

FIRSTPOINT★USA

**AN INTRODUCTION TO
US UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS**



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**WITH OVER 1.2 MILLION
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
CHOOSING TO ENROL IN US
UNIVERSITIES LAST YEAR,
THE UNITED STATES STANDS
AS THE WORLD'S PREMIER
DESTINATION FOR GLOBAL
EDUCATION**



CREATING LIFE-CHANGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD



FirstPoint USA is recognised and respected by America's top learning institutions. We are trusted by education partners from over the world – from the UK to Malaysia, UAE to Australia – to smooth the pathway from High School to University, providing a hands-on, personalised service to students and their families looking to the USA for the next stage of their academic careers.

Founded by University of Cincinnati All-American and Hall of Fame inductee Andrew Kean, FirstPoint USA is built on a passion for sharing authentic insights into US student life, embodying his mission to empower potential and help greatness grow.

We're here to guide the next generation of international students through the life-changing academic opportunities available in the USA.



ABOUT US



We have supported students from 87 different countries



We have a team of 70+ staff with US university experience



We have a network of over 2,500 universities



We are trusted by High School partners all over the world



We have developed strong relationships with Ivy League universities



We have 25 years' experience connecting students with best fit universities



95% of FirstPoint admissions clients secured a place at a top-choice university in 2024



We have secured \$2.4bn in scholarship funding for our clients

WHY ATTEND A US UNIVERSITY?



1.126m international students enrolled in a US university in 2023/24



5 of the world's top 10 ranked universities are in the USA



An unparalleled breadth of programmes across thousands of institutions



Strong ties to industry, providing numerous opportunities for internships

LEADING UNIVERSITIES

FirstPoint USA works with leading universities across the United States, encompassing not only prestigious Ivy League institutions like Harvard and Yale, but also other world-renowned academic powerhouses such as Stanford and Penn State, alongside highly-regarded public universities like the University of Michigan and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.





**THE EXPERIENCE OF COLLEGE CAMPUS LIFE
IN THE USA IS A WHIRLWIND OF ACADEMIC
RIGOUR, VIBRANT SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT, AND
PERSONAL DISCOVERY, ALL SET AGAINST
A BACKDROP OF ICONIC TRADITIONS AND
DEVELOPING LIFELONG FRIENDSHIPS.**

**IT'S YOUR PLACE OF LEARNING, WHERE
YOU'LL QUICKLY DEVELOP A PASSION
AND SENSE OF BELONGING ABOUT THE
UNIVERSITY YOU REPRESENT.**

THE IVY LEAGUES

A WORLD CLASS ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

An Ivy League education represents a transformative investment for international students, extending far beyond academic credentials to provide incredible future career opportunities and a lifelong competitive edge. The eight Ivy League schools are some of the best-known universities in the world, with an alumni featuring US presidents, global CEOs, Nobel Prize winners and Olympic champions. The demanding environment and high expectations at Ivy League schools serve as a powerful competitive filter, but the rewards are vast, positioning graduates for significant influence and increased earning potential.

- **Brown University**
Providence, Rhode Island
- **Columbia University**
New York City
- **Cornell University**
Ithaca, New York
- **Dartmouth College**
Hanover, New Hampshire
- **Harvard University**
Cambridge, Massachusetts
- **Princeton University**
Princeton, New Jersey
- **Yale University**
New Haven, Connecticut
- **University of Pennsylvania**
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

GLOBAL ALUMNI NETWORKS



Ivy League institutions boast expansive and highly engaged alumni networks that provide significant advantages for international students. These networks are active communities that facilitate mentorship, job placement, and business opportunities globally. Alumni often hold high-profile positions in politics, business, arts, and entertainment, and are known to proactively support recent graduates in securing internships and early jobs, serving as a powerful career accelerator.

INCREASED EARNINGS POTENTIAL



An Ivy League degree significantly boosts earning potential. Graduates can expect to earn substantially more over their lifetime - nearly \$50,000 more per year than their peers from less selective colleges.



OUR SERVICE SUMMARY

FirstPoint USA provides a comprehensive and holistic service for students and their families, delivering the key components required at each stage of the applications and admissions journey, from early planning to final decisions and pastoral care while attending university.



