



Queen Elizabeth Academy

# University Admission Guide 2020

How to Get  
Admitted to  
the Best  
Universities?

## “ How did I Get into my Top Choice University?

by Queen Elizabeth former students



Colin H.  
admitted to  
Queen's  
Commerce



Katie F.  
admitted to  
McGill  
Arts Program



Taylor W.  
admitted to  
Western Medical  
Science



Jeremy R.  
admitted to  
Western  
Ivey



Paul M.  
admitted to  
Queen's  
Engineering

by Queen Elizabeth Teachers

- How to Improve your Grades and Build Academic Credentials
- Dealing with Grade 12 English and Math
- How to Write a Compelling University Application Essay
- How to become a Well-Rounded Student



Top  
Achievers  
Our students\*

Jeff R.

admitted to  
Queen's Commerce  
with scholarship

Colin H.

admitted to  
Queen's Commerce

Katie F.

admitted to  
McGill Business

Stephanie R.

admitted to  
McMaster Life Sci.

Alex. A.

admitted to  
Laurier Business

Nicole A.

admitted to  
Laurier Business

Taylor W.

admitted to  
Western Medical  
Science

Catherine P.

admitted to  
McGill Nursing  
Program with  
scholarship

And many more..

# Queen Elizabeth Academy

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How can we help you to get admitted  
to your top choice university?

## Plan A: Private Tutoring

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Our 1-on-1 tutoring focuses on building  
your academic foundation

7+ years of experience tutoring 700+ students.  
Many entered top universities with scholarships ranging  
from \$2,000 to \$12,000

### Our Approach

Teaching students to organize knowledge  
Building foundation skills in order to overcome gaps  
Step by step explanation of difficult concepts

We have 18+ tutors, each specialized in the following subject areas:  
English, Math, Chemistry, Physics, French

## Plan B: Private Credit Course

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The credits obtained from Queen Elizabeth Academy can be used for university application and count towards the OSSD (Ontario Secondary School Diploma).

### Why Private Credit Course?

For Grade 12 students applying to university

Small Classes. 4 to 8 students per class. Our small class settings enable students to be more engaged in order to excel in academic achievement.

1,600+ Math problems for the students to practice in Adv Functions and Calculus, to help prepare the students for first year in university.

## Academic Advice

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### Bi-weekly Academic Advice Articles

Free, bi-weekly articles covering topics such as building study habits, test writing strategies, strengthening math foundations and more. These articles are written by the Queen Elizabeth team, including Harvard MD candidates, certified teachers, Master's degree graduates and Ivy League graduates.

To subscribe (free of charge): email Victor. [vwlee2008@gmail.com](mailto:vwlee2008@gmail.com)

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to enroll:

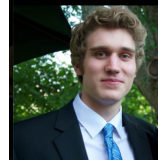
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[www.QETutoring.com](http://www.QETutoring.com)



HOW TO BECOME A  
WELL ROUNDED  
STUDENT  
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HOW DID I GET INTO  
MY TOP CHOICE  
UNIVERSITY  
PAGE 6



HOW TO WRITE A  
COMPELLING  
APPLICATION ESSAY  
PAGE 10

# UNIVERSITY APPLICATION GUIDE



**T**he university application process is highly competitive. Thousands of applicants often compete for a few hundred positions for a good science or business program. Top universities have been consistently raising their cut-off average year by year, making the admission process an even more stressful one. This booklet is composed for parents and students to offer them insight on how to get a competitive edge in the process.

The information for this booklet is derived from Queen Elizabeth **Academy's** experience of working with 700+ high school students, many of whom were admitted to top universities with scholarships ranging from \$2,000 to \$12,000. In addition, former Queen Elizabeth students who are now enrolled in Queen' s, McGill, Western and Wilfred Laurier share their tips on how they were successfully admitted. Queen Elizabeth Teachers and Advisors who specialize in their chosen field, ranging from medical school to physics, biochemistry, literature to commerce also provided insights for this booklet.

## *Contents*

- Your academic plan (p.3)
- How to improve your grade (p.5)
- Dealing with Grade 12 Math and English (p.9)
- How to become a well-rounded student (p.11)
- How to write a compelling university admission essay (p.12)



## Your Academic Credentials

The challenge for most students is that unless their cumulative average in Grade 12 is significantly above the cut-off average for university, they face severe competition. Achieving an average of 80–85% in their top 6 courses is common to many students who are serious about applying to the top schools. This means that if you are getting in the low 80% range, you will face fierce competition. You need to make your application stand out while working hard to push your average towards the 88–92% range.

To get a competitive edge, consider the following factors:

1. Academic credentials (details on page 5).
2. How to become a well-rounded student (details on page 11).
3. Writing a compelling application essay/personal statement (details on page 10).
4. Enrol in Queen Elizabeth Private Tutoring or Credit Courses. Take advantage of our small class settings to build better academic standing for yourself.

## Key Strategies for your University Applications

Before exploring how to build your grades and credentials, there are several key strategies you must consider.

Strategies to get into your desired university and program:

1. Work hard for better marks. Have a clear goal in each subject and commit yourself to work towards it.
2. Start early, (Grade 9–10), and plan ahead. Build a solid foundation in your junior high-school years. This will determine your success in your senior years.
3. Endeavour to be a well-rounded student. Engage in activities you are passionate about and programs you want to apply to. Focus on extra curricular activities that require dedication, demonstrate leadership skills, and teamwork.
4. Build consistent study habits. Balance your time wisely between your academic and extracurricular activities. Invest time in activities that can make you stand out from the crowd. Attain regional or provincial level or higher ranking in competitions, whether it is sports or math contests. Examples include the Waterloo Math Contest or Hockey championships.

## Key Strategies for Your University Applications



1. Work hard for better marks. Have a clear goal in key subject areas.
2. Start early (grade 9-10) and build a solid foundation.



3. Position yourself as a well-rounded student. choose activities that require dedication of 1-2 years.
4. Build consistent study habits. Find a good balance between school work and extracurricular activities.

# Your Academic Plan (Grade 9-12)



## Grades 9 to 10: Building a Strong Foundation and Staying Ahead

Many students who are in their junior years in high school continue with the “take it easy” mentality from their elementary school years. Usually students fall behind in starting Grade 10. Often, students ignore the gaps in their foundation, consequently leading to conceptual problems which continue without being addressed. Also, they underestimate the steep challenge and sudden jump in difficulty-level in Grade 11 and are caught off-guard. This is the reason why many students see their marks drop significantly in Grade 11 – just when the marks begin to count for university application.

Starting early gives you an edge in the upcoming admission. The key advantage is that you have time to explore and develop:

1. Building a solid Math and Science foundation. By working on this early, you can avoid playing catch up in your senior years.
2. Learn how to write essays, and in particular, how to critically analyze text, which will help you in senior level English, in labs, ISU essays as well as other assignments in the senior grades.
3. Participate in Math competitions to develop problem-solving skills, (i.e. tackle new questions on the spot). It will determine whether you are in the 80' s or 90' s in senior grade Math.
4. Develop consistent study habits, such as dedicating blocks of time for homework and overcome distractions. Developing these habits will be valuable throughout your academic career.
5. Explore your passion. Read books outside classroom requirements, which will help you figure out where your interest lies so you can focus on developing it.



## Grade 11: Get Ready for Serious Competition

Grade 11 is critical. If you score well in Grade 11, you will be in a much better shape to tackle Grade 12. However, Grade 11 is significantly tougher. The pace is faster and the Math and Science is complex compared to what you have studied earlier. This is the time you need to develop good study habits, time management skills, and the ability to tackle tough problems. Maintaining a solid foundation in Math while fixing gaps in key areas is equally critical. Math has a section called Thinking/Inquiry which requires problem solving. Whether you score an 80 or 90% depends on how successfully you tackle this section. Queen Elizabeth Academy offers private tutoring programs to help students through Grade 11.

This year is the right time to select extracurricular activities that you can commit a year or two to build your credentials. Select something that you love and seek the opportunity to demonstrate your success at the regional or provincial level. This could be your favourite sport, a Math competition or Music or building robots. You need to stand out from the crowd and at the same time demonstrate leadership skills and teamwork. Try and become a team leader whenever you can. It is advisable to highlight these experiences in your university application essay.

1. Participate in Math and Science competitions. This will sharpen your problem solving skills and help you to get in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile.
2. Learn to balance extracurricular activities and schoolwork. This demonstrates your time management skills, which are highly valued in the university admission process.



**Grade 11:  
Get Ready for  
Serious Competition**

3. Stay ahead of your competition and get yourself noticed. For example, if you are passionate about Business, start a small company. If you want to get into Health Sciences, volunteer at university labs, (you can cold call university professors or TAs to get started).
4. Work hard. Dedicate enough time to key subjects such as Math, Science and English
5. Spend your summer attaining a credit in English or Math. This allows you to focus on other subjects in Grade 12.



**Grade 12:  
Compete for Your Target  
University Effectively**

If you enter Grade 12 but have not built your academic or extracurricular credentials, or lack a solid foundation in Math or Science, you have to find efficient ways to catch up. It is recommended that you spend the first two months of the school year, (i.e. Sept and Oct), strengthening your foundation skills for the upcoming challenges. You have to work twice as hard, but this will make the rest of the year less stressful. Another recommended option is to take Queen Elizabeth private credit courses. Our courses provide quality education and focus on building a strong foundation for students so that they are prepared for their first year at university.

This is accomplished through our small classes (6–8 students), where our students can get individual attention in a fully engaging learning environment.

We value hard work and practice. In our Grade 12 Math courses, we provide 1,500+ math problems for practice. We organize the material, categorizing the important types of questions to teach our students how to take notes effectively, a skill that is very important in university. In our English 12 courses, besides the required Grade 12 curriculum, we use additional lessons to teach our students how to write essays. The students will need to write essays and research papers in university, so this preparation is crucial.

If you **haven't** yet engaged in activities that make you stand out, it is time to pursue the ones that can be completed in several months and still demonstrate credibility. This includes DECA ([www.DECA.ca](http://www.DECA.ca)), Wilfred Laurier Stock Market Competition, and Waterloo Mathematics Contests. Below is a list of key credible activities that you can join in Grade 12. Note that if you are participating in contests, it is worthwhile to spend extra time preparing, (i.e. 30 hours+), to ensure you get a good score, (at least at 99th percentile), otherwise the experience will not stand out enough. One piece of advice I give students who desire to enter Business Studies is to start his or her own company. This will require more time, but the experience demonstrates entrepreneurship and initiative.

*A List of Activities to Build  
your Credentials*

*Business*

- DECA ([www.DECA.ca](http://www.DECA.ca))
- Ontario Government – Start a Summer Company – up to \$3,000 grants to support high school students to start his own company
- Wilfred Laurier Stock Market Competition (<http://invest.wlu.ca>)
- McMaster University - High School Business Heroes ([hsbh.degroote.mcmaster.ca](http://hsbh.degroote.mcmaster.ca))



# How to Improve your Grades and Build Academic Credentials



The key to building your academic credentials, and to be a top student, is to do more than what you are asked for. Work hard and practice all the problems

throughout the textbook, beyond just the assigned homework. Always stay one step ahead of everyone else. Be curious and explore. For example, if you are taking high school physics, watch physics lectures by Richard Feynman, (Feynman is one of the best physicists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century), on YouTube, or read books written by Albert Einstein, (He actually wrote a layman language version of his Theory of Relativity). This learning process will help you develop thinking and problem solving skills, which will help you with your regular school work, making it a lot easier.

