

The Uplands University Guide 2010

Available online @ <http://hi5tory.com/uniguide.pdf>



Introduction

This guide is designed as a starting point to help Uplands students make informed choices regarding post-secondary education. The process can be lengthy and the best advice is to start early in Year 12 (if not sooner). Certainly you should be ready to apply by the end of your summer break.

You are fortunate to be studying at a school offering the IB Diploma and A-Levels. They are highly regarded university entrance programs that can give you a definite competitive edge when applying to university. Colleges and universities around the world recognise these as evidence of outstanding ability. University admissions officers consider many different criteria when making decisions about admitting students. The IB Diploma confirms your potential for academic success, as well as your capacity for critical thinking, intercultural understanding and sensitivity to a variety of points of view. Through your completion of C.A.S., the extended essay, T.O.K., some Internal Assessments, as well as the Group 4 project, you will come across as both a well rounded and well prepared university applicant.

Support from Uplands Staff

Uplands School will assist you with your applications as much as possible. Your main point of contact is with Mr. Klar, the Universities and Careers Advisor. However there are also a number of other staff members that can maybe assist you (the Head of Sixth Form, the Heads of Year 12 and 13, the Deputy Heads of the Secondary School or your mentor) and who are available to provide advice and to help with the application process. Your form tutors and other teachers hail from many countries and will also serve to assist you with your applications for university as well as write teacher's references for you.



Costs

Above and beyond the application fees paid to universities, for the first **SIX** standard applications you submit through the school, a RM70 administrative fee is charged to cover the costs of preparing and sending supporting documentation. 'One-Stop' online applications that cover a range of universities (UCAS, Commonapp, etc.) will only incur one charge, unless further follow up documentation by mail or courier is required. Further applications will be RM120 each and other costs (such as for extra documentation, courier costs, etc.) will be charged at the schools discretion. Therefore it is **very important** that you choose the institutions that you will apply to **carefully** rather than a 'scattergun' approach. Also ensure that **your applications are fully complete**.

Resources

Navigiance Succeed is your most important tool. **You should check and update regularly**

Periodically, universities from various countries do information tours that pass through Penang and Kuala Lumpur. Some of these also visit Uplands. Watch for announcements at school for when these events will be occurring.

Several up to date guide books are available at local bookstores as well as through online ordering companies such as Kinokuniya or Amazon.

In the University and Careers Space there are numerous university publications from several countries that you are welcome to peruse and borrow. The Uplands library also has a number of general reference books about universities around the world that may be helpful.

Penang and Kuala Lumpur have several higher education offices that offer a variety of services in terms of researching, applying and accepting. These include:

- **U.S.** MACEE (Penang Coordinator: Elizabeth Langsten)
Malaysian-American Commission on Educational Exchange
04-226-4924 , www.macee.org.my
- **Canada** CECN (KL Senior Education Advisor: Iris Low)
Canadian Education Centre Network
03-2162-2901 , www.studycanada.ca/malaysia
- **Australia** IDP Education Australia (Penang Manager: Joyce Chee)
04-226-1811 , www.idp.com
- **New Zealand** NZTE (KL Education Manager: Jamna Naidu Tan)
New Zealand Trade and Enterprise
03-2078-4612 , www.nzte.govt.nz
- **U.K.** The British Council (Penang)
04-263-0330, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/malaysia.htm>

Uplands alumni are attending universities around the world. Through the Head of Sixth Form or University Advisor we can try to put you in touch with former Uplanders that may be able to provide some insights. You could also join some of the online social groups that have been formed by Uplands alumni.

When possible, it is helpful to tour university campuses and talk with admissions officers during the school holidays.

The best and most up to date resource will be the internet. Most universities have admissions officers available to answer questions and send you materials. The following websites may be useful in addition to websites operated by specific universities.

