The Common Application

Thinking of transferring to a private college, state university or an out-of-state university? The Common Application is for you!!!!

What is the Common Application?
The Common Application is a not-for-profit organization that serves students by providing an admission application – online and in print – that students may submit to 488 different colleges and universities.

Who needs to use the Common Application?
Students wishing to apply to various private, state and out-of-state colleges, such as New York University, Cornell, Columbia, Adelphi, Fordham and Long Island University (just to name a few in the New York area), will be required to submit the Common Application.

How does it work?
Once completed online or in print, copies of the Application for Undergraduate Admission can be sent to any number of participating colleges. The same is true of the School Report, Optional Report, Midyear Report, Final Report and Teacher Evaluation forms. This allows you to spend less time on the busywork of applying for admission, and more time on what's really important: college research, visits, essay writing, and your coursework.

Ok, now that I know what it is, how do I complete the Common Application?

First research the institutions and programs you wish to apply to. If a college accepts the Common Application, visit commonapp.org and register to create an account. Be sure to write down your username and password so that you can access your application at a later time. Here are the steps to complete the application:

1. **RESEARCH** - Make sure you know the transfer requirements for the college and specific program you are applying to. For example, some programs require a specific GPA, while others require a portfolio and/or a supplemental application.

2. **DEADLINES** - Know the application deadlines for the colleges you wish to apply to. Every school will have a different application deadline. The Common Application requires many components that require time to complete, therefore you are advised to start the application process one year prior to the anticipated transfer deadline date.

3. **APPLY** - Make sure you complete the Transfer Application. The application will ask you for the following:
   ♦ Personal information
   ♦ Future academic plans
   ♦ Demographics
   ♦ Family information
   ♦ Education background
   ♦ Academic information
   ♦ Extracurricular activities & work experience

4. **PERSONAL ESSAY** - It is your responsibility to submit a personal essay with your application. The essay is your opportunity to share information about yourself as a person and student that cannot be seen on your application, transcripts and test scores. The best essays will set the student apart from the hundreds of other students applying and leave a positive impression on the admissions committee. This is also the time to explain any periods of hardships you may have encountered which may have affected your academic performance.

5. **SIGN and PAY** - You must remit payment in order for your application to be processed. You've gotten this far, don't let your application sit in cyberspace due to nonpayment. This is also the time to request a fee waiver, if eligible.

6. **DON'T FORGET THE REPORTS** - The Common Application requires that students submit several evaluations and reports which must be completed by a college advisor/administrator and/or professor. Please be sure to allow enough time for your advisors and professors to complete their portion of the application. It is recommended you submit these forms to your college officials at least 60 days prior to the application deadline. You will be required to submit the following:
   ♦ College Instructor Evaluation
   ♦ College Report
   ♦ Mid-term Report
   ♦ Final Report

7. **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION** - Now that you have completed your application, you must submit official supporting documentation. To be considered “official”, the following documents must be submitted by the institution or testing agency where completed:
   ♦ H.S. transcripts
   ♦ College transcripts
   ♦ Standardized test results

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8. **SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION** - In addition to the Common Application, many colleges and programs will also require a Supplemental Application. Most supplemental applications can be found on the individual college websites.

9. **FOLLOW UP** - Once you submit your application, supporting documentation and supplemental application, you must follow up by checking the status of your application. You can contact the Admissions Office of the school you applied to for an update on your application. Make sure that all your documents, application components and payment have been received and your application is being processed. If the college is missing any information, this is the time to resubmit.

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**Quick Do's and Don’ts of the Common Application**

- **DO** research colleges and programs for detailed transfer admission requirements. Pay special attention to program requirements and admission instructions.
- **DO** pay attention to application deadlines.
- **DO** visit colleges. Open houses are a great time to ask questions and tour the college. Some colleges even provide fee waivers for visiting their campus!
- **DON’T** wait until the last minute to apply. The application can take several weeks to complete.
- **DON’T** leave anything blank. If you are unsure of how to answer a question, save and print your application. Visit the Academic Advisement and Transfer Center and we can assist you.
- **DO** build relationships with your professors. You never know when you’ll need a recommendation.
- **DO** spend adequate time writing the personal statement.
- **DO** complete the Supplemental Application, if required.
- **DO** review your application and make sure all questions have been answered before you submit. Once the application is submitted, you cannot make changes.
- **DON’T** limit yourself by applying to only one college. Students should always have a second and third choice.
- **DON’T** forget to follow-up and check the status of your application.

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**Transfer Advice Column**

Below is a question sent from a BMCC student to the Academic Advisement and Transfer Center. If you would like to ask us a question, email it to advisementandtransfer@bmcc.cuny.edu

**Hello,**

While completing the Common Application, I noticed that I can apply for early decision and/or early action. What does this mean?

**Sincerely,**

**Steven**

Early decision (ED) plans are binding — a student who is accepted as an ED applicant MUST attend the college. Early action (EA) plans are nonbinding — students receive an early response to their application but do not have to commit to the college until the normal reply date. If you apply as an ED applicant, you must be positive that you will attend the institution if accepted. Students who are unsure of which college they wish to transfer to or have not thoroughly done their research, should apply during regular admission.

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**This Month in Academic Advisement & Transfer**

- Early advisement for winter and spring 2013 is currently taking place in S-763.
- The fall 2012 Academic Calendar has been altered due to Hurricane Sandy. For updated final exam dates visit: [www.bmcc.cuny.edu/calendar/academic_calendar.jsp](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/calendar/academic_calendar.jsp)
- The CUNY application deadline for fall 2013 admission is **Wednesday, February 1, 2013**.
- BMCC will be closed on December 24th, 25th and 31st.

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The Academic Advisement and Transfer Center wishes you great success on your finals and a healthy & happy holiday season!!!

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