Participate in Math or Science contests, starting in earlier grades. Your participation will require extra commitments, but if you rank in the top percentiles it will provide you with strong academic credentials. Practice past year Math contests (they are available to download on the University of Waterloo website). During the process, you will learn extra skills, such as problem solving and essay writing, which will distinguish you from the rest.

The second important point is to understand your weaknesses and to overcome them. Many students make careless mistakes, have trouble memorizing details, get nervous during tests and stumble upon tough math problems. Remember that every one of these weaknesses have solutions. It is important to identify and overcome them. Using this process, you will improve and achieve a higher grade.

## *A list of activities to build your credentials*

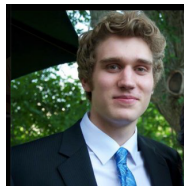
### *Math and Science*

- Canada's National Laboratory for particle and nuclear physics – High School students research fellowship (<http://www.triumf.ca/home/for-students/high-school-programs>)
- McMaster Engineering & Science Olympics (<http://olympics.mcmaster.ca>)
- University of Toronto National Biology Competition (<http://biocomp.utoronto.ca>)
- Queen's University FIRST Robotics competition – pairing a high school student with a Queen's engineering student to develop a robot. (<http://prospective.appsci.queensu.ca/Engineers-Wall.shtml>)

### *Law*

- University of Toronto Law School Youth Outreach – Summer Mentorship Program (<http://www.law.utoronto.ca/admissions/youth-outreach>)
- House of Commons Page Program – 40 chosen high school students will join the action on the Parliament in Ottawa. ([http://www.parl.gc.ca/Employment/House/PageProgram/pp\\_welcome-e.htm](http://www.parl.gc.ca/Employment/House/PageProgram/pp_welcome-e.htm))

## How did I Get into my Top Choice University?



### Jeremy R.

**Admitted to Western Ivey School of Business**

**Queen Elizabeth former student**

Tutored for: Grade 12 Advanced Functions, Calculus

Early on in high school, I knew I wanted to apply to the top business schools in Canada, which led me to focus my attention on getting accepted to both the Western and Queen's business programs. Consequently, I learned that these programs value not only high marks but also students who are heavily involved in extra-curricular activities.

I first decided to take extra-curricular activities seriously when entering my grade ten year. When choosing what to become involved with, I thought of what my interests were while also taking into consideration my natural strengths and weaknesses. Because I always had creative inclinations, I joined my school's video yearbook while at the same time taking up classical guitar lessons. Despite being a beginner in both of these fields, I persisted and ended up by

grade twelve becoming Head Editor of the Video Yearbook Club and achieving a certificate for Grade 8 Guitar from the Royal Conservatory of Music. Pursuing these two activities also opened up many other opportunities for me. I soon found myself volunteering at Rogers TV, playing bass guitar in the school's pit band, and making videos for school events. This undeniable commitment and progress made it clear to admissions that I had undergone a great deal of character development and was able to seriously invest myself outside of the classroom, which is something both Western and Queen's placed enormous emphasis on in their application processes.

Aside from creative pursuits, I ran for student council vice president in grade eleven but lost the election by a mere fifteen votes. The following year though, I ran for the presidential position and won. Instead of viewing my initial defeat as a

failure, I used the knowledge I gained from the experience to create an even better campaign in my grade twelve year, which evidently paid off. This persistence, I believe, was integral in allowing me to be accepted to both the Queen's Commerce and Ivey programs as it demonstrated my ability to persevere when faced with a severe setback.

With all this being said, managing my school workload was not easy. The key for me was planning out my days strategically. To do this, I recorded a detailed list of deadlines, homework, test dates and other important information in an agenda which I updated and referred to frequently. I would also set daily goals and objectives in it, which always kept me on track and focused. Overall, it was my ability to maintain a strong balance between academics and extra-curricular activities that allowed me to get into my top choice of university.



### Colin H.

**Admitted to Queen's University Commerce Program**

**Queen Elizabeth former student**

Enrolled courses: Grade 11 Math, Grade 12 Advanced Functions, Calculus

In Grade 12, managing your time is critical. You need to allocate your limited resources (i.e. your time) on what matters most. This principle applies to various tasks from focusing your energy on the most important subjects, to scoring the test questions you know first, to focusing on one or two job experiences or extracurricular activities that make you stand out.

For building your application I would recommend starting as early as possible to build up your profile. That being said, don't stress yourself out if you have not accomplished a lot by Grade 11. I was accepted even though I accomplished most of my work in Grade 12. My second piece of advice is that your acceptance is not about how many or what your extracurricular activities are, but how you

convey them. Give the people reading your essay something interesting and new to read. Use your activities to demonstrate your personal development, how you handle problems successfully, overcome failures, or display good work ethic. It is more effective and useful to explain a specific problem or situation and how you handled it.

An example would be my personal investment in the stock market. In my teenage years I saved most of the money I earned and invested it in the stock market. However, I encountered the recession of 2008, during which I lost a majority of my money. Since then, I have tried to learn from my mistakes. After four years I attained a breakeven point on my stock. I worked hard for my money and I

have particularly stated that my goal at Queen's University is to learn how to invest and manage money in a smarter way. Maybe one day I will be able to help other people to invest their money as well. In my Queen's University application I stated my challenges, (losing my savings in stock market), how I persisted, (learned from my mistake and broke even), and how it tie, to my goals and growth, (my career goals and how Queen's University could help me attain them).

