How to get the best reference

Your reference will be about you and should include the best things you have done. It is vital that you help whoever is writing your reference write the best possible one they can.

In addition to giving them your personal statement answers to some or all of these questions will help!

Some of these questions you can also ask yourself at the start of your AS year, **and before you write your personal statement**, if you struggle to answer them well, then **GET ACTIVE** and do the things needed to allow you to answer them well!

Try to answer these questions as well as you can, with as much detail as possible. This form will help make all of the extra things you have done inside and outside of school help make your university application even better!

**Name**, English and Chinese (in pinyin):  **Class:**

Email address:

Which subject is writing your references (usually the subject you are applying for at degree level):

Which teacher is writing it? Have you spoken to them about this? Yes/No

# Getting to know your CHoices.

1. **Where** do you want to study?

Answer:

1. **What.** First choice subject?

Answer:

1. Second and third choice subjects (if any)?

Answer:

1. What do you **like** most about that subject?

Answer:

1. What has happened that you find interesting in this field? (What’s been in the news?)

Answer:

1. Top 3 ideas for a career?

Answer:

1. Why do you want to pursue your top career choices?

Answer:

# Getting to know your Interests

1. What have you done, seen, experienced that makes you more interested in this subject choice?

Answer:

1. What do you **like most** about studying this subject at A Level?

Answer:

1. What do you find most **interesting** about this subject and why?

Answer:

1. What was the **last interesting** conversation you had with your teacher in your subject of interest?

Answer:

1. What was the **most interesting** conversation you had with you teacher in your subject of interest?

Answer:

1. How often do you talk about this subject with your friends?

Answer:

1. What are the top 3 **biggest ideas** you have encountered?

Answer:

1. What are the **3 most important** ideas to you that you have ever thought about?

Answer:

1. What are your 3 favourite books you have read?

Answer:

1. What are the 3 most important books to your development of your mind, that have had the biggest impact on how you think that you have read?

Answer:

# Getting to know your Achievements

1. What achievements do you have within the school? (e.g. helping out with school events, promoting the school, mentoring students, participating in events like maths day etc.).

Answer:

1. Are you a member of any societies?

Answer:

1. Have you lead any societies? How?

Answer:

1. Have you achieved anything important with any society that you worked really hard at and are really proud of?

Answer:

1. What after school events, like plays or sports competitions have you participated in? What did you learn from those experiences?

Answer:

1. What are the top 3 reasons for going to or experiences you want to get out of your time at university?

Answer:

1. When you imagine yourself after succeeding at university, how are you different? How are you the same?

Answer:

1. What are the 3 things you are most proud about yourself?

Answer:

## Achievements

**Include anything like academics/school Involvements, school productions, music performances, extracurricular activities: summer school, research project, school clubs, internship, community service, sports, skills, hobbies. Rank them according to how important you think they are (1=most important, 5 least important).**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Your Rank | Grade | Hour/ week | Week/year | Activity Type | Year/ Break | Organization Name | Position | Activity Description |
| 1 | 11 | 21 | 4 | Academic | Summer break | Summer school with topic \*\*\*\* | Participant | Took lessons in \*\*\* taught by \*\*\*.  Made 2 projects: \*\*\* & \*\*\*, which I presented to a group of 30 students and teachers at the end of the course.  Achievements/what you took away from it：Worked as a team to learn about a topic beyond the syllabus for 3 weeks at a university in a city that I do not live in. Learnt the importance of effective and timely communication when working towards a deadline in a group setting with highly competitive people. |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Competitions and Awards

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rank | Grade Level | Year | Honor Title | Awards | Level(s) of recognition | Additional notes |
| 1 | 10 | 2020 | UKMT Senior Mathematical Challenge | Merit | National |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Getting to know what you think about yourself

**Be sure to give concrete examples to back up more general statements. Specificity is very important in a letter of recommendation.**

**And be as positive about yourself as possible!**

## Intellectual ability

Think about: overall intelligence, analytical skills, creativity, academic record, retention of information.

Answer:

## Performance in class

Think about depth and breadth of knowledge, grade results, ability to analyze and apply what you have learnt

Answer:

## Communication skills

Writing skills (what did you write?), spoken skills, e.g. in presentations given

Answer:

## Self-discipline

To what extent are you persistent, efficient and motivated? Are you able to work independently?

Answer:

## Personal qualities

Industry, self-discipline, motivation, maturity, initiative, flexibility, leadership qualities, team working skills, perseverance, energy, competitiveness, etc.

Answer:

## Most important strengths and weaknesses

What do you expect to achieve at university. What things are you excited about doing whilst there?

Answer:

## Any other things that make you stand out

Anything that is unique, important and good

Answer:

# Getting to know your education history:

### When did you come to HIgh School?

Answer:

### What’s your primary and secondary school? Are they international schools or domestic schools?

Answer:

### When did you decide to study abroad?

Answer:

# Final opportunity

Further information you would like your reference to know **about you**, **your interests** and how all of this relates to **things you have done** that demonstrates **your subject passion**:

# Getting to know What is on your UCAS form:

## Intended degree subjects:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number** | **Degree subject** | **Country** | **University** |
| 1 |  | UK |  |
| 2 |  | UK |  |
| 3 |  | UK |  |
| 4 |  | UK |  |
| 5 |  | UK |  |

## **Grades**

For the final column “Confirmed?”, write yes if you have spoken to the teacher who is responsible for making that prediction and they are 100% sure they will give you that prediction.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Subject | iGCSE Grade | AS Grade | AS % | A2 Target grade | Predicted A Level grade | 100% Confirmed? |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

If any of your predictions have not been 100% confirmed, add any additional details here that you would like your reference to know about:

# Discussions with your referree

Give the date, day time and topic title for any extracurricular conversations you have had with your referee to help them remember them. Include a brief description of what was talked about.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Day** | **Time** | **Topic discussed** | **What you found most interesting in that discussion** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# To download an electronic version of this questionnaire:

