

Set up your Common App Direct Admissions program

2026–2027



We're here to help you set up your direct admissions program on Common App. Setting up your program early can help you launch your direct admissions offers with ease.

Step 1: Set your selection criteria

- [Minimum GPAs](#)
- [Residency](#)

Step 2: Decide how your direct admissions offers will work

- [Excluded programs or majors](#)
- [Waived application requirements](#)
- [Guaranteed financial aid](#)
- [Offer conditions](#)
- [Campaign timeline](#) (optional)
- [Maximum number of offers](#) (optional)

Step 3: Go live 🎉

- [Review and submit](#)

Step 1: Set your selection criteria

Minimum GPAs

You can set the minimum GPA a student must have to receive a direct admissions offer. Common App will use the in-progress GPA a student reports in their application to send offers. Direct admissions offers are conditional until you review the student's records and confirm their official GPA.

Common App uses 4 GPA scales to set minimum GPAs for direct admissions offers:

- 4.0 scale
- 5.0 scale
- 6.0 scale
- 100 scale

Students can also optionally report if their GPA is "weighted" or "unweighted." If they don't report this, their GPA is considered "unspecified."

You can decide if you want to consider GPA weight or not in your minimum GPAs. 60% of students report a weighted GPA, while 12% of students don't report a GPA weight. Keep this in mind as you set your minimum GPAs.

If you **ignore GPA weight**, you'll set **1 minimum GPA for each GPA scale**. Students with the minimum GPA or higher will get a direct admissions offer regardless of if their GPA is weighted or not.

If you **consider GPA weight**, you'll set **3 minimum GPAs for each GPA scale**: 1 weighted, 1 unweighted, and 1 unspecified. This means you'll have 12 minimum GPAs total.

If you're not sure how to set minimum GPAs for all scales, we can help! Enter your minimum GPA on the 4.0 scale, then select "suggest GPAs" to get equivalent minimum GPAs for the other scales.

You can also select "get feedback on my GPAs", and Common App can check if your minimum GPAs for each scale are consistent. You'll get to confirm your minimum GPAs look good when you go live with your program.

Residency

You can decide which student permanent home addresses are eligible for direct admissions. Here are your residency options:

1. In-state only (default)
2. Choose a list of U.S. states
3. Upload a list of ZIP codes

If you **choose a list of U.S. states**, you can identify specific territories or armed forces bases.

If you **upload a list of ZIP codes**, here are the file requirements:

- File type is .csv
- File name only uses letters and numbers
- File uses exactly 1 column
- No header row
- Maximum file size is 2000 KB
- Each entry must be a 5-digit, U.S. ZIP code
- ZIP codes should represent student addresses, not school district

Step 2: Decide how your Direct Admissions offers will work

Excluded majors or programs

List majors or academic programs that are excluded from your direct admissions offers in alphabetical order.

Waived application requirements

You can waive these requirements for students who are eligible for direct admissions:

- Personal essay
- Counselor recommendation
- Teacher evaluations
- Other recommendations

Waiving these requirements helps simplify the application process and makes your direct admissions offers stand out.

Guaranteed financial aid

You can guarantee financial aid for students with direct admissions offers and help boost your enrollment and conversion rates.

Be sure to describe your financial aid packages clearly for students. For example: "With a direct admissions offer, you'll receive \$10,000 to \$20,000 of merit-based aid each year for up to 4 years. You may also receive need-based aid."

Offer conditions

To accept a direct admissions offer, a student has to submit their Common App, school report, and official transcript to your institution. All direct admissions offers are conditional until you review the student's records.

If you have other conditions for extending or rescinding a direct admissions offer, it's important to communicate these clearly to students.

For example: "Students have to meet our code of conduct." Or: "Students have to meet our English proficiency requirements." Linking out to specific documents or parts of your website is super helpful!

Campaign timeline (optional)

By default, direct admissions campaigns begin in the fall and run weekly throughout the academic year. To accept a direct admissions offer, a student has to apply before your latest available deadline.

You can also add custom start and end dates.

We'll start sending offers in early September, so we recommend you start your campaign before then. You also might want to set an end date before your latest deadline so that students don't receive offers after your deadline has already passed.

Maximum number of offers (optional)

By default, Common App will send direct admissions offers to all students that meet your criteria. You can also set a maximum number of offers.

Step 3: Go live 🎉

Review and submit

When you're ready to launch your direct admissions program, select "submit to go live" in the Control Center and confirm that you're ready for offers to be sent. **You won't be able to edit your program after you go live.**

We'll start sending offers in early September. As long as you set your start date before then, you're all set. Way to go! 🙌