(s) require

Profile Preview

Personal Information

Legal first/given name*

Would you like to share a different first name that you go by? [Learn more](#)

Yes
 No

[Clear answer](#)

Middle name

Last/family/surname*

Need help? [Q](#)

Need Help?
Please use the link below to look for an answer to your question. Answers to most questions can be found in [Read more](#)

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
- Date of entry: Jan 2022 (RGS/JAE Class of 2023), Jan 2018 (RI Class of 2023). Amend accordingly.
- Graduation Date: Dec 2023. 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 (for all applicable cohorts)
 - ✓ 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 H2 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 our US writing guide on IVY (current students) or WWW (alumni).

COMMON APP ACCOUNT

"TESTING"

Self-report SAT/ACT/TOEFL scores, if you have them.

#HEOprotip: For colleges which are test-optional this year, it is not necessary to send in your official report at point of application—you can self-report them for now in Common App. *Then only* if you are offered a place *and decide to enrol*, will you need to request for the official test scores from Collegeboard to be sent over to your university for verification. This will help save some \$ on your end. :)

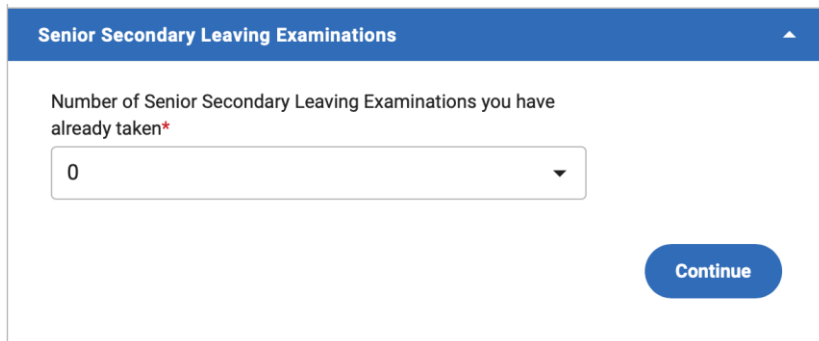
For "Is promotion within your educational system based on standard leaving examinations given at the end of lower and/or senior secondary school by a state or national leaving examinations board?", select "Yes".

COMMON APP ACCOUNT

"TESTING"

For Y6s, key in "0" as you have yet to take your A Level Exams. If you are choosing to report PW, you will report it here (i.e., '1'; report actual grade).

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 our US writing guides on IVY (current students) or WWW (alumni).

#HEOprotip: spend proper time and effort on the 10 Activities. They are the links to your essays.

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 Education section 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.**



A screenshot of the Common App user interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs: "Dashboard", "My Colleges", "Common App", "College Search", and "Financial Aid Resources". The "My Colleges" tab is active. On the left, a sidebar menu shows "My Colleges" with "Carnegie Mellon University" selected. Below this, there are sections for "College Information", "Application" (with "Recommenders and FERPA" highlighted), and "Writing Supplement". The main content area is titled "Recommenders & FERPA" and contains a warning icon and the text "FERPA Release Authorization". Below this, it explains that users must complete the FERPA release authorization process before inviting counselors, teachers, recommenders, parents, or advisors. There is a link "Learn more about FERPA" and a prominent blue button labeled "Complete Release Authorization". A "Continue" button is located in the bottom right corner of the main content area.

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 *

Date * 

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.

My Colleges

- Carnegie Mellon University
- College Information
- Application
 - Questions
 - Recommendations and FERPA
 - Review and Submit - Common App
- Writing Supplement
 - Questions
 - Review and Submit - Writing Supplement

Recommendations and FERPA

Recommendations are people who will submit forms to colleges on your behalf. This page shows which recommender types this college needs. Each college will have different requirements.

- ✓ **FERPA Release Authorization**
 - [View Details](#) ▾
- ~~**Invite recommenders**~~

Use this section to invite and then [assign recommenders](#) to this college. You'll need to assign recommenders for each college on your list.

