



# COLLEGE RESEARCH & VISIT GUIDELINES

Curated by Edvanta Consulting

When choosing a school, you should go beyond just the school's name and ranking and do thorough research to make sure that the school is the right fit for you. Here are some guidelines to get you started in your school research and selection process.

## I. VISIT COLLEGES

Even if you're not sure about which school you want to attend, college visits can give you a better sense of what might be important to you in a college, and what college life is all about.

### What To Do Before & During Your College Tour:

- Call the admissions office to schedule a guided tour and information session, or register using their admissions website.
- Research the guidelines of attending in-person tours in the college to understand the limitations imposed by COVID-19 safety protocols. These policies are rapidly changing across campuses so keep a track of updates posted on their university website.
- During your visit, pick up materials from the admissions office about academic majors or departments you might be interested in.
- In addition to the guided tour, also take time to explore the campus on your own, particularly places that might be of interest to you like the library, athletics facility, performing arts spaces, etc.
- If possible, visit the research labs to understand the research equipment available and the ongoing status of undergraduate research.
- Eat lunch on campus, either in the dining hall or at a place that's popular with students.
- If possible, tour the dorms or try to sit in on a class.
- Talk to current students. Ask them about their experience, and why they chose to attend this college.
- Pick up publications including student newspapers, literary reviews, etc.





- Visit the surrounding area of the college, including local bookstores, restaurants, etc. to understand the amenities available for students on campus. You will engage with the college as much as the city it is based in, after all!
- If you're going into or are currently in Class 12, consider interviewing with an Admissions Officer or Student Interviewer, if offered.
- If you are interested in the sports and athletics department of the college, talk to the college coach and members of the sports team.
- During and after the visit, make notes about what you did and did not like and review the materials you've picked up.

## II. GET ONLINE

School websites and social media feeds are a great way to learn more about a college, especially if you don't have the ability to visit the campus.

### **Ways to Explore Colleges Online:**

- Take a virtual tour on a college's website.
- Sign up on the college's mailing lists to receive regular updates about the college.
- Attend the information sessions and virtual college fairs organised by the college to understand the admission process, financial aid options, and undergraduate experience of students.
- Connect with student representatives of your prospective academic and non-academic interests through the admissions office.
- If a college doesn't offer a virtual tour, try to find student and campus videos on YouTube which cover the campus structures and dorm life.
- Follow the college on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat to get regular updates about what's happening on campus.
- Learn about everyday life – look for information on organisations, cultural events, student government, and sports.
- Check out the student-run club websites to understand how active they are in your areas of interest.
- Email local alumni from the college to learn about their experience.
- Student blogs can also be a great resource for getting a sense of daily life on campus.





- Browse the course catalogue, including course descriptions, and requirements for each major.
- Departmental Websites – look at professors’ pages. If you find a particular professor’s area of research interesting, consider sending him or her an email.
- Investigate support services, including writing centres, and career-planning services.
- Look into the housing options available for freshmen and upperclassmen.
- Read the school’s newspaper and other publications online.

### III. ASK QUESTIONS

Whether emailing the admissions office, chatting with current students on campus, or meeting school representatives in India, asking thoughtful, insightful questions can help you determine whether a school is the right fit for you.

#### **Sample Questions for Current Students:**

- Why did you choose this college?
- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- What do you do in your free time? On weekends?
- What is your favourite spot on campus?
- What do you wish you could change about this college?
- How did you choose your major?
- Are you happy with the on-campus dining options?
- Are you happy with the residential options?
- Are there internships and part-time jobs available for international students?
- How was your academic experience during the virtual semester?
- Was the college administration helpful to students during the pandemic?
- For non-academic majors:
  - What kind of opportunities and infrastructure are available for students with non-academic interests (art studios/ media workshops/galleries/orchestra/sports)?
- How often do you interact with your professors outside of class?





### **Sample Questions for Admissions Officers:**

- What is the average size of an introductory class?
- How accessible are professors? Do they keep open office hours?
- What opportunities are there for undergraduate research?
- How many students participate in undergraduate research?
- Does the college have any scholarships or financial aid available for international students?
- What type of career services does the college offer?
- What are the living options on and off-campus?
- What percentage of students live on-campus?
- How long are dorm accommodations guaranteed?
- What clubs are there on campus?
- How easy is it to double major?
- What are the college's most popular majors?
- Does the college offer any interdisciplinary majors?
- When do students need to declare a major? How easy is it to switch majors?
- What kind of sporting, theatre, and social events happens on campus?
- What cultural or recreational opportunities are available in the surrounding area off-campus?
- What is the social and political atmosphere of the surrounding community? Do students ever become involved in town life?
- What opportunities are there for community service?
- How is the advising system set up for freshmen?
- What are some of the best features of this college?
- What are some of the weaknesses of this college? Are there opportunities for students to work toward improvement?
- What is the reach of the alumni network of this college?
- Is public transportation available near the campus or does the college offer a shuttle service?
- What resources are available for international students to navigate the college?