My examples were specific, and I had planned out how I would use them to showcase my ability to learn from the challenges life had brought my way. This connection is incredibly important. Begin using a reflective approach to examine the wisdom various experiences have provided you with, especially focusing on how they have prepared you for the program you wish to enter.



## How did I Get into my Top Choice University?



### Paul M.

**Admitted to Queen's University Engineering Program**

**Queen Elizabeth former student**

Tutored for: IB Calculus, Physics and Chemistry

In Grade 10 I began to realize that I wanted to go to university for engineering. This realization allowed me to take the necessary courses and steps to prepare me for getting into the program. The first step was to take the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The IB program is one that teaches university level classes in high school. However, in order to stay in the program I had to commute an hour and a half to and from school every day. The commute added a time constraint and made time management an incredibly important tool I needed to develop. Choosing the International Baccalaureate program was the ideal program to allow me to get into university, because of the Creative Active Service program (CAS). CAS requires each IB student to have to do 50 hours of

extra-curricular activities. I had already started practicing karate, however, the IB program also asked questions regarding the impact of my extracurricular activities, and how each activity related to my life. These questions and the IB program in general taught me to think critically which consequently helped me in my courses in high school and university.

The extra-curricular activities, the increased workload, and the aforementioned commuting made time management another aspect that was necessary to learn quickly. In my last year of high school, I was at karate every day training and competing in tournaments. Scheduling my time efficiently by placing an emphasis on school and karate allowed me to get accepted to university and earn a black belt. In order to balance my time between my commitments, I prioritized assignments and courses in a way

that would allow me to focus on the more difficult courses and more important assignments. I continue to employ this method at university with success.

In my opinion, critical thinking, time management and self-awareness were the key components of my Queen's University personal entrance essay that helped me to get accepted. Critical thinking and a self-awareness cultivated by the CAS program allowed me to also realize when I needed help. The realization led me to enrol in the Queen Elizabeth Academy Tutoring Program which helped me achieve a 93% in Physics. Time management, critical thinking and self-awareness allowed me to reach my goal of getting into the dual degree program of Applied Science and Engineering at Queen's University with a scholarship.



### Katie F.

**Admitted to McGill Arts Program**

**Queen Elizabeth former student**

Enrolled courses: Advanced Functions, Calculus

My decision to enrol at Queen Elizabeth Academy was not an easy one at first as my home is located in Georgetown, Ontario where I was attending high school. The Academy is situated in Mississauga about an hours drive away. I maintained a busy schedule of classes and extra-curricular activities as well as holding down a part-time job. I was concerned that with all the travel something would have to give and that something would be my grades.

So with some trepidation I enrolled for two high school math credits at the Academy. My decision was made easier as I sometimes struggled with math and felt extra help and smaller class size would prove beneficial. I am a solid A student but at times felt unsure working through difficult math concepts and word problems. I felt I needed help.

To my great surprise - and considerable relief - I flourished in the smaller classroom setting and my marks in math improved about a full grade point. At the Academy classes run for a full three hours allowing the instructor more time to focus on difficult concepts. As well smaller class size gives instructors time, while in class, to work through individual student problems. The instructors at the Academy encouraged me to participate and with less kids in the class my stress level dropped considerably. In addition, tutors were available after hours to provide one-on-one instruction when the need arose.

As for the drive to and from school while I did not always look forward to it I found that once I was on my way I had time to reflect on my day away from constant

interruptions and distractions. I used the time to catch up on music or listen to talking books. I found, with a little planning, I used the time well and as the year progressed looked forward to these moments to myself.

I graduated high school with an A average, attaining an 87 and an 82 in advanced functions and calculus, respectively, at Queen Elizabeth Academy. I was admitted to all, but one, of the programs I applied to. I am currently enrolled in my first year in McGill's arts program. I'm not sure where this is all leading me but my dream of obtaining a solid post secondary school education is off to a good start thanks in large part to the Academy.

## How did I Get into my Top Choice University?



### Taylor W.

**Admitted to Western University Medical Science Program**

**Queen Elizabeth former student**

Tutored for: Chemistry and Calculus

I was one of the lucky ones in school who knew what they wanted to do since they were 5 years old. Knowing I wanted to go into medicine created a drive for me to achieve high marks in all my classes especially the sciences, made me get 100+ volunteer hours at the hospital and take extra-curricular involved with health and sciences. This drive that I had came with a very good work ethic, ability to manage my time, and making sure I really understood the basic material taught in high school that I knew I would be using for years and years to come.

What I've always found is that high school can prepare you for the subjects taught in university but it also prepares your time management. Being able to handle four

classes each with their own set of quizzes, tests and projects, is exactly what needs to be learnt in order to succeed in university. In high school, classes may coordinate between each other to not have tests on the same day, but in university this is not the case. You have to prepare to have many midterms and assignment in the same week that you will have to be prepared for far ahead of time, and be able to manage each subject according to the amount of material tested. This work ethic is not only important for when you study for more than one test at a time, but also for staying on top of your work. Be disciplined and take that extra hour after you've done your homework to write out your notes that you can then use later for studying for finals. This is the most crucial step I have found in succeeding both in

high school and university. An hour a day saves you so much time during finals that you can spend reading and understanding your notes rather than just starting to write them out.

I've found that studying with other people is a very effective way of preparing for tests and exams. Being able to teach someone what you know about your schoolwork is a great way of testing your own knowledge. This is the technique I had learnt from Queen Elizabeth Academy when I was tutored in chemistry and calculus. At the end of the sessions I was asked to explain and teach the concept back to my tutor. It helped me to find out any gaps I had with the concepts. And working through problems not only saves time when doing homework, but again it helps to really solidify your knowledge in the area by being able to talk it out.



