



Counselor conversations with Common App: International student supporters

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Common App is an online application that makes applying to college easy.

Each year, more than one million students explore and apply to over 1,100 member colleges and universities worldwide.

commonapp.org/explore

60+ International members

15+ Countries and territories outside the U.S.

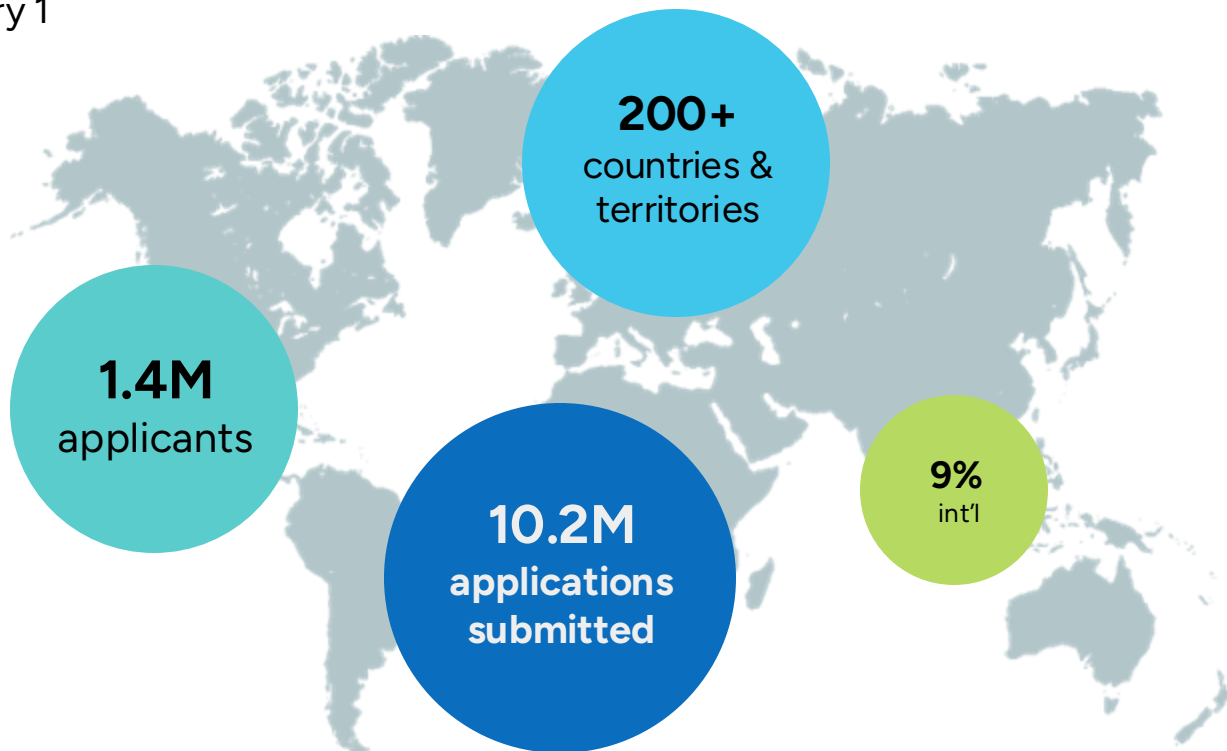
500+ Charge no application fee

First-year applicants' home countries

2025–2026 ytd as of February 1

Top 15 countries (non-US)

1. China
2. India
3. Ghana
4. Canada
5. Pakistan
6. Nigeria
7. Uzbekistan
8. United Arab Emirates
9. Ethiopia
10. Kenya
11. Saudi Arabia
12. Bangladesh
13. Kazakhstan
14. Korea
15. Brazil