Invite Recommenders
- ✓ **Counselor**

Your school is using Cialfo for transcripts, school reports, and teacher recommendations. Please contact your counselor directly and they will provide instructions specific to your school regarding these documents. If your counselor wishes to submit forms via mail, you can download forms that can be completed on paper and mailed to each institution to which you apply.

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 Common App. The school list on Cialfo will be updated naturally via the Common App-Cialfo sync.



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:

<https://forms.moe.edu.sg/forms/vGNP7e>

ALL former students:

<https://forms.moe.edu.sg/forms/Jlj2Ae>

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.

Higher Education Office, your school counselor, has invited you to set up your Cialfo account to kickstart your college search! Inbox x

Higher Education Office <notifications@cialfo.co>
to me

8:40 PM (0 minutes ago) ☆ ↶ ⋮



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

CIALFO ACCOUNT

2. Create your account Password

Click on the 'Register Now' button in your email. This will take you to a webpage to create your account (see screenshot on the right). Choose your password and then proceed by clicking on 'Create my account'.

Dear Stamford,

Isn't it exciting to be thinking about where you will be studying for your undergraduate studies?

Will you head to the US to pursue engineering,



Will it be to the UK to study literature in the land of Shakespeare?



Or somewhere else entirely?

REGISTER NOW



Create Account

First name

Stamford

Last name

Raffles

Gender

Female

Male

Non-binary

Other

Email address

@gmail.com

Phone number

+65

Provide your mobile number

Password

Password

Confirm password

Password

I agree to Cialfo's [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Create my account

CIALFO ACCOUNT

3. 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.

The screenshot shows the Cialfo account dashboard for a user named Stamford Raffles. The dashboard is divided into several sections:

- Search Bar:** Located at the top, with the text "Search for universities, content, careers and more..".
- Navigation Tabs:** On the left side, there are four tabs: "Home", "Universities", "Bookmarks", and "Applications". The "Universities" and "Applications" tabs are circled in blue.
- Instagram Section:** A section titled "Follow us on Instagram" with a "Follow us" button and a "Dismiss" button.
- Profile Section:** A section titled "Welcome Stamford Raffles" with a "Profile strength: Fair" indicator and a "Complete profile" button. The "Complete profile" button is circled in blue.
- My University Roadmap Section:** A section titled "My University Roadmap" with a "View" button and a "Complete" button.
- User Menu:** A dropdown menu on the right side, containing options: "Stamford Raffles", "Profile", "My Settings", "Help Center", "Chat with Cialfo", and "Log Out". The "Profile" option is circled in blue.
- Progress Bar:** A progress bar at the bottom left showing the number of universities in each stage: Applying (0), Shortlist (0), Longlist (0), and Applied (0).

CIALFO ACCOUNT

3. Navigating Cialfo

Profile

- Where you can edit your personal information

Universities

- Where you can search for colleges, read up on their profiles and courses offered

Applications

- Anything and everything related to your application list, including requesting for recommendations, etc

At the top right hand corner, you can also 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

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 '**Applications**' on the left tab:

The screenshot shows the Cialfo user interface. At the top left is the Cialfo logo. Below it is a navigation menu with icons for Home, Universities, Bookmarks, and Applications (which is highlighted in blue). The main content area is titled 'Applications' and features a search bar, a 'Back' button, and utility icons for 'Download' and 'Request LOR'. The page is divided into two sections: 'In Progress' (orange background) and 'Submitted' (green background). In the 'In Progress' section, there is a card for 'Common Application' with a '0' next to it and a 'More' dropdown. A blue arrow points from the 'Applications' tab in the left sidebar to this card. Another blue arrow points from the 'Common Application' card to a blue button labeled 'Link Common App' located on the right side of the card. The 'Submitted' section below has a 'Show Withdrawn' toggle switch.

Click on "Link Common App". You will be brought to CA.

