



1 Research your options

2 Finance your studies

3 Complete your application

4 Apply for your Student Visa

5 Prepare for your departure

Your 5 Steps
to U.S. Study



Application types

It's important to plan your workload, so read through each of your college applications carefully and make sure you know how many and what sort of essays you'll be required to write.

Application types:

1. The Common Application (CommonApp)

The Common Application informally known as the [CommonApp](#) is an online application used by 700+ colleges. Essay prompts for the next year's intake reset on August 1 each year and your essay must be 250–650 words in length.

Note: Colleges that use the CommonApp may require supplemental information, including additional essays.

2. Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success

The [Coalition](#) is an online application used by 130 universities. Essay prompts can be reviewed on the website.

3. Universal College Application

[Universal College Application](#) is an online application used by over 75 institutions.

4. Individual college application

Specific essay instructions will be found on the college's website

The importance of your essay/personal statement

Your transcript is the 'who', 'what' and 'where' of the application, whereas your essay(s) and letters of recommendation form the 'why' and 'how'. Think of each essay as an opportunity to share highlights and lessons learned from your life.

Remember that admissions staff have read many essays in their career, so having a completely unique thought is unlikely. However, your application can always stand out through an engaging and compelling essay that is clearly focused, well-written and demonstrates your personality and maturity.

Do not let the relatively short word count minimize the importance of this task—or the quality that is expected. The U.S. students you're competing against spend in excess of 6 months in preparing their essays.