

The College Admission Process...

What are college admissions considering?

1. Academics
2. Testing
3. Application Essay
4. Letters of Recommendation
5. Extracurricular Activities
6. Completion of High School

1. ACADEMICS

There are a number of factors that colleges take into consideration in the admission process. The most important component is the student's **academic record**. The high school courses a student takes and their grades are top factors in college admission decisions. The high school transcript shows a college whether the student is capable of succeeding if admitted. The more selective the college you are considering, the higher the admission requirements will be. Highly selective schools will require a more rigorous curriculum.

2. TESTING

Counselors typically encourage students to take the **SAT or ACT** during the spring of their junior year. You may take either the ACT or the SAT or both; most colleges accept both tests. Some colleges will superscore the tests, taking the highest score from each section. Refer to the individual colleges for these specifics. Both the ACT and SAT are commonly used for college admissions decisions and awarding merit-based scholarships. Most colleges do not have a preference of which one, but different students tend to do better on one test over the other. It is recommended to take both in order to make the determination of which you tend to score better on. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools have become “test optional,” meaning they are not requiring test scores for admission, however, sending a strong test score is still a favorable factor for any college.

When registering for these tests you will need to enter **Christian Family Academy's code 341810**. Both tests will require you to upload a recent photo of yourself for test day check-in; therefore, make sure you have a photo available when you go online to register.

You will need to send your test scores directly from ACT/SAT to the colleges where you are applying for admission and/or choose to attend. Test scores do not appear on your transcript.

Test scores can be sent free of charge to four schools during registration and for nine days following the test. If you choose to wait to send scores, be aware that there will be a fee to send each of the scores to the individual colleges. Many schools are now offering self-reported scores during the application process. This will save money because you will only pay to send scores to the school you decide to attend. Scores can be sent by going to www.act.student.org or www.collegeboard.org.

ACT – American College Testing

Students register for the ACT online at www.actstudent.org. The registration process will take approximately 30 minutes. The first step is creating a username and password. Make sure you write this information down and keep it for future reference. It is important for the student to register for this test because of the nature of some of the questions. It may be helpful to have your transcript available to answer certain questions about classes taken and grades earned. The ACT has an interest inventory to help assess students' potential career interests. Filling out this inventory is optional but highly recommended. If you have questions regarding registration, you can contact ACT at (319) 337- 1270.

ACT Test Dates 2020-2021

Test Date	Registration Deadline
October 10, 2020 October 17, 2020 October 24, 2020 October 25, 2020 (Sunday)	September 25
December 12, 2020	November 6
February 6, 2021	January 8
April 17, 2021	March 12
June 12, 2021	May 7
July 17, 2021*	June 18

SAT – Scholastic Aptitude Test

Students register for the SAT at www.collegeboard.com. The registration is similar to the ACT. If you have questions regarding the SAT registration you can reach SAT at (866) 756-7346.

2020-2021 SAT Test Dates (U.S.)

Test Date	Normal Deadline	Late Registration*	Online Score Release**
August 29, 2020	July 31, 2020	August 18, 2020	September 21, 2020
September 26, 2020	August 26, 2020	September 15, 2020	October 9, 2020
October 3, 2020	September 4, 2020	September 22, 2020	October 16, 2020
November 7, 2020	October 7, 2020	October 27, 2020	November 20, 2020
December 5, 2020	November 5, 2020	November 24, 2020	December 18, 2020
March 13, 2021	February 12, 2021	March 2, 2021	March 26, 2021
May 8, 2021	April 8, 2021	April 27, 2021	May 21, 2021
June 5, 2021	May 6, 2021	May 26, 2021	June 18, 2021

*The late registration deadline is about one week earlier if you are registering by mail

**SAT Essay scores are usually released within 10 days of the multiple choice scores

Conversion Chart ACT/SAT:

ACT COMP	SAT TOTAL	SAT RANGE	ACT COMP	SAT TOTAL	SAT RANGE
36	1590	1570–1600	22	1110	1100–1120
35	1540	1530–1560	21	1080	1060–1090
34	1500	1490–1520	20	1040	1030–1050
33	1460	1450–1480	19	1010	990–1020
32	1430	1420–1440	18	970	960–980
31	1400	1390–1410	17	930	920–950
30	1370	1360–1380	16	890	880–910
29	1340	1330–1350	15	850	830–870
28	1310	1300–1320	14	800	780–820
27	1280	1260–1290	13	760	730–770
26	1240	1230–1250	12	710	690–720
25	1210	1200–1220	11	670	650–680
24	1180	1160–1190	10	630	620–640
23	1140	1130–1150	9	590	590–610

Compare the ACT and SAT tests

- ACT includes a Science section
- SAT includes one SAT Math Section on which you may not use a calculator

	SAT	ACT
Why Take It	Colleges use SAT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.	Colleges use ACT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.
Test Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Writing & Language • Math • Essay (Optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Math • Reading • Science Reasoning • Essay (Optional)
Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 hours (without essay) • 3 hours, 50 minutes (with essay) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hours, 55 minutes (without essay) • 3 hours, 40 minutes (with essay)
Reading	5 reading passages	4 reading passages
Science	None	1 science section testing your critical thinking skills (not your specific science knowledge)
Math	Covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arithmetic • Algebra I & II • Geometry, Trigonometry and Data Analysis 	Covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arithmetic • Algebra I & II • Geometry, Trigonometry, and Probability & Statistics
Calculator Policy	Some math questions don't allow the use of a calculator.	You can use a calculator on all math questions.
Essays	Optional. The essay will test your comprehension of a source text.	Optional. The essay will test how well you evaluate and analyze complex issues.
How It's Scored	Scored on a scale of 400–1600	Scored on a scale of 1–36

3. APPLICATION ESSAY

Many college applications require a student to submit one or multiple essays. The essay is your chance to make a personal impression. Short answer essays are just as vital as the longer essay; don't just assume because it is a short answer that it shouldn't require as much thought. You may find it helpful to review your essays with a teacher or mentor. Make sure your final copy is free of any errors – grammatical and spelling.