U.K.: www.ucas.ac.uk UCAS (Universities & Colleges Admissions Service)
www.educationuk.org

U.S.: www.collegeboard.com (for SAT's)
www.commonapp.org (U.S. Common Application for many U.S. Colleges)
www.princetonreview.com
<http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges>
www.petersons.com
www.unigo.com

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Australia: www.idp.edu.au

New Zealand: www.educationnz.org.nz

Canada: www.aucc.ca

Europe: www.dmoz.org/Reference/Education/Colleges_and_Universities/Europe

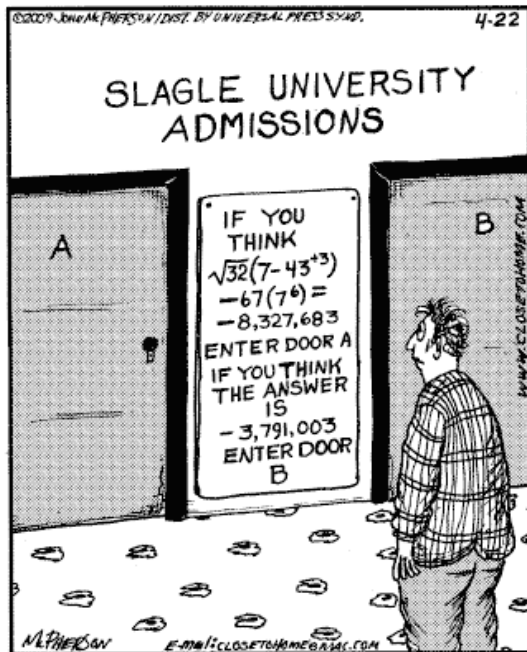
Asia: www.dmoz.org/Reference/Education/Colleges_and_Universities/Asia

General: www.highered.cois.org
www.shambles.net

Other school sites:

<http://www.dulwich-shanghai.cn/dcs/tertiary/dcstertiary/Navigation.html>

http://www.dalat.org/jweb/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=171&Itemid=238



Deadlines

To best deal with individual student needs, we ask that you do your research well in advance and plan your applications around the following deadlines. In general, the following summarizes the dates you must be prepared to submit your application if you wish the School to assist you in a timely fashion. Students applying to universities in other countries not listed here will need to adhere carefully to the deadlines published in the materials provided by individual universities.

U.K. (Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry) - October 15th#

US Early Application – October 15th

General applications – November 1st

Australia / NZ - November 1st 2011 (to commence studies in February 2012)

Others TBA

If a Malaysian national and requiring an interview in KL the date is earlier – usually September 20th

Country Requirements

The IBO keeps an online updated list of all countries and universities that recognise the IB Diploma, with any specific requirements that they may have, at:

<http://www.ibo.org/country/>

It is important that students wishing to attend university in a specific country should check to see if there are any special requirements that that country may have.

Initial Decisions

University decisions are a collaborative effort among students, parents, counsellors, teachers, and admissions personnel. You must take advantage of all resources available to you in order to make informed decisions. Firstly, students must consider the following points and discuss them with their parents:

- In what country do I want to study?
- Which university will I attend?
- What is our financial budget?
- In what subject will I specialise?

Where to Study

Many Malaysian students from Uplands seriously consider overseas institutions. Others who are not from Malaysia, or who have a non-Malaysian parent, might wish to return to their home country for your post-secondary education. For reasons of finances, geography and future opportunities, this may not be possible. Uplands graduates have attended universities in almost twenty countries over the last fifteen years.

Some University Destinations for Uplands Students over the last 15 years

Country	Universities
U.K.	Bristol, Cambridge (various colleges), Cardiff, Edinburgh, Hull, Lancaster, Leeds, London (various colleges), Loughborough, London School of Veterinary Science, Manchester, Northumbria, Nottingham, Oxford Brookes, Sussex, Warwick, York
U.S.A.	Berklee College of Music, Columbia, DePaul University, Georgia Tech, New York, Penn State, Portland University, Swathmore, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, University of Seattle, University of Washington, University of Texas, Princeton, Savannah College of Design, Smith, Sarah Lawrence, Ohio
Australia	Adelaide, ANU, UNSW, Monash, Perth, Melbourne, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Sydney
Other Destinations	Auckland University (New Zealand), Bangkok, Barcelona, Denmark, University of Dublin (Ireland) Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Malaysia, Singapore, Tsukuba University (Japan), Utrecht (Holland), Waterloo, UBC (Canada)

It is important to narrow down which countries you wish to study in. Consider the following table.