### Freda B.

**Graduated from University of Waterloo  
Mathematics / Charter Accounting**

**Queen Elizabeth Teacher**

Specialized in: Grade 11 and 12 Mathematics, Accounting

After deciding to apply to the Mathematics/Chartered Accountancy program at the University of Waterloo, I quickly found out that the program had a highly competitive admission process, (for the fall 2008 entry, applicants needed to achieve 96%+ average, demonstrate strong aptitude in mathematics and provide two professional references). All three aspects were important factors in the University's selection process and of course, the final outcome also depended on how I compared with other applicants also applying for the program. In order to place myself in an advantageous position among the pool of candidates, I strived to make myself stand out from the others.

Attaining the admission average was perhaps the most measurable, and thus

objective, requirement. In other words, there was minimal leeway to fulfill this condition, which had to be met in order to gain acceptance. To meet the requirements, I set solid goals for myself, took meticulous notes in class, and asked for help as soon as I needed it, because not doing so would result in misconceptions that could affect future classes. I always paid attention to feedback from my assessments in order to learn from my mistakes. Good study skills were crucial to ensure my admission into my desired program and to also help me maintain my academic success in university, (staying in the program was just as difficult as getting in!).

Another consideration for admission is the level of extra-curricular involvement a student exemplifies. In addition to keeping!

up with school work and spending time with family and friends, I also dedicated a large portion of my time to various community involvements. These experiences were essential in helping me develop my soft skills (such as time management, leadership, communication and team work). Universities look at the students' exposure in these activities in order to gauge the students' ability to be successful in the community and in their future professions. Since I contributed ten hours of my time each week to the community, I carefully chose activities that aligned with my interest. I would recommend the same to others as it allowed me to establish personal connections with my volunteer work, which ultimately transpired as motivation, dedication and enthusiasm for my work. Not to mention, I had a ton of fun while building up my profile and experience.

# Dealing with Grade 12 Math and English

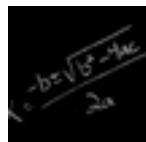
## Grade 12 Advanced Functions and Calculus



by Victor L.  
Principal, Queen Elizabeth Academy



David T.  
Certified Teacher of Ontario  
English Teacher, Queen Elizabeth  
Academy



To effectively deal with Advanced Functions, you need to realize that it contains very simple chapters (such as Polynomials) and very difficult ones (such as Trigonometry). The easy chapters are just a level higher than Grade 11 Math, and the difficult ones are at first year university level. Thus the difficulty of the course fluctuates significantly. Realizing this, you need to score as much as possible on the easy units so as to not underestimate the course, and work very hard on the tough units. Secondly, your foundation skills need to be solid, especially in the areas of factoring, graphing and trigonometry. At Queen Elizabeth, we provide 650 math problems to strengthen the **student's** skills before they start our course or tutoring programs, which is essential for their success.

## Grade 12 English

Grade 12 English is a much more focused course compared to the previous high school English classes. Where you were once writing in a variety of styles, English 12 specifically pushes the student towards critical thinking and analysis, combined with the requirement for clarity and concision in their writing. The idea is that you will be practicing the thought process and inquiry that post secondary schools ask for in their literature courses.

With Writing, it is expected at this point that students are extremely adept in the mechanical aspects of writing. Paragraphing, spelling, grammar, and sentence structure should be flawless, and if not, it will reflect very poorly on your work submissions. Instead, the major focus for the writing is the development and expression of ideas with clarity and precision. To generate the required critical thought and inquiry, there are two things you can do. One is to relate course content to world content. What are you learning in the course that can be related to socio-cultural concepts? Two, recall the extensive notes you made when reading. Group them into the course themes and find something that interests you, a topic where you can strongly agree or disagree with. These will be cornerstones for your idea development. When writing, make sure you are not creating flowery, eloquent sentences with words that are rare and unheard of. Teachers will know when students are attempting to hide behind a smokescreen of fancy words. Rather, make your sentences direct and to the point. It will direct the reader's attention to the content of your idea, and secondly, it will allow you more room to substantiate your perspective. Proving

Calculus is divided into two sections. The first section involves Derivatives with concepts similar to Advanced Functions. One of the difficult parts in this section are the word problems at the end of Unit 3 on Optimization and Related Rates. Since many students have difficulty with word problems throughout high school, it is advisable to hone one's skill in this area. The student needs to strengthen his or her knowledge in the derivatives section. These concepts will be encountered again in first year calculus courses if they are pursuing business or science. Note that Calculus is run during the 2<sup>nd</sup> term at most schools, so the midterm marks are included in university applications. The student will have to ace the word problem unit to avoid having his or her mark pulled down right before submission.

your position thoroughly is extremely important. Each proof you use, ask yourself, "If this were my only proof, would it convince someone?" If the answer is no, keep searching.

In terms of Reading, students can be expected to read texts from a variety of time periods, cultures, and genres. Students should also expect dramatic works, most likely chosen from Shakespeare's expertise, but not necessarily. You must be prepared to read texts that you are unfamiliar with and uncomfortable with, and be able to connect them to each other. A large part of English 12 asks you to find ties in between texts where you may not think any exist. In order to prepare yourself for this, you should first determine certain themes that will run throughout the course. You may ask your teacher for clarification about these. Once you have narrowed down these themes, come prepared for each text with a highlighter or sticky notes. Chunk your text into chapters or paragraphs and keep a record of what theme or idea that paragraph might pertain to. This will provide you with insight into the connecting threads between texts and provide the supporting detail later on when you write.

Achieving high grades in grade 12 academic English relies on deep understanding of readings and well thought out arguments. Well-kept notes on your readings will be the foundation for your course. Combine this with well developed arguments written in a clear and concise manner and you will achieve success.

## How to Become a Well-Rounded Student



**by Victor L.**

Principal, Queen Elizabeth Academy  
Graduate of University of Waterloo (B. Sc)  
Recipient of Canada Scholarship



**by Aisha G.**

Teacher, Queen Elizabeth Academy  
Master of Finance, University of London  
Graduate of University of Pennsylvania (BA)

Top universities value well-rounded individuals who demonstrate leadership skills fused with teamwork, striking a good balance between their academic and extracurricular activities. They are interested in students who can contribute to their campus life along with being academically sharp. While selecting which activity to be involved in, you should consider the time commitment required, along with credible experience to make them stand out. Another consideration should be whether you are in a leadership role or part of a team and if you can effectively balance the activity with your schoolwork. Your activity of choice should demonstrate what you are passionate about as well as your willingness to commit 10+ hours a week pursuing it for at least a year or two. You should be wary of spreading yourself too thin and being involved in too many activities, thus not contributing to any significantly.



The second consideration is the credibility of the experience. Your chosen activity should be well recognized at the national or international level, or at least the provincial level. It is important to devote time and work hard on this activity to rank at the provincial level, or at least in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. The ranking itself will make you

The third aspect is leadership, coupled with teamwork. If you are involved in leadership roles or activities that involve teamwork, try to start them in the summer. Summer vacations allow students to devote more time to their activity of choice and thus make a significant contribution. I

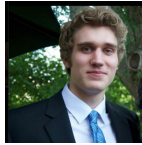
often advise students applying to business programs to start their own business, even if it's a small unprofitable one. Universities value students who take initiative and are willing to take risks. Other activities that students could be involved in include fundraising for charity, or volunteer with university professors to help with research. However, you might need contacts or cold call professors to get a position. Also, you can volunteer at recognized organizations like World Vision

or the UN. The UN too offers a volunteer program for high school students.

Lastly, students should balance their extra curricular activities with their schoolwork. It is essential to dedicate time blocks for schoolwork to ensure you keep up. You should estimate the amount of time needed to devote to a subject per week to achieve an A grade and be willing to put in the required effort. Also, don't lag behind and work hard daily to identify problems early on. I have seen students who failed to manage their time and thus ended up abandoning their extracurricular activities or perform poorly in school. The challenge to be a well rounded student is time management.!



# How to Write a Compelling University Application Essay



**by Jeremy R.**

admitted to Western Ivey School of Business and Queen's University Commerce Program

Queen Elizabeth former student

Tutored for: Grade 12 Advanced Functions, Calculus

## Western Ivey School of Business (AEO) admission essay

Attaining AEO status to the Western Ivey School of Business is not an easy task. However, with the right approach and execution, getting into this competitive program can certainly be done.

Aside from having strong academics, the main aspect the staff evaluating your application will look for is extra-curricular involvement. Simply put, they want to see what you have achieved outside of the classroom. This can range anywhere from starting your own business (which can look very impressive on your application) to being heavily involved in school activities. Whatever it is, just make sure it is something that you have excelled at and committed to with all your heart. Once you have decided what your extra-curricular activities are (in the previous year's application, you were required to write about three), the next step is to demonstrate that you have experienced both excellent results and a great deal of character development as a result of doing them. In essence, you must establish the

fact that you have progressed and thrived in these areas of interest. To better explain this point, I will draw upon my own application.

One activity I wrote about was filmmaking. I first developed an interest in this in grade nine after shadowing an editor at CBC on Job Shadow Day. Although I had no prior experience, I began volunteering my free time to help him with filming weddings and other events and also joined my school's video yearbook club. Through taking these initiatives, I gained considerable skill by grade eleven, and as a result, many new opportunities presented themselves. I found myself making videos of events for my school's YouTube channel, volunteering at Rogers TV, and working part-time with the CBC editor. Finally, I achieved solid results. I was promoted to Head Editor of the Video Yearbook Club, had my grade twelve ISU film accepted to international student film festivals, and made a promotional music video which helped me become elected as Student Council President.

Evidently, I was highly passionate and able to remain committed, which allowed me to progress and accomplish great results. An important element to take note of is that I essentially just wrote a clear and concise story about my involvement with filmmaking. This storytelling aspect is definitely something that you should try to incorporate when writing your application. In addition, making it clear that you have demonstrated leadership in your pursuits and had an impact on a group's success is very important. One final tip is to not rush the process. Try to write it as professionally as possible and do extensive proofreading and editing (similar to as if you were writing an essay for an English course). Many people applying simply overlook the fact that the people evaluating your application want to see how well you can write, so make sure to impress them with your writing style.

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## Queen's University Commerce Program (PSE)

For the Queen's PSE, the university asks that you identify from the past four years important awards and distinctions you have received, extracurricular activities you have been a part of, and lastly jobs that you have held. On top of this, you must write a short essay discussing your goals for your time at university and thereafter. Although this can of course seem like an intimidating part of the application process, do not fear as it can be done through following the simple approach I outline for you here.

The first step you are going to want to take is to go on the Queen's University website and read the PSE page as well as the practice PSE so that you can get a general idea of what Queen's looks for in an ideal student. Once you gain this understanding, make a detailed list for the first question and highlight the ones you have been the most dedicated to, passionate about and successful in, as this will be what you will want to include in your PSE. Although this can be a time consuming process, it is necessary and will make the essay seem relatively easy in comparison.

The next and arguably most important stage is to write about your goals for your time at 'Queen's and beyond' in a short essay. A solid approach you can take to this, which worked well for me, is to divide this question into four parts. The first part should include your academic goals (i.e. how you want to achieve academic excellence). The next part should include your extracurricular goals. In essence, describe how you can contribute to the Queen's community through your unique skills and talents.



