

US College Recruiting Guide

A resource to assist student athletes make informed decisions about their athletic and academic future.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
1. FIND A COLLEGE	3
2. STRUCTURE OF THE US COLLEGIATE SPORT SYSTEM	3
3. WHY CHOOSE COLLEGE ROWING?.....	4
4. PRE-COLLEGE – FROM AN ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE	4
5. PRE-COLLEGE – FROM A SPORTING PERSPECTIVE.....	7
6. PRE-COLLEGE – FROM A RECRUITMENT PERSPECTIVE	12
7. TIPS – HOW TO GET RECRUITED	12
8. TIPS – ATHLETIC RESUME	13
9. TIPS - HOW TO MAKE A COLLEGE DECISION.....	14
10. GOING TO COLLEGE	14
11. WHAT ARE SOME QUESTIONS I SHOULD ASK OF THE RECRUITER/COACH/COLLEGE?	16
12. OTHER NOTES & POINTS OF INTEREST	18
13. CONTACT DETAILS.....	19
14. WEB LINK SUMMARY	20

INTRODUCTION

Rowing Australia recognises there is more than one pathway for athletes to progress through their rowing journey one of these is the Australian pathway system, with the US student experience presenting another attractive option that you may wish to consider. This resource has been developed to assist you in understanding the US Collegiate system to assist you to make informed decisions about your potential athletic and academic future.

Understandably, the opportunities presented by an offer of a scholarship at a US university/college can be exciting for athletes and parents.

Rowing is one of 37 amateur sports offered within the US College system. This resource offers a guide into the system and looks to answer any questions you may have about the process of attending College in the US.

Australia is renowned for providing very skilled, tough, disciplined athletes from top quality programs.

1. FIND A COLLEGE

Information about every US education institution can be found using the following websites:

BigFuture
www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org

 **PETERSON'S**
www.petersons.com



A list of schools will be created based on the variables you provide such as sport, location, area of study etc.

2. STRUCTURE OF THE US COLLEGIATE SPORT SYSTEM

There are over 3,700 accredited post-secondary education institutions in the USA and there are three organisations involved in the delivery and governance of College sport, each with its own rules and regulations - the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). Rowing is primarily governed by the NCAA who oversees 'four-year' College and University sporting programs - this is the premier college competition in the USA and is comprised of three Divisions (I, II and III) with Division I being the most prestigious.



www.ncaa.org

Both Division I and Division II schools can offer athletic scholarships. Division III schools cannot offer athletic scholarships, however, they can offer other forms of financial assistance. Whilst an athletic scholarship can assist with the cost of attending the school, a student-athlete must first meet the academic requirements of the college.

Some of the most prestigious colleges in the USA participate in the NCAA, such as Stanford, Harvard, Yale and Princeton.



PLEASE NOTE: Men's Rowing is not recognised as an official NCAA sport and is instead governed by the Intercollegiate Rowing Association (IRA). As most men's rowing programs are conducted at NCAA registered Colleges, the IRA applies the majority of NCAA rules, requirements and guidelines to the rowing programs, *except where it is expressly stated they don't*. While all care has been made to provide accurate information in this document, please ensure you consult the following:

[Legislative - Intercollegiate Rowing Association](#)

3. WHY CHOOSE COLLEGE ROWING?

Rowing and studying in a US College program offers a unique experience, combining a competitive rowing schedule with a tertiary education in your chosen field of study. Student athletes are required to attend classes and study, as well as attend daily training, strength and conditioning/fitness sessions, rehabilitation, and compete in a number of intercollegiate regattas. They are provided with coaching, conditioning, training and world class facilities.

It is important to understand which rowing programs have the most suitable resources, schedule, facilities and coach access for your requirements.

In some cases, you may be better off staying in Australia and training with your state institute or academy. Refer to [What are some questions I should ask of the Recruiter/Coach/College](#) later in the document to ensure you are asking the right questions to fully understand the College program you are interested in.

4. PRE-COLLEGE – From an Academic perspective

A snapshot of the US Tertiary Education System

The US tertiary education system is based on a philosophy of developing and enhancing the education of students in a variety of areas, providing a wide base of education rather than focusing on one specific subject. Additionally, the NCAA's guiding principle is that student athletes are students first.

Division I Colleges generally have the biggest student bodies, manage the largest athletic budgets and offer the highest number of athletics scholarships. Division II schools provide growth opportunities through academic achievement, learning in high level athletics competition and a focus on service to the community.

A Bachelor degree course requires four years of study in the US - the first two years are general years of study and the remaining two years focus on a major area of study. In Australia, many Bachelor degrees can be obtained in three years.

