

Guidance Bulletin 88, 4th May 2020

Changes to guidance at Nations Mr Martyn Rowlands (martyn.rowlands@ecolint.ch) started as full-time guidance counsellor at Nations on 01-May-20. Ms Mita Villegier-Dhokia (mita.villegier-dhokia@ecolint.ch) will be joining him as part-time guidance counsellor on 01-Sept-20. After eleven years as guidance counsellor at Nations, Dr Mark Grant will be leaving at the end of this term.

Year 13: Swiss universities The federal government in Bern ruled on 29-Apr-20 that each canton could choose how to proceed with the *maturité*. Geneva has therefore decided to cancel the final exams. This means that the current IB diploma will be recognised for entry to Swiss universities. For further details go to <https://www.24heures.ch/suisse/examens-maturite-laisses-choix-cantons/story/24660243>.

Year 13: Medicine in UK The University of Buckingham (GB) received over 900 applications for January 2020 entry to Medicine, a 30 per cent increase on last year, demonstrating that the course is a strong option for students predicted to achieve a minimum 34 points in the IB diploma. The programme is 4.5 years in length and fully accredited by the UK General Medical Council regulations. Applications for the January 2021 Medical School intake are now open. Buckingham does not set a cap on international students for Medicine or require the UCAT/BMAT tests to be completed. For more details go to <https://www.buckingham.ac.uk/medicine/undergrad/mbchb>.

Years 12 and 13: Central European University Founded by George Soros in 1991, the globally recognised CEU has moved from Budapest to Vienna. Under twelve hours away from Geneva by train, Vienna is regarded as one of the best cities in Europe in which to live. The dual Austrian and American accredited degrees in either Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) or Culture, Politics and Society are taught wholly in English. The deadline for applicants who do not need a study visa (EU and Swiss citizens) is 14-Aug-20. An online interview is required as part of the selection process. The tuition fees are €5,000 per annum. For more details and to apply go to <https://www.ceu.edu/>.

Year 12: SAT The College Board has cancelled all SAT and SAT Subject Test sittings in June. To replace these, an extra test date has been added in September. If the current health situation continues into the autumn, an online SAT will be offered for sitting at home. To take SAT at La Grande Boissière, the School Code (International School of Geneva) is 796086, the Centre Code (Campus des Nations) 59817. Registration for SAT is at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat-subject-tests/register>.

Year 12: Universities in Portugal Two institutions in Portugal teach degrees wholly in English. For further details go to <https://www.study.eu/country/portugal>. Católica Lisbon School of Business and Economics <https://www.clsbe.lisboa.ucp.pt/> Business Administration, Economics and Finance ■ Nova School of Business and Economics (Lisbon) <https://www2.novasbe.unl.pt/en> Economics, Management.

Year 12 (and Year 11 for reference): Applying to top universities Half a year now remains before the deadlines of 15-Oct (Oxford and Cambridge) and 01-Nov (Early Action/Decision). In that time become the focus of your own application since neither guidance counsellor nor teachers are putting themselves forward for selection. If you are called for interview, practice is given beforehand at school. For inspiration read Constantine Cavafy's poem Ithaca; and for practical advice Guidance Bulletins 1, 3, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 43. Oxford and Cambridge (1) Cultivate interest in the academic area, but do not mention the word passion in your personal statement. (2) Read round the chosen subject and make brief notes about particular points of interest. (3) Elaborate on ideas to show depth of thought. (4) Think how your interest started, not that you have always held it. (5) Look at university websites for booklists, but read with discernment. (6) While the application is fiercely competitive, with preparation you can be as good as the competition. (7) Ask yourself if you are serious about investing time in the application, for the effort should form part of a personal intellectual journey. (8) Grades are of the essence and you should aim ideally for a total (without ToK) of 40 points in your reports cards. (9) Since no personal statement can be perfect, certainly heed the advice of others, but in the end trust your own style of writing (see below). (10) Prepare past questions using the papers provided on the websites for entry tests such as HAT, MAT, CAT and PAT. (11) Share your interest in the chosen academic area with others so