# How to Write a Compelling University Application Essay

## Queen’s University Commerce Program (PSE) - continue

For me, I wrote about how I had an avid interest in holding a position in student government where I could apply the knowledge I gained as high school student council president to a university setting. Drawing upon past successes in high school (whether you were captain of a sports team, part of Mock Trial, heavily involved in volunteer work, etc.), and describing how the knowledge you have gained in these can translate into the success you envision for yourself in university is a great method to use. This will definitely make you stand out

among the sea of applicants, as it shows how you have achieved great things in the past and will continue to do so in the next phase of your life. The third part should include your personal goals (i.e. building a network of personal and business relationships) and the last part should include your aspirations for after graduation. For the former, it is key to emphasize how you want to improve certain aspects of yourself. In my essay for example, I wrote about how I wanted to grow in maturity and develop better judgement through my experience at Queen’s. Lastly, in reference to the latter point, make

sure to be as specific as possible. It is important to write about an end goal and how your undergrad experience will help you achieve it. Essentially, you want to establish in your essay that your time at Queen’s will be integral in allowing you to achieve this aspiration after you get your degree. For example, the main goal I wrote about was how I wanted to start my own film production company with the knowledge I would gain in the Queen’s business school and through a student film society. This approach made it clear to whoever was judging my essay that I had a clear and strategic plan for after university, and that my time at Queen’s would be necessary to execute it.



by **Colin H.**

admitted to Queen’s University Commerce Program

Queen Elizabeth former student

Courses enrolled: Grade 11 Math, Grade 12 Advanced Functions, Calculus

## Queen’s University Commerce Program (PSE)

While applying to universities, many students will focus on their grades, but have often neglected the importance of the application essay. You should start early (one to two months before the deadline) and compose at least 4–5 drafts on each essay. The words on your essay are very limited, often times you have to deliver your points in about 300–400 words. Therefore you must go straight to the point and be clear and concise.

In writing your Queen’s application essay, you can either use your work experience or extracurricular activities to demonstrate your leadership skills, personal development and character. I used my work experience as evidence to demonstrate my abilities and what I have learned.

If you are using your work experience as the main argument for your essay, it is not enough just to state that you have a job or simply describe your role. Many students

have part time jobs, and you will need to find ways to differentiate yourself. My first piece of advice is that you share an anecdote from your workplace that shows how you have handled a challenging situation. An important point is to elaborate what the situation taught you and what you learned from it upon reflection. To elaborate on this topic of work experience I will convey a brief overview of my application.

Working at a golf club during one of its biggest tournament days, three of the back-shop staff who were scheduled to work, (including our manager), were absent. The back-shop was in utter chaos. With no plan and no one in charge, the staff was not communicating well, and it was causing panic. I was the youngest back-shop staff member working that day, but I had a bit more experience than the others. I took control of the situation and created a plan. I delegated work and got the others helping one another out efficiently. Working as a team, we got the job done and the event

ran smoothly. It seemed obvious to me what had to be done, and no one was taking responsibility, so I took charge. I spent a considerable length of my essay to illustrate what I had learnt from this experience: leadership **doesn’t** always come from your job position.

The point of the essay is to differentiate yourself, therefore select topics that serve this purpose. For example, what have you done to handle the situation? What value have you added to your team? Share the knowledge that various experiences have provided you with. Remember that you are trying to prove to the university that you are worthy of acceptance, and therefore you must showcase your experiences and your wisdom.

# How to Pursue a Science Career



by **Laura C.**

**MD Candidate, Harvard Medical School**

Academic Advisor on Learning Strategies, Queen Elizabeth Academy

I remember the first time I did a dissection in science class. I was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, so 12 years-old, and we were dissecting pigs' lungs. As part of the exercise, we placed straws in the specimen's windpipe and pushed air through to watch the lungs expand and inflate. It was that moment, when my grossed out dissection partner shied away and I took charge, that I knew that I wanted to explore the world around me through science.

By now, you may not know what type of career you want to have, but if you are thinking about a career in a science field, there are some things you can start doing today to prepare yourself for a great career.

## 1. Read about science

If you really are curious about the world, this will probably come naturally to you. But what should you read? Really, anything that interests YOU. The New York Times has an online paper and you can read 10 articles free per month. Their "Science" section comes out every Tuesday and has a mix of interesting articles ranging from space exploration, exercise physiology to stories of patients with cancer. This is a great resource where even non-science lovers can find articles that interest them. I especially enjoy the opinion / perspective pieces where doctors and healthcare workers reflect on difficulties they face in patient care. There are also a few books that many pre-medical students read and find inspiring. Check one out:

"Mountains Beyond Mountains," By Tracy Kidder

"The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down," By Anne Fadiman

"How Doctors Think," By Jerome Groopman

"Treatment Kind and Fair: Letters to a Young Doctor" By Perri Klass

"The Hot Zone," By Richard Preston

"Better" By Atul Gawande

"Cutting for Stone" By Abraham Verghese

TIP: Although these books may motivate some of you to change the world, when you eventually write admissions essays for college and beyond, don't say a book is the reason you are doing what you are doing. It's a generic answer that bores admissions committee members!

## 2. Take Classes

High School: You may not have many opportunities to choose your own classes in high school but you can often choose to take enhanced or AP classes. Challenge yourself and take these classes. There is also an opportunity to take courses through distance learning programs offered by many universities or watch online video lectures (for example, MIT offers a wide range of science video lecture on their website ([www.MIT.edu](http://www.MIT.edu))).

University: When you get to university, you may feel pressure to be a Chemistry or Biology major, to help you advance in a science career. While these majors can help you, you should still find a major and take classes that meet your interests. I ended up majoring in Biology because it meant I only had to take four additional classes beyond my pre-med requirements. This gave me the flexibility to keep up my French minor and explore classes in Anthropology and Sociology. A classmate of mine majored in Philosophy and another majored in Policy, while still completing their pre-med requirements. They hope to be doctors who focus on medical ethics and healthcare policy, respectively. Can you imagine if they felt limited to Science majors only? Explore, explore, explore.