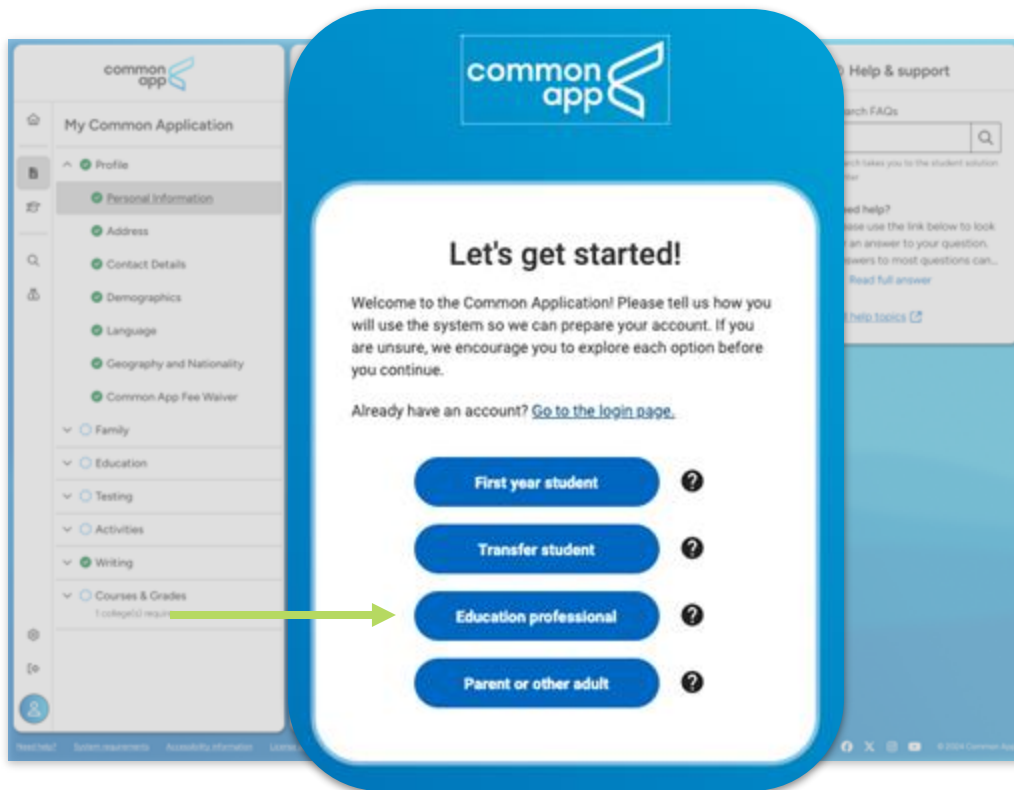
First-year application

Create a practice student account

- Visit commonapp.org
- Click **create an account**
- Choose your path

Select **education professional** to explore the student experience

Just getting started? Check out our New Counselor 101 [recording](#) and [slides](#) for tips and tricks.