Criteria	U.K.	U.S.	Australia	Canada
Funding	Public	Many private and public options	Public	Public
Costs	High (lower for E.U.)	Highest	Medium	Medium



The bane of every college applicant: the admissions essay.

	residents)			
Financial aid international students	Few scholarships	Many scholarships	Few scholarships	Many small, several large scholarships
Undergraduate degree length	3 years	4 years (possible credit for IB HL subjects)	3 years	4 years (possible credit for IB HL subjects)
Application costs	UCAS fee GBP 15	USD \$30-50	AUD \$0-100	CAD \$50-100
Application system	Maximum 6 universities through UCAS	Apply through Common App or to some individually	Generally apply individually	Generally apply individually
SAT's and TOEFL	Not required	Both required by most	Not required, possibly IELTS	SAT's only for U.S. students, Some require TOEFL

Choosing a University

You may wish to focus your applications in one country or apply to universities in several countries. It is a sensible strategy to have a balance of “hopeful”, “realistic” and “safety” options. For many students, six university applications is enough to keep a person very busy, particularly if you are applying to universities individually.

As you do your research, make a table similar to the one below that lists the name of the university and various criteria to compare them easily.

University/ College									
Criteria									

You may wish to use some of the following points to compare the universities:

- **Application Process:** forms, essays, interviews, teacher references, certificates, school transcripts of grades, portfolios, required admissions tests immunisations required, parents’ bank statements
- **Immigration:** Is obtaining a student visa costly, time consuming?
- **Costs:** application fees, annual tuition, cost of living, books, travel, etc.
- **Financial Aid/Scholarships:** What is available for international students?
- **Location:** urban, rural, proximity to international airports, family members in area, languages spoken in area, consideration of settling there after university
- **Character of the University:** traditional/conservative, progressive/liberal, religious, single sex, co-ed, formal, friendly, national, international

- **Courses of Study:** availability of your desired major, length of program, pre-requisite high school courses for desired program, university well known for your field of study
- **Size of University:** class size, teacher-student ratio, size of department you wish to study under
- **Special Programs Offered:** international students' office, tutorial system, research work available for undergraduates, co-op programs/work experience, use of IT, foreign exchange programs, links with government agencies
- **Climate:** Can you live with snow? Rain? Freezing temperatures? Extreme heat?
- **Accommodation:** university residence halls on campus, affordable apartments off campus, meal plans
- **Nature of Student Body:** proportion of international students and national students, multicultural, multilingual
- **Student Life:** recreation, social events & activities, food options, personal safety
- **Facilities:** libraries, computers available for student use, science labs, health clinic, sports facilities



Costs

The table on the next page provides a rough estimate of what **annual** costs are involved to attend universities in various countries. Different cities within a country will have different cost of living expenses. There is likely to be variation between different universities within a country and different programs of study within a university. For example, clinical programs often cost significantly more. Again, further research on your own is necessary.

Country	Tuition	Living Expenses ⁴	Total
U.S. ¹ -public	\$15,000	\$12,000	USD \$27,000
U.S. -private	\$30,000	\$12,000	USD \$42,000
U.K. ² -E.U. citizen	£1,100	£9,000	GBP £10,100
U.K. -international	£8,000	£9,000	GBP £17,000
Canada -citizen	\$4,000	\$10,000	CAD \$14,000

Canada -international	\$15,000	\$10,000	CAD \$25,000
Australia ³ -citizen	\$5,000	\$13,000	AUD \$18,000
Australia -international	\$15,000	\$13,000	AUD \$28,000

Exchange Rates: 1 USD=3.2 RM, 1 GBP=4.9 RM, 1 CAD=3.2 RM, 1 AUD=3.0 RM

Please Note:

¹ You will find that although private American universities may have wider reputations and recruit more aggressively, there are many public state universities which offer very good programs of study that are excellent value for money. Scholarships are available at both but in general private institutions have more available for international students.

² It is very important to check with individual universities' admissions offices whether overseas citizens of a country are eligible to pay resident citizen fees. This is especially important the U.K. as some universities are more flexible than others in terms of defining a resident citizen.

³ Australian universities normally start their school year in February. Students may apply to commence studies mid-way through the Australian school year in July. It is best to check with individual admissions offices in terms of any special requirements.

