

# Common Application Instructions, 2020 Entry

The Lyceum

Students using the US Common Application (USA) must complete the following:

- Create an account.
- Send your Counsellor and Teachers online invitations to complete references for you.

## **A. Creating your Application**

Go to [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

1. You will be given only first name and last name fields at this stage, but enter as much of your name as you can. Put last name only in the last name field, but enter two or more names/initials in the first name field, as this name will be used on your counsellor list. You will re-enter your name in the application itself and will be given first, middle and last name fields at that stage.
2. Keep your username, password and applicant ID somewhere where you can get to them - your phone or an e-mail account that you can access from anywhere.
3. Make sure to register as a first-year student and not as a transfer (unless you are an ex-student who has already spent a year at a university).
4. Make sure to “Invite” your College Counsellor and teachers as soon as possible so that they can see your name on their lists and will be able to access and complete their forms.

## **B. Completing Your Application**

Have the Common App open online as you read these instructions.

- You will see five tabs at the top of the page, *Dashboard, My Colleges, Common App, College Search* and *Financial Aid Resources*. In each section, an *Instructions and Help* bar on the right provides tips and instructions.
- The form is progressive; as you complete it, new sections will become visible and available. If you cannot find a section referred to in this document, then back up – you may have not yet have filled in the section that allows you to access it.

### **Immediately**

1. Go to *College Search*.
  - a. Add a school you are considering. Don't worry if you are not sure, as you may add/remove a school at any time until you submit its application.
    - i. You must keep at least one school on the dashboard at all times or your counsellor will not be able to see your name on her list or fill out your forms.
    - ii. Come back to use this tool to search for colleges.
2. Go to *Common App*.
  - a. Open Complete the *Profile* and *Education* sections only. Do the rest later.
3. Go to *My Colleges*
  - a. Under any college, open *Recommenders and FERPA* and click on the *Invite and Manage Recommenders* box. Using the box that pops up, send an invitation to your college counsellor and to the teacher(s) you will ask for letters of reference.
    - i. Use the special teacher reference e-mail addresses on College Counselling website. (Format: [teacher.name-ref@lyceu](mailto:teacher.name-ref@lyceu). . . .)
    - ii. There is now a separate Invite Advisor button. If you wish your College Counsellor (or any other person) to be able to see what you enter in to the Common App, then invite her using this tool.
    - iii. You will need to complete the FERPA section first. (See section *My Colleges*.)

### **Between now and the time when you submit your first application via Common App**

1. *Common App*: Complete the other sections.
2. *Dashboard*: Enter all of the schools you want to apply to on the Dashboard.

3. **My Colleges:** Complete all of the sections for each school
  - a. Click on the name of the school you wish to submit, and then fill out the sections in Application: Questions, Recommenders and FERPA, Review and Submit – Common App Writing Supplement: Questions, Review and Submit – Writing Supplement.
  - b. Remember that these sections must be done separately for each college or university
  - c. Open each section and look carefully at the contents. It is especially important to know what writing requirements you will have to fulfill – essay type questions can be in the *Questions* section as well as in the *Writing Supplement*.

**When submitting each individual application via Common App**

1. You must submit both the application and the supplement to each school by its stated deadline.
2. In **My Colleges**, follow the instructions in the *Review and Submit* section for each school
  - a. Review and save a PDF copy of your application, pay fee (if required), sign.
  - b. Submit the Common App and separately submit the Writing Supplement if required.

**C. Section-Wise Instructions**

**1. College Search: Add Colleges and Universities to your list.**

Click in the box to the left of the college you want to add to your *Dashboard*, then click “Add.”

1. Enter your search criteria and hit *search* to get a list of matching schools
  - a. Put a school on your dashboard and go through its information carefully under the *My Colleges* tab to see full application information and requirements.
  - b. Always double check requirements with school websites
2. Click on the box *Application Requirements* to open a new window with a searchable database of all US Common App schools and their requirements.

**2. Dashboard: Keep Track of Your Applications.**

Add schools to the list on the *Dashboard* using the *College Search* section. Remove by clicking on the trash can. Keep the list as accurate as possible, and keep at least one school on your *Dashboard* at all times.

1. The main list will show: name of school, writing requirement icons, deadline, application status, and writing supplement status (if required).
  - a. Make sure that a deadline is showing for each school so your counsellor will know when to complete your forms. Select the deadline in the *Questions* section for each school under the *My Colleges* tab.
2. Open each school to see two tabs – *Status* and *Writing Requirements*.
  - a. Open the Writing Requirements tab to see that school’s requirements. If both “required” and “optional” icons are showing it means that there are some questions of each type.
3. You may receive e-mail messages from the schools you have on your dashboard.

**3. Common App: Information Entered Here Will Go to All Colleges to Which You Apply**

Instructions are only given for areas that may need clarification

1. Profile:
  - a. Personal Information: Use the name that appears on your passport.
    - i. Last name should match the last name you used when registering for external tests such as SAT, etc., so that your scores can be matched with the application.
    - ii. *Other names* – asks for former last name (could be useful if you have documents with more than one last name).
  - b. Common App Fee Waiver: The last statement here is the only one that might apply. NOTE: Read the full list of indicators of economic need. They all indicate a significant degree of poverty. Anyone who can pay to attend The Lyceum is not really comparable in economic situation to those who qualify for fee waivers in the US.
2. Family:
  - a. Household: *Do you have any children?* This means you, personally.

- b. Parent 1/Parent 2/Step Parent: If you cannot find the name of a university (college) attended by your parent in the list, you may select *I don't see the college I am looking for on this list* and enter the data by hand. You will need to know degrees earned and the dates they were earned.
    - i. "Step Parent" will only appear if you have indicated that you want to list one.
  - c. Sibling: List all of your siblings with educational level. If a sibling is attending or has graduated from college, you will need to enter the name of the college and dates of attendance (end date may be in the future).
3. Education:
- a. Current Secondary School: If you type "Lyceum" in the search bar, you will get a match for Lyceum School, Karachi, Pakistan. List April 1, 2018 as your graduation date.  
Enter your counsellor's information:
    - i. Ms. Annabel W. Belgaumi [belgaumi@lyceumschool.edu.pk](mailto:belgaumi@lyceumschool.edu.pk)
    - ii. Ms. Maleeha Naqvi, [maleeha.naqvi@lyceumschool.edu.pk](mailto:maleeha.naqvi@lyceumschool.edu.pk)
    - iii. Ms. Zehra Raza [zehra.raza@lyceumschool.edu.pk](mailto:zehra.raza@lyceumschool.edu.pk)
    - iv. Ms. Ayesha Islam [ayesha.islam@lyceumschool.edu.pk](mailto:ayesha.islam@lyceumschool.edu.pk)
    - v. Ms. Azarmeen Chawla [azarmeen.mchawla@lyceumschool.edu.pk](mailto:azarmeen.mchawla@lyceumschool.edu.pk)
    - vi. Mr. Shahriar Ahmad [shahriar@lyceumschool.edu.pk](mailto:shahriar@lyceumschool.edu.pk)

Phone Number for all counsellors is 92-21-3582-1741  
Fax Number for all counsellors is 92-21-3583-2310

Progression through or since secondary school. Not applicable, except for ex-students who have taken a gap year will check *did or will take gap year*, and enter details in the box that opens.
  - b. Other secondary schools: Some local O Level schools can be found in the search and some cannot. If you can't find your school, enter it manually. Enter dates of attendance.
  - c. Colleges and Universities: Not available to students in Karachi. Leave blank.
  - d. Grades:
    - i. *Class Rank Reporting* – None.
    - ii. *Graduating class size* – 354. (Class of 2019)
    - iii. *Cumulative GPA, GPA scale and GPA weighting* – Leave blank.
  - e. Current Year Courses:
    - i. *How many?*: Count all subjects you are taking this year (2018-19), including Language/General/GPR, both in school and privately.
    - ii. *Course title*: list as "A Level Biology," "AS Level English General Paper," "AS Level Psychology" etc., including both name and level.
    - iii. *Course Level*: leave blank – none of them apply.
    - iv. *Course Credit Value*: Enter "1."
    - v. *Course Schedule*: Full Year.
  - f. Honors: If you have won any academic honours, you may list them here. Not all schools award them. If you have any questions about how to list awards from your school or exam board, ask your college counsellor.
  - g. Community Based Organizations: Not available to students in Karachi. Enter 0.
  - h. Future Plans: Enter what is most probable. If things turn out differently later, it's ok.
4. Testing:
- a. Tests Taken:
    - i. *Do you wish to self report standardized test scores?* You may choose whether or not to report achieved scores via Common App. Note:
      - 1. Self-reported scores do NOT substitute for official scores sent from the test agency, but can be useful if your official scores are delayed.