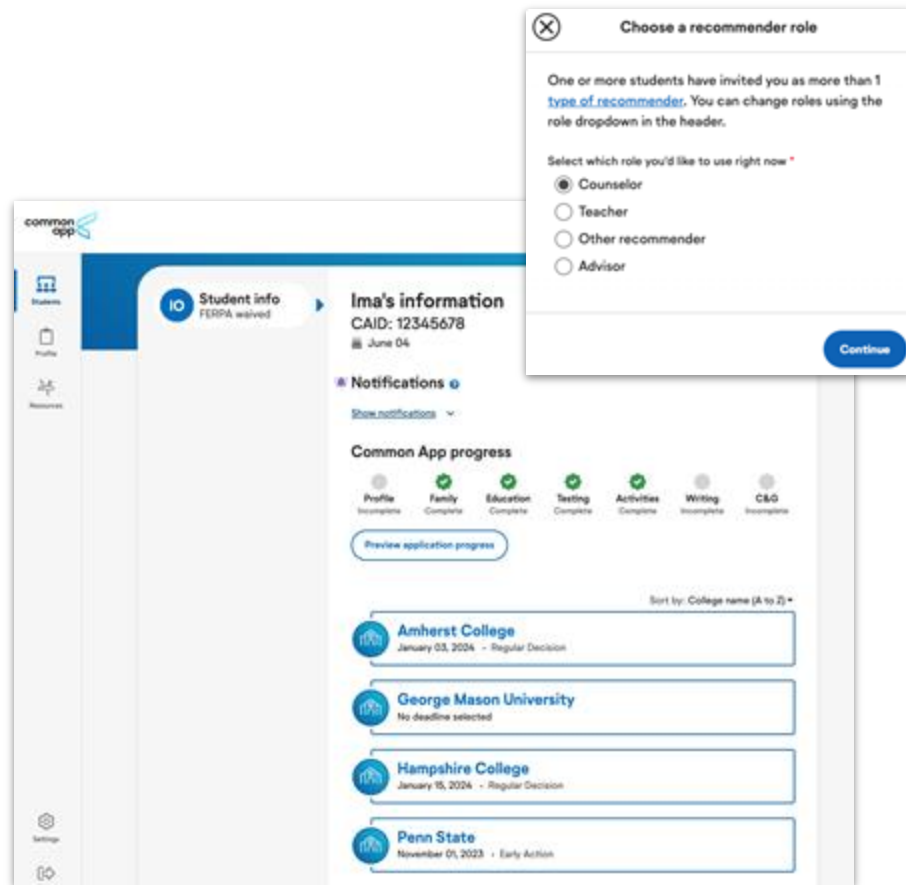
First-year recommender system

700K+ education professionals use the Common App to support students with the application process

Once a student invites and assigns a recommender in their application, an email invitation is sent. Recommenders **activate their account** in Common App's Recommender system.

- Submit school forms
- Download the Requirements Grid
- Use search filters to find cohorts of students
- Track student progress
- View college-level details for each student
- Access a PDF preview of in-progress applications, with student permission
- Export detailed lists to Excel

recommend.commonapp.org



Recommender system integration partners



Frequently asked questions



QUESTION

Do students have to answer all questions asked in Common App?

No. Only required questions are marked with a red asterisk *.



Example: Reporting class rank and GPA

How do I report my class rank and GPA?

You should report your current Class Rank and GPA, even if they might change later in the school year.

If your school does not rank, select "none" from the drop down menu. If your school calculates both weighted and unweighted Class Rank/GPA, report the weighted value.

If your school does not calculate a cumulative numerical GPA, or if it uses a GPA scale that is different than the options available in the drop down menu, **leave the Cumulative GPA field blank**. This field is not required for submission of your application.

You can always use the **Additional Information** prompt in the **Writing** section to elaborate.

Complete your Common Application

Grades

In progress

Graduating class size (approx.)*

Class rank reporting

☐ Exact

☐ Decile

☐ Quintile

☐ Quartile

☐ None

Clear answer

GPA Scale reporting

- Choose an option -

Cumulative GPA

GPA weighting

☐ Weighted

☐ Unweighted

Clear answer

Continue

QUESTION

Who can be a Common App recommender?

Common App supports 4 recommender types on the first-year application:

- Counselor
- Teacher
- Other recommender
- Advisor

Recommenders can use one email address across multiple roles. Advisors do not submit forms.



QUESTION

How do students invite recommenders?

Students complete the FERPA release authorization and invite recommenders in My Colleges.

Students attending a school using a Common App integration partner to submit school forms manage their counselor and teacher recommenders in the platform their school uses.



Managing recommenders

Students manage their recommenders within My Colleges, in the Recommenders and FERPA section.

- For high schools using the **Common App recommender system**, students invite and assign their Counselor and Teachers **in their Common App**.
- For high schools using a **Common App integration partner**, students invite and assign their Counselor and Teachers **in the platform their school uses**.
- Regardless of which platform their school uses to submit school forms, **students invite Other recommenders and Advisors in their Common App**.

Schools using the Common App recommender system

Apply to University of Wisconsin-Madison
Recommenders and FERPA
Progress

Recommenders are people who will submit forms to colleges on your behalf. This page shows which recommender types this college needs. Each college will have different requirements.

✓ FERPA Release Authorization
[View Details](#)

Invite recommenders
Use this section to invite and then [assign recommenders](#) to this college. You'll need to assign recommenders for each college on your list.