If you are pursuing a medical career, beware that the MCAT, (medical entrance exam), consists of 4 major components: Verbal Reasoning (English), Chemistry, Biology and Physics. Many science students neglect the English component, not realizing how difficult it is until several months prior to writing the MCAT exam. Start early, and take English literature classes in your first year, which provides you one or two years to practice your comprehension skills and prepare for the Verbal Reasoning component.

## 3. Volunteering

If you are really interested in science, you can round out your experiences by volunteering in something related to your field of interest. It's important that you start taking these opportunities on early in your education for a few reasons. Universities are looking for well-rounded individuals; it doesn't matter if you ace all of your science classes, they want students who will offer something outside of the classroom. Also extracurricular activities and community service turn you into a leader outside of the classroom. These experiences help you learn organizational, administrative, and teamwork skills you don't gain through coursework. Last, these opportunities give you a chance to understand how you can use science to make a difference in the world. Volunteer at a local clinic, tutor younger students in science, or help out at a blood drive. It doesn't matter what you do, but do something.



# How to Pursue a Business Career



**by Aisha G.**

Teacher, Queen Elizabeth Academy  
Master of Finance, University of London  
Graduate of University of Pennsylvania (BA)



**by Victor L.**

Principal, Queen Elizabeth Academy  
Graduate of University of Waterloo (B. Sc)  
Recipient of Canada Scholarship

When you enter business school, you should focus on your post university life and think about how, four years on, you would compete with your peers for jobs or with other entrepreneurs to start your own business. Acing your courses is no longer sufficient to excel at university. These four years of undergrad should be spent on networking and building your resume.

Your first step should be determining the aspect of business you want to specialize in. There are many fields of business for example, Finance, Entrepreneurship, Human Resource, etc. to choose from. In your senior years, you will be able to select your courses and narrow your field of specialization. A number of factors should be considered while determining this, like your interest and personality, along with the opportunities available. Research to ascertain where there is more scope for growth, which field or country is attracting more capital and investment and how the job market is evolving.

The next step is to build your competitive advantage. There are several ways you can do this:

## 1. Co-op experience

The Co-op experience gives you a competitive advantage because upon graduation, you have hands-on experience in your field as well as connections with at least 2-3 employers whom you can use as references. These connections with management can also help secure a job and might deem the Human Resources screening process unnecessary. This also gets you introduced to managers and department heads that you can get in touch with while looking for a job.



## 2. Expand your circle

Expanding your social circle is key. You need to know people beyond your friends from class. Over your four-years at university, one of your goals should be to build industry contacts, because in time this will open new doors for you. Initially, you can work with professors on various projects and attend as many industry conferences as possible. Also, you could participate in business plan competitions and make connections with corporate sponsors. Meanwhile, find out which departments of the university have connections with companies you would like to work for and get involved in their projects and events. It is always beneficial to take an executive position in student government as it enhances your resume while expanding your connections with top university officials.

## 3. Expand your horizon and knowledge

You need to gather knowledge of the real world beyond theories and textbooks. Start reading newspapers such as The Wall Street Journal or The Financial Times to explore where opportunities lie. You can also download annual reports of the Fortune 500 companies and analyze their financial statements. Other recommended reading materials include:

- Annual Shareholder Letters of Berkshire Hathaway by Warren Buffett. You can learn how Warren Buffett, a prominent investor, make his investment decisions.
- Watch interviews of investors and entrepreneurs such as George Soros, Jack Welch, Steve Jobs etc. to learn ideas on management, innovations and investing.
- The Intelligent Investor by Warren Buffett (investment)
- Straight from the Gut by Jack Welch (management)
- The Alchemy of Finance by George Soros (investment)

The knowledge you gain from your various experiences will help you secure a job in your desired company or field. The employers will see your commitment to pursue a particular career through your involvement in various activities as well as your academic achievements.



## About

# Queen Elizabeth Academy

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Queen Elizabeth Academy has a strong tradition of providing quality education and tutoring. For more than 7 years, we have worked with 700+ students, to build on their successes step by step. Our team of 18+ tutors, are each specialized in a subject area. Our focus is to help our students to build a solid academic foundation, so that they will succeed in the long run.

## Meet our Tutors:

### Renuka R.

Teaches: Advanced Functions

1200+ hours of tutoring experience.  
Specialized in making complex concepts easy to understand.

### Marc D.

Teaches: Physics, G11 Math, Calculus

Teaching Assistant, U of T first year tutorial classes (Physics and Calculus).

### Aisha G.

Teaches: SAT, Economics, English

Master Degree of Finance from University of London, and Bachelor of Arts from University of Pennsylvania.

### Andrew K.

Teaches: G11 Math, Adv Functions

Certified Teacher of Ontario Graduate from University of Toronto (OISE) major in Mathematics.

and 16+ more tutors who are expert in their fields

## Our Approach to Learning

### Organize Knowledge

We help you to organize knowledge and categorize types of problems, so it will be easier for you to retain knowledge.

### Understand the Fundamentals

The key to understand concepts, is to know what it is and the *why* behind it. Once you understand the fundamentals, solving problems will be a lot easier.

### Foundation Building

Most students struggle and lose marks because they have foundational gaps. The best way to fix this, is by identifying the gaps and strengthen them with practice.

**Contact us:** [www.QETutoring.com](http://www.QETutoring.com) | (905) 257-9009

Location: Unit 5, 1020 Johnson's Lane, Mississauga.

We are located at Lorne Park, 8 minutes from Oakville and 10 minutes from Cawthra.



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