⁴ This will include on-campus residence or off-campus apartment rental fees, food, books and school supplies, local transport, social/recreational activities, and other miscellaneous day to day expenses. Health insurance, transport to home country, moving expenses, and student visa fees are excluded due to the variability of such expenses.

Specialisation Subjects

By the time you start Year 12 you should have a good idea of what you would like to study in University. If you still are not sure, you will at least know what you don't want to study. Work from there, considering the subjects you are currently taking in Year 12 and what subjects you took in Years 10-11. Naviance is an important tool to help you.

The choice can be vast, especially if you have more than one area of interest. Many universities have combination degrees where a main subject can be combined with a second from a wide range of options. Some universities allow you start with a general degree program and declare your area of specialization later on in your degree.

Many university programs have prerequisites for admission. For example, medical colleges in the U.K. usually will require you have Biology and Chemistry and possibly Mathematics at the higher level in your IB Diploma.

Again, take advantage of all resources available to help you with your choices. Speak to family members, friends, and teachers. Use the print resources within the School. Get on Naviance plus research online and investigate specific university degree programs and future career options. Also use social networking to find where could be a good 'fit'

Glossary

GAP Year: Some students choose to take a year away from study after completing their IB Diploma. Most universities will allow you to defer your place for one year provided you have worthwhile reasons. A gap year can help you gain valuable life experience, adaptability and independence. Many students use the year to get relevant work experience, raise funds to pay for their university education, travel, or work on volunteer projects. You may plan your own schedule for the year or you may connect with a Gap Year

Organization. The best advice is to secure a place in a university before commencing the gap year.

Oxbridge: Oxford and Cambridge universities or “Oxbridge” have their own application system and deadlines. Depending on the success of your application, the process will involve careful examination of your predicted grades, sitting a test in your subject area, and an interview. Be mindful that many international schools will not support a student’s application to Oxbridge unless that student has potential to achieve a minimum of 38 out of 42 possible IB Diploma points.

Personal Statement: A personal statement is required on both UCAS and Common App and may be modified for use as an application essay for other universities. You must outline your university and career aspirations, describe your experiences in leadership, sports, the arts and volunteerism and outline any special awards or achievements you have had. It often takes many drafts to get a polished and interesting personal statement.

SAT’s: Scholastic Aptitude Tests or SAT’s are general reasoning tests administered by the College Board in the U.S. American universities require students to write the SAT I which has a verbal and a math component. Some colleges will require one or more SAT II’s, which are subject specific tests. Some students write the SAT’s at the end of their second to last year of high school and many opt to repeat them to better their scores. You need to register at least two months in advance for the SAT’s on College Board website www.collegeboard.com. The SAT’s are written in Penang at Dalat School. You must write them before the end of December of Year 13 to ensure the universities you apply to receive the results in time. A fee is involved.

TOEFL: The Test of English as a Foreign Language or TOEFL will be required by many American and Canadian Universities to prove your ability to communicate effectively in English. This is especially the case if you have studied in an English medium school for less than five years. The paper based test can be written at MACEE in Penang usually on a predetermined date once a year. The computer based test can be done at MACEE in Kuala Lumpur, any time of the year during regular business hours. You must do the test before December 1st of Year 13 to ensure the universities you apply to receive the results in time. A fee is involved. More information can be obtained from the website www.ets.org/toefl or from the MACEE office in Penang.

UCAS: All applicants to U.K. universities must apply online through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service or UCAS – <http://wwwucas.com>. A single application form provides spaces for up to five courses at five universities, with some exceptions. The application will also require you to write a personal statement. A fee is involved.

Commonapp: Many applications to US colleges go through Commonapp – <http://www.commonapp.org>. For the 2009-2010 admissions year, more than 390 U.S. colleges were accepting the Common Application. All colleges that accept the Common Application agree to treat all applications equally. In fact, many now use only the Common App (including Harvard). The application you use is not as important as the care and thoroughness that you put into completing it. And most importantly, the strength of your transcript matters most, followed by other criteria including your essay, SAT/ACT scores, letters of recommendation, extracurriculars, etc.

Any questions please come see me in B106A. Good luck!

Mr. Klar

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