GUIDED BY EXPERTS

Navigating the competitive landscape of US university admissions can feel overwhelming for families, but with FirstPoint USA, you don't have to do it alone. We offer expert, personalised guidance that covers every critical step of the journey, ensuring candidates present their very best.

Our dedicated team of university advisors works closely with each student to meticulously craft an application that highlights their unique academic achievements and extracurricular passions. This includes providing strategic advice on standardised testing, helping to refine application strategies, and assisting with university selection to find the perfect fit.

For those aspiring to the most selective institutions, our specialised Ivy League Admissions Directors provide unparalleled insights into the intricate and highly competitive admissions process, giving you a distinct advantage.

COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT FOR EVERY STEP

We provide a comprehensive suite of services designed to maximise your child's chances of securing a place at their dream university. This includes developing personalised application strategies, offering meticulous essay review to ensure their voice shines through, guiding extracurricular planning to build a compelling profile, and providing targeted test preparation.

Our ultimate goal is to empower you to confidently choose universities where you will thrive, both academically and personally. We focus on ensuring their individual strengths and potential are clearly communicated, giving you the best possible opportunity to achieve admission to top-choice institutions, including those with significant financial aid and scholarship opportunities. With FirstPoint USA, your family gains a trusted partner committed to unlocking your future in the USA.



OUR SERVICE OFFERING

Dedicated University Advisor

- Each student will be paired with a dedicated university advisor, ensuring personalised guidance throughout the application process.
- This advisor will provide continuous support and strategy, tailored to the student's specific academic profile and goals.

Personalised Admissions Strategy

- A tailored plan that outlines key application milestones and deadlines, helping students stay on track and manage the process efficiently.
- This strategy is personalised to each student's academic profile, extracurricular activities, and university aspirations, providing a clear roadmap for success.
- Includes detailed timelines for standardised testing, application submissions, essay drafting, and interview preparation, offering the structure and clarity students need at every stage of the admissions journey.

Advice from Former Ivy League Admissions Directors

- Students gain direct access to exclusive insights and personalised guidance from former Ivy League Admissions Directors.
- This expertise helps craft competitive application strategies, refine personal statements and essays, and navigate the highly selective admissions process with an edge.

SAT and ACT Test Preparation

- Comprehensive support for both SAT and ACT exams.
- This includes advice on test selection, preparation resources, test dates, and access to FirstPoint USA's bespoke test preparation platform.
- 10 x 1:1 tuition sessions with experienced tutors to provide personalised coaching and ensure they are fully prepared for these crucial exams.

Application & Admissions Support

- Common Application: Comprehensive assistance with completing applications, including activity lists and additional information sections.
- Personal Statement & Admissions Essays: Structuring, brainstorming, drafting, and refining essays to highlight strengths and unique qualities.
- Letters of Recommendation: Guidance on selecting recommenders and providing structured templates to assist teachers.

Extracurricular and Leadership Development

- Extracurricular Strategic Planning: Guidance on selecting extracurricular activities that will enhance a student's university application. We assist students in building credible evidence of involvement in meaningful activities.
- Leadership Mentoring: Support in taking on leadership roles or initiating projects that demonstrate initiative, responsibility, and the ability to make an impact.

Academic Review & University Shortlisting

- **GPA Calculation & Academic Readiness:** Conversion of international grades to US GPA equivalents and assessment of academic competitiveness.
- **International Transcript Evaluation Guidance:** Support in navigating transcript evaluation services such as SpanTran, InCred, and WES, which convert international academic records into US-equivalent formats. This ensures universities can accurately assess qualifications and assign an appropriate GPA for admission purposes.
- **University List Development and Shortlisting:** The dedicated university advisor will work with students to develop a balanced list of target, reach, and safety schools, offering strategy and guidance on selecting the best-fit universities.

Research Development Advice

- **Research mentorship** with guidance on undertaking research projects to enhance academic profiles and demonstrate intellectual curiosity.