LINKING CA AND CIALFO

Then Click on 'Link Account'

The screenshot shows the Cialfo user interface. On the left is a navigation sidebar with icons and labels for Home, Universities, Bookmarks, and Applications. The main content area features a search bar at the top, a 'Request LOR' button, and a table with columns for 'Required' and 'Optional'. A yellow note states that no recommenders are currently listed. Below this, the 'Common App account' section shows two red error messages: 'Account Not Linked' and 'FERPA Unknown'. A text box provides instructions on how to link a Common App account, and a blue 'Link account' button is prominently displayed with a blue arrow pointing to it from the bottom left.

Request letters of recommendations and track their status here [Request LOR](#)

Required	Optional
N/A	N/A

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


Common App account ✖ Account Not Linked ✖ FERPA Unknown

If you have a Common App account, enter the email address and password when selecting "Link Account". Click "Link Account" to create a Common App account if you don't already have one.

[Link account](#)

LINKING CA AND CIALFO

You will be prompted to login to your CA account, and finally, click on Connect to link CA and Cialfo, and you will be brought back to Cialfo.



Connect your Common App

First year student? Great! Enter your email and password below to sign in, or [create an account](#) to get started.

* Indicates required fields.


Email *

Password *

Show password [Forgot password?](#)

Sign in

Need help?
[Visit the Applicant Solutions Center.](#)



Hi, Stamford!

By checking the box below you will enable Cialfo to access certain information from your Common App account that is necessary for integration and processing.

If you authorize this connection, you will be granting permission to Cialfo to:

- See the status of your applications and recommendations
- View additional Common App data in order to support submitting recommendations on your behalf

I agree *

Cancel **Connect**

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) Completed the Education section in CA
- 3) Included at least one college you are applying to in CA
- 4) Signed the CA FERPA

The screenshot shows the Cialfo interface. On the left is a navigation menu with icons for Home, Universities, Bookmarks, and Applications. The main content area has a search bar at the top and a section titled "Request letters of recommendations and track their status here" with a "Request LOR" button. Below this is a table with columns "Required" and "Optional", showing counts of 1 and 2 respectively. A yellow note states: "Note: You currently don't have any recommenders. When you do, they will appear here." Below the note, the "Common App account" section shows two green status boxes: "✓ Account Linked" and "✓ FERPA Waived". Blue arrows point from these boxes to the text on the right. Below the status boxes, a box contains the text: "Common App ID: 38108800 Email: rafflesheo2023@gmail.com" and "Your Common Application account has been successfully linked to Cialfo. If the displayed information is incorrect, please contact the Common Application to resolve it."

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

SCHOOL LIST

Make sure your Cialfo school list is the same as your CA school list as we can only send your transcripts to the schools listed on your Cialfo school list. The Common App-Cialfo sync may not be immediate depending on load and traffic.

The screenshot shows the 'Universities' search page. A search bar at the top contains the text 'columbia'. Below the search bar are filter tabs: 'Regions' (with a '1' indicator), 'Entrance Requirements', 'Environment', 'Admission Requirements', '+ More Filters', and a 'Reset' button. The 'Applied Filters' section shows 'University location: United States'. Below this, it says '42 Universities'. A grid of university cards is displayed, including Columbia University, Columbia College Chicago, Columbia College (SC), and Sciences Po - Columbia University Dual BA Program. A dropdown menu is open over the 'Add to list' button for Columbia University, showing options: 'Longlist', 'Shortlist', and 'Applying'. Three red annotations with blue arrows point to specific elements: '1. Click on 'Universities'' points to the 'Universities' link in the left sidebar; '2. Search for the school name' points to the search bar; '3. Click on Add to List, and then select 'Applying' to add school to your application list so that you can come back to it later.' points to the 'Applying' option in the dropdown menu.

1. Click on 'Universities'

2. Search for the school name

You may wish to first restrict the search to US colleges

3. Click on Add to List, and then select 'Applying' to add school to your application list so that you can come back to it later.