2. You may not wish to self-report if you plan to send different scores to different schools. Be very careful to give correct instructions to the College Board/ACT about which scores are to go where.
  3. Schools with flexible testing plans allow you to specify which test(s) you want them to use, and they will honour your request, and will not use them, even if they are there.
- ii. *Indicate all the tests you wish to report.* (will appear if answer was “yes”)
    1. Select and add each kind of test score you wish to report. A separate section for each one will be added at the bottom of the page.
  - iii. *International Applicants: Is promotion within your educational system based upon standard leaving examinations given at the end of lower and/or senior secondary school by a state or national leaving examinations board?* – Yes, your O Level results are required in order to continue on to A Levels.
- b. Specific test sections – according to what you entered in the tests you want to report.
- i. *Number of scores you wish to report:* For tests already taken. List the number of times you have taken the test. Under that, enter your best score already earned for each subsection, with the date you earned it.
  - ii. *Number of future sittings you expect:* List the number of future tests you will take, and the future date(s) immediately underneath.
  - iii. SAT Subject Tests: List the number of SAT subject tests (not dates) you plan to take, with date, subject and score for each one. If it is a future date, omit score.
- c. Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations:
- i. *Number of Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations you have already taken:* Count each of the AS (and A (Accelerated Mathematics)) exams you have already taken. Include Oct/Nov re-sits as well. Do not enter June 2019 exams.
  - ii. *Date taken:* select June 2018 or November 2018.
  - iii. *Examination Board:* GCE A Levels. – This indicates the academic system we follow, not the levels of the exams themselves, which you must enter with the name of the exam.
  - iv. *Academic Subject:* Enter with both level and name of subject: “AS Level Biology,” “A Level Mathematics,” “AS Level Physics,” etc.
    1. Accelerated Maths: list as “A Level Mathematics” because “accelerated” refers to the way it is taught at Lyceum, and is not the name of the exam.
  - v. *Score and Score Type:*
    1. June Exams: Enter your letter grade, and choose “Actual”
    2. November Exams: For *Score* enter “Pend” and for *Score Type*, enter “Predicted”

For November Re-exams, you must also list the June 2018 exam and result. US applications require reporting of all academic data.
5. Activities:
- a. You can enter details about Activities 1 – 10. Use the Resume you made as a guide.
    - i. *Activity Type:* Choose the closest one. Ex: Theatre/Drama
    - ii. *Position/Leadership and Organization Name* (50 characters available) Enter a name and a description of what the organization is. Ex: Mashal Academy, a school for disadvantaged students. If pressed for space, omit the name.
    - iii. *Please describe this activity, including what you accomplished and any recognition you achieved, etc:* You have 150 characters, including spaces, to describe your activities. Use action verbs. Figure out how to say the most in the shortest space. It should be clear, but you need not use complete sentences.
    - iv. *Participation grade levels.* Use 9, 10, 11, 12 (AI) and PG (13/AII).

- v. *Hours per week, weeks per year*: Figure out how many weeks a year you do your activity (# of ECA weeks fall + spring), average out the number of hours you commit to it, including transport. Ex: Play: 4 weeks. 5 hours/wk in wks 1 & 2, 10 in wk 3, and 14 in wk 4. Total 24hrs divided evenly = 4 wks of 6 hrs/wk.

6. Writing:

- a. Personal Essay: Write a personal essay of 250-650 words. Compose and save offline, and then cut and paste into the space. Once you paste in your text, it will tell you how many words you have used. Some schools do not require this essay. You will need to select one of the topics:
  - i. Some students have a background, identity, interest or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
  - ii. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount an incident or time when you faced a challenge, setback or failure. How did it affect you, and what lessons did you learn from the experience?
  - iii. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
  - iv. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma – anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
  - v. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
  - vi. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
  - vii. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

If you wish to seek your College Counsellor's comments on your essay, please do so by **November 15** at the latest for regular decision, October 15 for November deadlines. Please bring her a proofread version that you have shown to your English teacher.

- b. Disciplinary History: If you answer "yes" to either of these questions, a box will appear and you will be asked to provide details. If you have a disciplinary infraction that resulted in a suspension/expulsion, then you should list it, and make sure to carefully describe the circumstances and especially "what you learned from the experience."
- c. Additional Information: Self explanatory.

7. Courses and Grades

- a. Please try to enter your school grades into this system.
- b. If you find you cannot fill it so that your school grades are represented accurately, answer that you do not have access to your transcripts and it will allow you to skip this section.