Language Proficiency Tests

- **Support for TOEFL, IELTS, and Duolingo English Test** with preparation strategies and recommended study materials.

Expert Workshops and Seminars

- **Skill-Building Workshops:** Sessions on time management, study skills, and university life preparation, ensuring students are well-equipped for the transition to university life.
- **Seminars with Admissions Officers:** Events where admissions officers share valuable insights on the application process, providing students with a deeper understanding of what top universities look for in applicants.

Financial Aid & Scholarship Support

- **We help students and families understand the difference between need-blind and need-aware institutions**, ensuring they are fully informed about how financial circumstances may impact admissions decisions before submitting applications.
- **Exclusive Bursaries & University Fees:** Access to negotiated discounts and financial support from our university partners.
- **Financial Aid Applications:** Assistance with CSS Profile and institutional financial aid forms.
- **Scholarship Guidance:** Identifying merit-based and academic scholarship opportunities.

Visas, Immigration Support & Compliance

- **Guidance on the F-1 student visa process and SEVIS requirements**, including required documentation, embassy appointment scheduling, and interview preparation. We also provide country-specific advice where access to a US embassy may be limited or where additional processing is likely.

Additional Services & Ongoing Support

- **Interview Preparation:** Opportunities for students to practice with professionals who have prestigious university backgrounds, ensuring they are well-prepared for any interviews.
- **Ongoing Application Tracking:** Support in tracking applications, follow-ups, and post-admissions decisions.
- **Pastoral Care:** Pre-departure advice and ongoing student welfare support throughout an undergraduate degree. Support with evaluation of advanced high school classes (e.g. A Levels, IB, Scottish Advanced Highers, or US Curriculum AP Classes) for US university undergraduate credits.

FINANCIAL AID

THE AVERAGE COST FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS TO ATTEND A US UNIVERSITY FOR AN ACADEMIC YEAR CAN RANGE FROM \$25,000 TO \$55,000, ENCOMPASSING TUITION FEES AND LIVING EXPENSES. MANY FAMILIES PAY SIGNIFICANTLY LESS THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID.

**PLEASE NOTE THIS FIGURE CAN VARY SIGNIFICANTLY BASED ON FACTORS LIKE THE TYPE OF INSTITUTION (PUBLIC OR PRIVATE), THE SPECIFIC PROGRAMME OF STUDY, AND THE STUDENT'S LIFESTYLE CHOICES. STUDENTS CAN ALSO BENEFIT FROM FINANCIAL AID.*



A FIRSTPOINT STUDENT ATTENDING THE PRESTIGIOUS BRYN MAWR COLLEGE RECEIVED FINANCIAL AID TO THE VALUE OF \$71,500 (79%), AGAINST OVERALL STUDENT FEES OF \$90,000

WE HELPED A FAMILY SECURE 100% FUNDING AT IVY LEAGUE INSTITUTION PRINCETON UNIVERSITY, WITH FINANCIAL AID VALUED AT \$91,000



OUR PACKAGES

Our University Admissions Support Services

We've designed our University Admissions Support Services into three clear tiers, giving you flexibility based on the level of dedicated support your needs. Each tier offers a specific number of hours focused on personalized assistance, covering everything from test preparation and essay review to university shortlisting. It's about ensuring each student receives the right support at the right time, tailored to their individual goals and needs.

Tier 1: Starter Package (20 Hours)

- Number of Applications: Up to 11 applications
- Allocated Hours: 20 hours of live support
- Price: £5,500

Tier 2: Extended Package (30 Hours)

- Number of Applications: Up to 20 applications
- Allocated Hours: 30 hours of live support
- Price: £8,000

Tier 3: Premium Package (40 Hours)

- Number of Applications: 20+ applications
- Allocated Hours: 40 hours of live support
- Price: £10,000

All packages include 10 hours of tuition for standardised test preparation. These hours are provided in addition to the live support hours and are not deducted from the allocated total.