SCHOOL LIST

If you add an application on Cialfo, make sure you choose **Common Application** wherever possible. You will not need to do this usually as the school list is updated naturally via the Common App-Cialfo sync. For colleges like the UCs, Georgetown and MIT, the default is **Other portals**. See **Slides 53-57** for important information about applying to non-CA schools.

Add application



Select university

Columbia University

Select portal

Common Application

Other portals

Add course/major

Applied Mathematics

Mark as submitted

Choose Common Application wherever possible.

Add application

Add application



Select university

Georgetown University

Select portal

Other portals

Add course/major

Add course/major

Mark as submitted

Add application

SCHOOL LIST (STUDENTS WHO APPLIED IN PREVIOUS CYCLES)

You will need to clear your school list from the previous cycle (found under Submitted) by clicking on the 3 vertical dots, then on withdraw application for **all** your previous applications.

3 Submitted Show Withdrawn

Common Application 3 [More](#) [Track on Common App](#)

University	Result	Student decision	Enrolment	
Harvard University Not set	Pending	Not set	Select	⋮
Stanford University Not set	Pending	Not set		⋮
Carnegie Mellon University Not set	Pending			⋮

1. Click on 3 vertical dots

2. Click on 'Withdraw application' on the drop down that appears

SCHOOL LIST

Under 'Applications', for colleges under your CA list,

- the 'Mark as submitted' appears on colleges you manually added on Cialfo, but are not yet synced from CA. Once the college is on your CA list and Cialfo syncs with CA, it will go away.
- If you remove a college from your CA list, Cialfo will reflect it once it syncs with CA.

The screenshot shows the Cialfo interface with a sidebar on the left containing 'Home', 'Universities', 'Bookmarks', and 'Applications'. The main content area is titled '5 In Progress' and is divided into two sections: 'Common Application' and 'Other portals 2'. The 'Common Application' section contains a table with three rows: Carnegie Mellon University, Columbia University, and New York University. Each row has columns for 'Round', 'Deadline', and a 'Mark as submitted' button. The 'Other portals' section contains two rows: Georgetown University and University of California, Berkeley, each with a 'Mark as submitted' button. A search bar at the top reads 'Search for universities, content, careers and more..'. A blue arrow points to the 'Mark as submitted' button for Carnegie Mellon University, and a red arrow points to the 'Mark as submitted' button for Columbia University.

College	Round	Deadline	Action
Carnegie Mellon University	Not set	Select date	Mark as submitted
Columbia University	Applied Mathematics	Select date	Mark as submitted
New York University	Not set	Select date	Mark as submitted

College	Deadline	Action
Georgetown University	Select date	Mark as submitted
University of California, Berkeley	Select date	Mark as submitted

Synced from Common App

If college is not synced from Common App

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

(LORs: Letter of
Recommendations)

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

For US schools, you will generally need

- 1) **Counselor Recommendation** from your Civics Tutor
 - 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 2 subject tutors
 - 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)

Only Y56 teachers can write your teacher recommendations: this is to meet the **requirement** for **latest academic** references.

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, we will send off the ST 1 recommendation (based on the form submissions in **slide 22**).