What do colleges want to see?

- Can you write? Colleges want to see if you are able to take a thought and develop it into a well-organized essay. They are well aware of the standards of their students' writing and can assess whether your writing ability meets their academic standards.
- Who are you? The essay is your chance to express who you are to the admissions officers. They are looking to get a sense of your values, passions and beliefs and want to hear that through your own voice. Address questions like how you are going to impact the college community and how you would be an asset to their campus. They want to read your essay and see that you are an "interesting" person with a personality. Be authentic!

Select a topic

- Some colleges offer a specific question or prompt for you to answer while others give you freedom in choosing what you will write about.
- It will benefit you to do your research, organize your thoughts and opinions before you start, draft an outline of points with supporting ideas, have an idea of your conclusion and be sure to answer the question.
- If you choose your own topic, your essay should reveal who you are in an authentic voice. There is no single "right" topic.

Creating Drafts

- After you select a topic, start writing! The first draft should include everything that comes to mind. It might be helpful to set a timer for thirty minutes and don't stop writing until time is up.
- Put what you've written away and don't look at it until the next day.
- The next day, re-read your essay. Do you still feel good about the topic? Is the essay about you? Is it truly written in your voice? Does the essay address the "who, what, why and how" of you?
- Review your essay. How is the structure? Did you attack your topic with a specific and creative angle? Is it personal and written in a concise manner?
- Get some constructive input from teachers, parents or peers. However, be cautious of revisions making sure that it is still written in your voice.

4. LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Not every college requires a letter of recommendation. The college's admission webpage will address whether it is required or not. Students should be looking for recommendations from teachers and mentors who know them well and can give testimony to their work ethic, character, persistence and growth. Teachers and mentors should be given at least two weeks to prepare a letter of recommendation. Your request date should always be prior to the college admission deadlines in order to account for processing time including collection of letters from teachers, etc.

5. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities help tell the story of who you are as a person. Each high school student should create an "Extracurricular Activity List" to use for the college application process. This list should include activities in which you have been involved both inside and outside of school. Colleges are looking for consistency and leadership roles. They want to know how long you have been involved in the activity and what your level of commitment is to the group. Extracurricular activities show a student's motivation to become involved within the community and their ability to manage their time. Many colleges love to see how you have served your community. When reviewing extracurricular activities on an application, admissions officers really want to know things like: What did you do in high school that made whatever you participated in better and helped you grow? What are you doing with your time that would contribute to our campus in a meaningful way if you came here?

6. COMPLETION OF HIGH SCHOOL

Admission decisions are contingent upon successful completion of high school. Although most applications will include a student's academic profile up through junior year, it is important that a student maintain the same standard throughout senior year. When admissions make decisions, they are taking into account the rigor of a student's senior course schedule as well. Colleges will require a final transcript after graduation in order to finalize registration.

***TIPS FOR THE APPLICATION PROCESS:

- After determining your **list of interest schools**, add **dates and deadlines** to your calendar.
- Make sure you have done **ample research** on the schools and hopefully **visited each of the campuses**.
- Students should complete their own application.
- Fill out the application completely; do not leave any question blank.
- Call the college if you have questions about the school or the application process.
- Read over the application for errors. Have a parent or mentor proofread your application before hitting the submit button online.
- Request recommendation letters and follow-up if necessary.
- Remember to write a nice "thank you" note for those who wrote letters of recommendation on your behalf.
- It is your responsibility to have transcripts requested and sent from CFA.
- Remember to request official transcripts from CVCC if you have taken CCP classes
- Remember to have your test scores sent directly from SAT and ACT to the schools to which you are applying. Each of these requests will incur a fee unless you choose to have them sent at the time of registration or up to nine days after the test (or if you are eligible for a fee waiver).

NCAA ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Student athletes who want to participate in Division I or II athletics during their first year of enrollment in college must register with the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse will determine the student's eligibility by his/her grade point average in core classes and college entrance exams. Students should register online by the end of their junior year at www.web3.ncaa.org.

FINANCIAL AID

On October 1st, the **FAFSA** opens. FAFSA is a Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This is a very important part of the application process. Most college applications require students to fill this out. Financial Aid is dispersed as requests are made. This can be filled out prior to college applications and prior to acceptances. Go to fafsa.ed.gov to apply. The first step is for each student and their parent (typically the one who files taxes) to sign up for an **FSA ID**. Have your "profile data" handy for the application. You will need Social Security Numbers, Federal Tax returns, Bank statements, etc. Typically, this application takes around one hour to complete.

SCHOLARSHIPS

There are many resources available to search for scholarships. Research online and locally. Do not ever pay for a scholarship application. All legitimate scholarships are free. See the resource page for links.