Optional Extras

In addition to our core services, we offer a range of optional extras to further enhance the university application experience. These services are designed to provide additional support and personalisation, tailored to the individual needs of each student:

Video Introduction

We offer a professionally produced video introduction to highlight a student's strengths, achievements, and aspirations. This video can be used as part of the application process to help students stand out to universities. *(Pricing available upon consultation)*

Advanced Test Preparation

For students seeking to further enhance their standardised test scores, we offer advanced test preparation services. This includes more focused, intensive coaching for the SAT, ACT, or other standardised exams to ensure students are fully prepared to achieve their best results. *(Pricing available upon consultation)*

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A STUDENT AT AN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Embarking on a journey at a top American university is an experience defined by academic challenge, social engagement, and a significant degree of personal independence. Unlike the structured days of high school, a college schedule offers flexibility, allowing students to craft a routine that aligns with their learning style and personal interests. Here's a glimpse into what a typical day might look like:

Morning: Academic Immersion and Personal Start

The morning often begins with a choice: some students prefer an early start, hitting the gym or grabbing a coffee to prepare for the day, while others might opt for a few extra minutes of sleep before their first class. Classes typically kick off around 9am or 10am. These aren't your high school 50-minute periods; college classes usually last between 60 to 90 minutes and meet two or three times a week, often on a Monday/Wednesday/Friday or Tuesday/Thursday schedule. This structure means fewer classes per day but longer, more intensive sessions.

Mid-day: Breaks, Learning, and Connection

Between classes, students often have longer breaks than they might be accustomed to from high school. These periods are valuable and can be used for various purposes: reviewing notes from a recent lecture, enjoying a latte, or even fitting in a workout. Lunch is a social affair, with students meeting friends at campus cafes or favourite local diners. The mid-day pause is crucial for recharging and connecting with peers.

Afternoon: Deep Dives and Extracurriculars

The afternoon might include a final class, wrapping up around 3pm or 4pm. Following classes, many students dedicate time to focus on academic work. Spending 1-2 hours in the library is common for tackling assignments and preparing for upcoming exams.

Beyond academics, the afternoon truly highlights the breadth of university life. Students dive into a myriad of extracurricular activities, from competitive varsity sports to a vast array of clubs, academic societies and cultural groups.

Approximately 30% of students at some universities also engage in Greek life, which offers another dimension of social and community involvement. Students are highly motivated, often seeking out professors during office hours to ask questions and deepen their understanding. The university's career centre is also a vital resource, assisting with resume building, cover letter writing, and internship applications.

Evening: Community, Study, and Social Life

Dinner is typically shared with friends in a campus dining hall. The evening hours are a blend of continued academic commitment and social activities. Students might return to the library for more study time or work in their dorm rooms. However, there's always time for socializing, whether it's hanging out with friends, attending a campus sports event, or exploring the surrounding city.

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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The whole FirstPoint USA experience has been excellent. Their knowledgeable team has supported us throughout our player the full journey, and with our consultant's warm, friendly and supportive manner, we have always felt happy and reassured with our progress. The team was so professional, always available and super prompt with all communication. We would highly recommend FirstPoint USA.

Sarah Smith, Parent

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Our partnership with FirstPoint USA has consistently delivered fantastic support to students pursuing higher education in the US. Their experience, insightful knowledge, and guidance have been instrumental in empowering pupils and parents to make informed decisions and access the essential tools for success. At a time when interest in US universities is at an all-time high, we wholeheartedly recommend FirstPoint USA to families, having witnessed firsthand their success in guiding students to prestigious institutions such as Brown and Yale.

Jamie Houston, Head of 6th Year, St Columba's School

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I would not have made it to the US without FirstPoint's help and guidance. There are so many different moving parts to becoming a student in the US and FirstPoint USA have a handle on all of them. Any questions you would have; they have the answer. Any problems you come across; they have the solution. They are so incredibly well versed and professional, it makes the process so much easier. Their service was crucial to help me to get to where I am today and I felt very looked after, even after I arrived at college, I received support and updates from them. Hearing from other students, the services FirstPoint provide are unmatched.

**Stella McCardie,
Freshman Student, University of Connecticut**





FirstPoint USA
80 Cannon Street,
London,
England,
EC4N 6HL

0141 204 3030
info@firstpointusa.com
firstpointusa.com



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