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

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

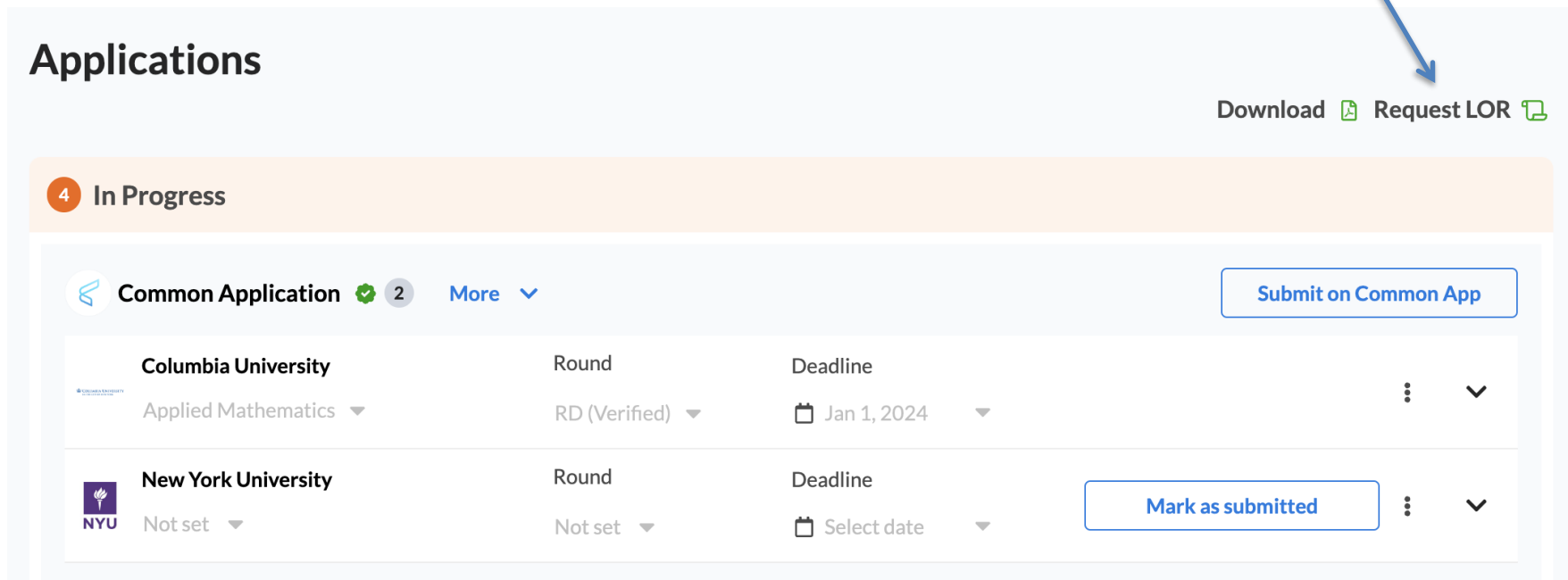
We send all our teacher recommendations via CIALFO. Do not fill in the 'Invite Recommenders' section on your Common Application.

The screenshot shows the 'My Colleges' sidebar on the left with 'Carnegie Mellon University' selected. The main content area is titled 'Recommendations & FERPA' and includes a 'FERPA Release Authorization' section with a green checkmark and a 'View Details' link. Below this is the 'Invite Recommenders' section, which is crossed out with a large black X. The text in this section reads: 'Invite Recommenders' and 'Recommenders are people who will submit forms and information to colleges on your behalf.' A blue button labeled 'Invite Recommenders' is also present and crossed out.



TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

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




Click on Request LOR at the top right-hand corner:

















Applications

Download  Request LOR 

4 In Progress

 **Common Application**  **2** [More](#) 

[Submit on Common App](#)

 Columbia University Applied Mathematics 	Round RD (Verified) 	Deadline  Jan 1, 2024 	 
 New York University Not set 	Round Not set 	Deadline  Select date 	Mark as submitted  

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

STEP 2



Request Recommendation

Recommenders 2/3 + Add Recommender

Albus Dumbledore ✕

Teacher Demo ✕

You should see your CT and STs' names here

Survey

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



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

STEP 3

Upload

File

Google Drive

Send Request

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: 34016411

Email: rafflesheo2022@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.

- 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)!

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

Request letters of recommendations and track their status here

Request LOR

Required Optional

2

3

Common App Account

✓ Account Linked

✓ FERPA Waived

Common App ID: 34016411 Email: rafflesheo2022@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.