[Invite Recommenders](#) [Manage Recommenders](#)

Counselor
You must invite a school Counselor who will complete the School Report and other forms for you.
[Invite Counselor](#)

Teachers
Please select and assign the Teacher(s) below whose recommendation will be submitted to this college on your behalf. You must invite a teacher with the [Invite Teacher](#) button before you can assign them to this college.
Required: 1 Optional: 1
- Choose a recommender - [Assign](#)
[Invite Teacher](#)

✓ **Other recommender**
Please select and assign the Other Recommender(s) below whose recommendation(s) will be submitted to this college on your behalf. You must invite an Other Recommender using the ["Invite Other Recommender"](#) link before you can assign them for this college.
Recommender types accepted by this college:
• Arts Teacher
• Clergy
• Coach
• College Access Counselor
• Employer
• Other
Required: 0 Optional: 1
- Choose a recommender - [Assign](#)
[Invite Other Recommender](#)

Advisor
An advisor can be anyone assisting you with your application. They can review your application and give you personalized feedback. You may invite up to 3 advisors. Advisors do not submit any forms on your behalf. Colleges will also not receive any information about your advisor(s).
[Invite Advisor](#)

Schools using an integration partner

Apply to University of Wisconsin-Madison
Recommenders and FERPA
Complete

Recommenders are people who will submit forms to colleges on your behalf. This page shows which recommender types this college needs. Each college will have different requirements.

✓ FERPA Release Authorization
[View Details](#)

Invite recommenders
Use this section to invite and then [assign recommenders](#) to this college. You'll need to assign recommenders for each college on your list.

[Invite Recommenders](#) [Manage Recommenders](#)

✓ **Counselor**
Your school is using MailLearning for transcripts, school reports, and teacher recommendations. Please contact your counselor directly and they will provide instructions specific to your school regarding these documents. If your counselor wishes to submit forms via mail, you can download forms that can be completed on paper and mailed to each institution to which you apply.

✓ **Teacher**
Your school is using MailLearning for transcripts, school reports, and teacher recommendations. Please contact your counselor directly and they will provide instructions specific to your school regarding these documents. Once your teachers submit their recommendations online you will see the status below. If your teacher(s) wish to submit forms via mail, you can download the Teacher Evaluation PDF Form that can be completed on paper and mailed to each institution to which you apply.

Required: 1 Optional: 1

QUESTION

Is there an international student supplement?

Yes. For students who indicate that promotion within their educational system is based upon standard leaving examinations given by a state or national leaving examination board.