#### 4. My Colleges: Specific Information that Must be Completed for Each School

The list of your colleges will appear in the left side bar.

- Click on each section to complete it. The contents of these sections will vary depending on the requirements of each school. Instructions are only given for areas that may need clarification.

#### Application

- 1. Questions: Categories and questions will vary by school.
  - a. General: *Fee Waiver*: (See section E.1.h. under the heading *Common App* section (p3)). Your counsellor will determine if you are eligible for a fee waiver. You must ask.

- b. Academics:
    - i. *Intended undergraduate division*: May be difficult to change later on.
    - ii. *Intended major(s) or area(s) of academic interest*: Can usually be changed.
  - c. Residency (for public schools): Each public university in the US has different minimum requirements for students who wish to establish residency for tuition purposes. You must be a US citizen/permanent resident and meet the residence requirements of each school.
  - d. A range of other questions can be asked. Please look at this section early so that you can be prepared. Ask your counsellor about anything that you do not know how to answer. Some of the questions in this section may be short-answer questions – please prepare the answers to these questions as carefully as you prepare your main essay.
2. Recommenders and FERPA – You must complete the *Education* section under the *Common App* tab before you can open this section.
- a. FERPA Release Authorization: It is self-explanatory if you read it carefully.

**FERPA Waiver:** It is to your advantage to waive your right to see your references. If you do not waive your right to see them, then the university may wonder if your referees are being totally honest: by extension, a good reference looks even better, as they know that the teacher is free to write anything, and has still written a strong reference. If you choose not to waive your right to see the letters, then you can ask to see them once you are attending the school in the US if the school saves application documents. You cannot access them if you do not go. The Lyceum will not share references with you, regardless of how you complete the FERPA waiver.

Once you complete this, a box will appear from which you will send invitations to your referees. If you wish to add referees later, return to the window by clicking the box: *Invite and Manage Recommenders*.

Recommender Invitations/Manage Recommenders Pop-Up window:

- a. Counselor: You will enter the name and e-mail address (see page 3) of your assigned college counsellor.
- b. Lyceum Teacher: Select the subject area and enter the name of your teacher. Enter his or her e-mail address using the special reference e-mail addresses. ([teacher.name-ref@lyceu](mailto:teacher.name-ref@lyceu). . . .) This list is available in the Forms section of the College Counselling pages of the Lyceum website.
- c. Non-Lyceum Teacher: Select name and subject area. Enter the e-mail address he or she gives you. If s/he will not fill out a reference online, then submit the request without an e-mail address and s/he will be listed as an “Offline” provider.
- d. Other Recommender: Occasionally required by a school, but usually optional. Select relationship, and enter name and the person’s e-mail address.

Each invited referee will receive an e-mail with a link to the website so that s/he can fill out the form. All e-mail invitations for Lyceum teachers will arrive at, and be submitted online by, the College Counselling office.

The Lyceum College Counselling office will not submit references from outside teachers.

- c. Counselor: Your college counsellor will automatically be listed for each school, with date of invitation and the status of the sections she must complete.
- d. Teacher: You must select the references that you wish to be sent to each school. The minimum number of references required and the maximum allowed will be shown.

- i. The names of the teachers you have already invited will appear in a drop down menu. Select the name of the teacher(s) and click “assign.”
    - ii. That teacher’s reference will then be downloaded by that school
  - e. Other Recommender: This section will only show if the school accepts these references.
    - i. The names of the people you have already invited will appear in a drop down menu. Select the name of the person and click “assign.”
  - f. Offline Providers: If you assign an offline provider then an “offline form” link will appear. Download and save it and then print a paper copy and give it to the referee.
    - i. Remember you must collect and mail/courier any offline references to each school that requires them.**
  - e. Advisor: You may grant someone access to see what you enter into your Common Application by inviting them using this tool. No one except those you invite in this way will be able to see your application. The advisor does not submit a form on your behalf.
3. Review and Submit – Common App

**Writing Supplement** (Will show if required)

1. Questions - Complete according to instructions.
  - a. Your College Counsellor’s comments on any writing must be requested by November 15 (for regular decision)
2. Review and Submit – Writing Supplement
  - a. You must submit the main Common App. to a school before submitting its supplement.

**Portfolio** (Will show if you indicated that you would submit one.)

1. This section will give instructions if the portfolio is to be submitted via the Common Application.
2. If a school uses an outside service such as Slide Room, then you will be provided with a link.

**END**