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

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 Y5-6 civics/subject tutors as this is an academic reference 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 recommenders need to specify the A-level subject taught and attest to your attitude and aptitude in a classroom context.

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 6 Oct**

For regular decision: **Request before 17 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 binding applications which include the clause that if you are accepted, you will attend that particular school. **You must withdraw applications to all other schools (incl. ALL UK Schools and Singapore) once accepted and cannot apply to any other school, 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 **one school of choice** and you are positive you are able to attend if successful.

EARLY APPLICATIONS

BINDING (EARLY DECISION)

You can only apply to one ED school.

You and your parents will have to acknowledge, sign and send the ED Agreement on Common App before your application can be processed. Note that there are consequences from the US schools if you break the ED Agreement, as specified by the universities.

By our internal timeline, all ED applicants (current and former students) are to indicate your ED school in Cialfo by 20 Oct 2023, 1700hrs.

EARLY APPLICATIONS

NON-BINDING

EA (Early Action) : Offers early outcomes to your apps, but you do not need to commit until May.

SCEA (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: you are to adhere to all you sign on to.

Similar to EA, you get early indications of outcomes, but you do not need to commit to enrolling.

EARLY VS REGULAR (IMPORTANT)!

Go to Applications on the left tab.

Please make sure the 'Round' in your apps are reflected correctly (EA/REA/ED/RD). This information is synced from Common App.

This is to ensure your apps are sent off correctly!

The screenshot shows the 'In Progress' section of an application portal. It is divided into two main categories: 'Common Application' and 'Other portals'. The 'Common Application' section lists three universities: New York University (NYU), Columbia University, and Carnegie Mellon University. Each entry shows the 'Round' and 'Deadline'. A blue arrow points to the 'ED (Verified)' round for NYU, which has a deadline of 'Nov 1, 2023'. The 'Other portals' section lists Georgetown University and the University of California, Berkeley, both with 'Not set' rounds and 'Select date' deadlines. Each entry in the 'Other portals' section has a 'Mark as submitted' button.

University	Round	Deadline
New York University	ED (Verified)	Nov 1, 2023
Columbia University	RD (Verified)	Jan 1, 2024
Carnegie Mellon University	Not set	Select date
Georgetown University	Not set	Select date
University of California, Berkeley	Not set	Select date

Do check the round you are applying for is correctly reflected

This is automatically synced from Common App.

There is no syncing between 20 Oct 1700h and 3 Nov, and after 18 Dec 1700 hrs (see subsequent slides).

EARLY VS REGULAR: CIALFO DEADLINES

Early Apps	6 OCT	Last day for Early applicants to request for recommendations from teachers <u>on CIALFO</u> .
Early Apps	20 OCT 1700hrs	Last day and time for Early applicants to confirm Early school list and application plan <u>on CIALFO</u> . This deadline is non-negotiable. NO change to Early choices possible thereafter. This is as we need a confirmed Cialfo list to prepare and send through all the documents, for all of you, on time. You will be able to make edits to your Regular choices from 3 Nov.
Regular Apps	17 NOV	Last day for Regular applicants to request for recommendations from teachers <u>on CIALFO</u> .
Regular Apps	18 DEC 1700hrs	Last day and time for Regular applicants to confirm Regular school list <u>on CIALFO</u> . This deadline is non-negotiable. NO additions possible thereafter. HEO needs a confirmed Cialfo list to send through all the documents for all your schools, for the entire applicant pool then. #HEOprotip: if you are unsure of schools prior to 18 Dec, just leave them in CIALFO. You can opt not to submit CA later, that's fine. You will not be able to add schools post-18 Dec 1700h.