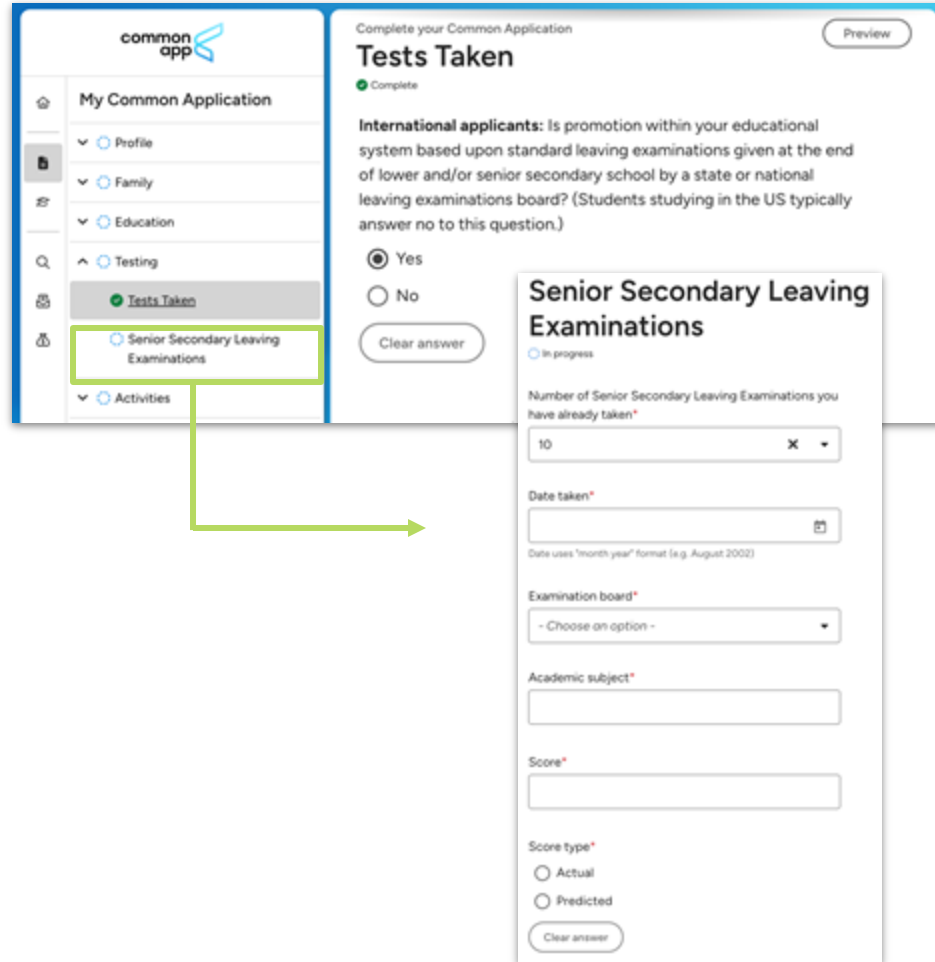
International student supplement

In the Testing section, students are asked the following question:

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?

If a student answers 'Yes', a 'Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations' subsection opens for them to complete.

- Students can list up to 10 Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations they have taken
- Students can choose from 30 different examination boards (or select 'Other' and write in an examining board's name)



The screenshot shows the 'common app' interface. On the left, the 'My Common Application' sidebar has a green box around 'Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations'. The main content area is titled 'Tests Taken' and includes a 'Complete your Common Application' header, a 'Complete' status indicator, and a question for international applicants. Below the question are 'Yes' and 'No' radio buttons and a 'Clear answer' button. A green arrow points from the sidebar box to a detailed form for 'Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations'.

Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations
In progress

Number of Senior Secondary Leaving Examinations you have already taken*

10

Date taken*

Date uses "month/year" format (e.g. August 2002)

Examination board*

- Choose an option -

Academic subject*

Score*

Score type*

☐ Actual
☐ Predicted

Clear answer

QUESTION

How do I submit documents for my student?

Common App uses single-submission (“one-and-done”) to streamline the process for counselors, teachers, and other recommenders.

Recommenders submit forms using Common App’s recommendation system or through an integration partner.



Submitting school forms

Each college determines which forms they require.

- School profile
- School report
- Early decision agreement
- Fee waiver
- Counselor recommendation
- Optional report 1 and 2
- Mid-year report
- Final report
- Teacher evaluation
- Other evaluation

Transcripts, recommendations, and school forms are only sent to colleges when students submit their Common App.

Common App recommender guide



QUESTION

Can international students use a Common App fee waiver?

It depends! International students may be eligible for a Common App fee waiver.

Each college has varying policies, so it is not guaranteed that they will accept a fee waiver request as an international student. If a college does not accept the fee waiver, they may ask a student to pay the application fee after they submit their application.

Fee waiver FAQ



QUESTION

Our academic year is January–December. When should I send a mid-year report?

Counselors should submit Mid-year reports as soon as first semester/trimester grades are available. The Common App recommendation system does not send reminders about these forms.

Counselors must submit the School report before they can submit the Mid-year report, Optional report, or Final report.

Order of forms FAQ



Resources



Connect with other international student supporters like you

The international community of counselors and higher education institutions is your greatest asset.

Take advantage of the networks around you (membership, special interest groups, conferences, webinars, etc.).

Professional organizations provide:

- Policy & advocacy
- Resources
- Professional development
- Guiding ethics
- Awards



Common App advising resources

- Create a practice student account
- Sign up for the monthly counselor newsletter
- Request a free map poster
- Utilize our [Recommender guide](#)
 - Letter writing resources
 - Developing a School Profile
- Watch counselor and student [video tutorials](#)
- Download [student handouts](#) in English and Spanish

commonapp.org/advisors

Supporter resources



EXPLORE COLLEGES

Help your students search, explore, and virtually tour over 1,000 Common App member colleges across the globe.