that you can explain it cogently at interview. Ivy League (1) Take SAT, if needed, and aim for the highest scores. (2) Ensure the grades in the summer term report are the best possible for the transcript. (3) Ponder which essay to write for the Common Application and the supplements. (4) A small theme cleverly crafted (a recipe for a biscuit/cookie) can be as effective as a big theme (president of STUCO). (5) Make sure that SAT subject tests, if available, are completed to the highest standard. (6) By all means write from an international perspective, but shun stating you are international. (7) Stay true to yourself in order that the self may shine through. (8) Consider too the advice for Oxford and Cambridge.

Year 12: Test optional In response to the current health situation, and with the absence of SAT sittings, many US universities will turn test-optional just for the 2020/21 admissions cycle. These include Northeastern University (MA-USA) <https://www.northeastern.edu/>, Pomona College (CA-USA) <https://www.pomona.edu/>, and Williams College (MA-USA) <https://www.williams.edu/>. Harvard College (MA-USA) <https://college.harvard.edu>, exceptionally, will not require SAT subject tests.

Year 12: Virtual visits and open days University of Cambridge (GB) <https://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/events/cambridge-open-days>, Skidmore College (NY-USA) <https://www.skidmore.edu/admissions/visit/schedule.php>, Trinity University (TX-USA) <https://www.youvisit.com/tour/trinity>, UCLA (CA-USA) <http://www.ucla.edu/visit>. If you wish to ask questions of an admissions adviser, go to any university website and look at the contact details via Facebook, Twitter, Zoom and other platforms.

Year 12: Supercurricular activities The BBC radio series *In Our Time* offers a wonderful range of intellectual discussions, from Picasso's *Guernica* (Art) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07mdlx7>, Dorothy Hodgkin (Chemistry) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0008wkk>, W.H. Auden (English) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000cc0r> and George Sand, alias Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin, (French) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000dxsr>, to Paul Adrien Maurice Dirac (Theoretical Physics) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000fw0p>, and Federico García Lorca (Spanish) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0006dss>. The University of Cambridge provides questions, guided activities and suggestions for reading around academic subjects at <https://www.myheplus.com/>.

Years 11 and 12: Bocconi University Summer School Online and in English, two subjects can be chosen from the menu, which includes Computer Coding, Digital Marketing, Finance, Game Theory, International Politics, and Cryptography. The Summer School runs from 29-Jun to 10-Jul-20. To register go to https://www.unibocconi.eu/wps/wcm/connect/bocconi/sitopubblico_en/navigation+tree/home.

Years 11 and 12: NYU Summer School With more than thirty courses including Media, Filmmaking, Journalism, Coding, Mathematics, and Electronic Music, the NYU Summer School allows high school students to engage online with leading scholars and professionals. For details and to register go to <https://www.nyu.edu/admissions/high-school-programs/high-school-programs-at-a-glance.html>.

Years 11 and 12: Boston Summer School Boston University Summer Journalism Institute is offering an online non-credit course. Students will work with award-winning journalists, such as Pulitzer Prize winners (and BU alumnae) Lara Salahi and Rochelle Sharpe, who will show them how to follow facts and get to the heart of stories affecting communities; hear from guest speakers in the field while learning important journalism tips when covering a crisis; connect with students in different parts of the world and time zones; and have at least one article published on the Terrier website to showcase their work. The dates are 06 to 17-Jul-20 and 20 to 27-July-20. The cost is \$1,200. To see more details and to register go to <https://combeyond.bu.edu/workshop/bu-summer-journalism-institute/>.

Years 10, 11 and 12: Virtual Summer School Oxford Royale's Virtual Summer School 2020 provides the high-quality tuition, international collaboration and outstanding learning experience for which it is internationally renowned. The week-long programmes are available from May to July for young people aged 14-18 all over the world. For more details go to <https://www.oxford-virtual-summer.com/>.

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