EARLY & REGULAR: WHAT CONFIRMING YOUR CHOICE(S) MEAN

When we say 'confirm your choice(s)', this means your choice (Early, Regular, etc) is reflected rightly in Cialfo. This will naturally occur via the Common App-Cialfo sync. As such, **ensure you check that your choices are reflected rightly in both Common App and Cialfo, ahead of the deadlines.**

Once the deadline (20 Oct or 18 Dec) hits, the sync will be **stopped**, and your list of schools are confirmed in Cialfo. These deadlines are non-negotiable. It allows HEO to work with a confirmed list, to send through all your documents for all of you, on time. You can still work on your application materials on CA, not to worry. On your part, you will need to 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 **applying and requesting for recommendations via their school portals directly.**

Also add these schools onto your Cialfo school list so that we can support your applications, at the later stage of offers & acceptances.

For instance, here are some schools with their own application portals:

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

NON CA SCHOOLS

When you click on 'Applications' on the left tab, you should see a list of the non CA schools you are applying to under Other portals.

The screenshot displays a user interface for managing applications. On the left, a vertical navigation menu includes 'Home', 'Universities', 'Bookmarks', and 'Applications' (highlighted in blue). The main content area is titled '4 In Progress' and is divided into two sections: 'Common Application' and 'Other portals'. The 'Common Application' section lists Columbia University and Carnegie Mellon University. The 'Other portals' section lists Georgetown University and the University of California, Berkeley. Each entry in the 'Other portals' section includes a 'Deadline' field with a 'Select date' dropdown and a 'Mark as submitted' button. A blue arrow points from the 'Applications' tab to the 'Other portals' section.

Section	School	Round	Deadline	Actions
Common Application	Columbia University Applied Mathematics	Round ED (Verified)	Nov 1, 2023	▼
	Carnegie Mellon University	Round Not set	Select date	▼
Other portals	Georgetown University	Not set	Select date	Mark as submitted, ⋮, ▼
	University of California, Berkeley	Not set	Select date	Mark as submitted, ⋮, ▼

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 1 Dec, after which the Higher Education Office is closed for the year.**

If you are unsure, drop as an email.

Note that Cialfo is **only** used for US apps. Do **not** include your UK or other countries' apps in 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 contrasting 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 is 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)

The screenshot shows the Raffles Institution website. At the top left is the Raffles Institution logo with the text "FOUNDED 1823". To the right are links for "Contact Us", "Visit Us", and a "Login" button with a lock icon. Below the logo is a navigation bar with the following items: "About Us", "Admissions", "Learning", "School Life", "Alumni", "Giving", and "Highlights". A search icon and the word "Search" are on the right side of the navigation bar. The main content area features a large banner image of students in uniform on a golf course. A central menu is overlaid on the banner, listing the following options: "Co-Curricular Activities", "Houses", "Sports", "Arts", "Raffles Guidance Centre", "Raffles Leadership Institute", "Higher Education Office", "RI Boarding", and "Uniforms & Books". The "Higher Education Office" option is highlighted in green. Below the banner, there is a green bar with the text "Celebrating National Day!" and "Check out the school's National Day Celebrations here!". A "MORE" button with a right-pointing arrow is located in the bottom right corner of the banner area. On the left side of the banner, there is a font size adjustment control with three "A" icons and the text "Change font size".

Reminders

- US applications are **not** a necessity. Thoughtful applications that can yield take **months** of work: they should **not** be initiated on an impulse, please.
- Y6 students: your priority is the A-levels, do take on what you can manage, in a timely manner. For those applying, HEO's recommendation is 5-8 schools: refer to our US writing guide for advice.
- **Be on time with all deadlines:** Avoid being last minute, especially considering there are months, from Aug to Dec, to do this. Be aware that apps require not just work from you, but your teachers. It is good manners to give others time to help *you* with *your* dreams.
- **Those with NS:** you should **only be applying for what, if offered, you would definitely accept**. This is as acceptance equates enrolment for the US. Be aware that US schools often have binding regulations thus, so you will mostly not be allowed to hold a place to reapply elsewhere the following year. As such, avoid the temptation of hoarding. **It's not cool.**

Do all things in a measured, proper and healthful way.

All the best!

Higher Education Office,
Raffles Institution 2023