[Explore >](#)



ORDER A COMMON APP MAP

Request a free national or regional map poster of Common App member colleges for your office or classroom.

[Get a map >](#)



CREATE A PRACTICE ACCOUNT

Create a Common App practice student account as an education professional to familiarize yourself with the ins and outs of navigating the application.

[Create an account >](#)



TUTORIALS

Check out Common App's YouTube channel for video tutorials that walk students through different sections of the application.

[Visit our YouTube channel >](#)



ACCESS RESOURCES

Discover our toolkit of college application resources in English and Spanish.

[View the toolkit >](#)



VIEW RESEARCH

Follow application trends and learn key insights from our research briefs and state reports.

[Dive into the data >](#)



FREE TRAINING

Request in-person and virtual training for schools, districts, and organizations. These sessions can be tailored for your specific audience.

[Request training >](#)



STAY INFORMED

Keep up with all things Common App and get our monthly digest of news and updates.

[Sign up >](#)



GET HELP

Need help? You're not alone. Get 24/7 support when you need it.

[Go to the help center >](#)

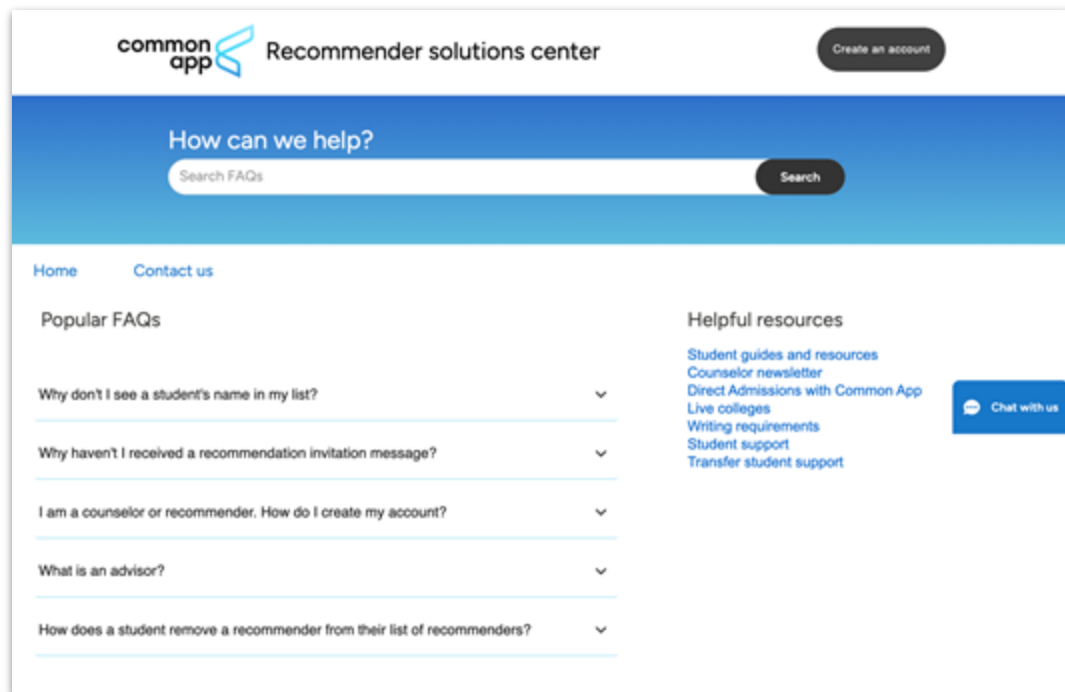
24/7 support

Help when you need it!

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Known issues
- Requirements grid
- Writing requirements resource
- Application PDFs
- Request training
- Contact support

appsupport.commonapp.org

recsupport.commonapp.org



Connect with us

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Contact 24/7/365 support when you need it

First-year application questions

appsupport@commonapp.net

First-year recommender questions

sfsupport@commonapp.net