In order to be accepted at a US College or University, you must have graduated with a high school certificate from an accredited Australian high school and have completed studies from Year 9 to Year 12 within a four year period. For example, if you began Year 9 in 2018, you must graduate Year 12 at the completion of 2021. You must provide the following documents in order for your initial eligibility to be assessed:

- Evidence of high school graduation; and
- Official transcripts for Year 9 – Year 12 only (Year 8 and earlier is not considered)

It is important to note there are different eligibility requirements for admission to a College rowing program - academic eligibility into the College itself and athletic eligibility into the NCAA:

- NCAA initial eligibility is separate from University admission
- Each institution makes its own admission decisions based on its own established criteria
- A student may be admitted to a College (meeting academic eligibility) but not meet NCAA initial eligibility standards, or
- A student may meet NCAA initial eligibility standards but not be admitted to a specific institution due to academic eligibility.

Therefore, meeting NCAA admission requirements does not guarantee admission into College - it simply determines whether you are able to participate in rowing during your freshman year. Students must follow each College's admission policies and apply directly to that College.

4.1 Public vs Private Institutions

The United States tertiary education system is divided into public and private institutions. A public institution is funded by the state or federal government, while private institutions are funded by the income and revenue they generate from enrolled students. Most private institutions tend to be more expensive and usually specialize in certain educational areas. Public institutions offer a wide variety of degrees and areas of study.

4.2 Yearly curriculum

The yearly curriculum at US Colleges is divided into either semesters or trimesters. A semester is when the academic year is divided into two periods, Fall (Autumn) and Spring. A trimester is divided into three academic periods. The academic year is conducted from the middle of August until the start of May (the following year) with a break for the Christmas period. Most academic institutions offer summer classes to their students.

4.3 Academic advisors

To assist student athletes with their academic progress, the athletic department will provide an academic adviser. Below are some of the responsibilities held by the academic adviser:

- Ensure all student athletes have completed the necessary academic requirements to stay eligible
- Assist student athletes in designing their class schedule
- Assist student athletes in registering for classes
- Provide student athletes with class tutors

4.4 Study Hall

The majority of institutions require student athletes to attend regular study hall hours. This ensures student athletes keep up to date with their academic work. Study hall hours are supervised to maintain the good study habits of student athletes.

4.5 NCAA Eligibility

The NCAA requires every prospective student-athlete to register with the NCAA Eligibility Centre in order to be considered for recruitment by any Division I or II College, go on an official visit, receive a written offer of financial aid or sign a National Letter of Intent. This enables them to ensure:

- 1) you have met amateurism standards (see section [5.1 Amateurism](#)); and
- 2) are academically prepared for college course work.

For Division I and Division II Colleges the NCAA sets academic initial-eligibility standards that take into account your GPA, standardized test scores, core courses taken in high school and the grades earned in those core courses.

An overview of the basic NCAA academic eligibility criteria is as follows:

DIVISION I COLLEGE	DIVISION II COLLEGE
16 core courses	16 core courses
4 years of English	4 years of English
3 years of Math (Algebra I or higher)	3 years of Math (Algebra I or higher)
2 years of Natural/Physical Science	2 years of Natural/Physical Science
1 additional year of English, Math or Natural/Physical science	3 additional years of English, Math or Natural/Physical science
2 years of Social Science	2 years of Social Science
4 additional years of core courses (from those listed above or foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy)	4 additional years of core courses (from those listed above or foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy)
Achieving a minimum 2.3 GPA	Achieving a minimum 2.2 GPA

Earn a combined minimum SAT score of 980 or sum ACT score of 75.

Earn a combined minimum SAT score of 1020 or sum ACT score of 79.

* Please note, these are *minimum* criteria and some Colleges may set higher standards for their student athletes.



- A summary can be found in the [International Eligibility Fact Sheet](#).
- NCAA initial-eligibility information for Australia, can be found [HERE](#).
- For more information on Division I Eligibility, see the [NCAA Division I Academic Requirements Fact Sheet](#)
- For more information on Division II Eligibility, see the [NCAA Division II Academic Requirements Fact Sheet](#)



4.6 Academic Terminology

GPA – Grade Point Average. A GPA is a statistic summary representing a student's performance over a stated period of time. Typically, it is calculated by adding all the numbered grades you have received and dividing them by the number of credits you have taken. In high school, it is simply a matter of tallying your grades and dividing that total by the number of classes. *GPA* is usually given on a scale from 0 (an F) to 4.0 (an A), though sometimes it goes higher than that, accounting for a grade of A+.

SAT – Scholastic Assessment Test. The SAT is a standardised test widely used for college admissions in the USA. Since it was debuted by the College Board in 1926, its name and scoring have changed several times, but is now commonly known as *SAT*.

ACT – American College Test. The ACT is a standardised test used for college admission in the USA. The ACT test covers four academic skill areas: English, Mathematics, reading and science reasoning. It also offers an optional direct writing test. It is accepted by all four-year colleges and universities in the USA, as well as more than 225 universities outside of the USA.

4.7 SAT vs ACT Testing

It is your choice as to which test you sit and either can be taken an unlimited number of times prior to full-time enrolment in College. For example, you may choose to sit both tests in Year 11 and repeat either again in Year 12 if you were not satisfied with the initial results.

4.8 A step-by-step guide to obtaining a scholarship and attending College in the US

4.8.1 Year 9 – PLAN

- Start planning now and ensure you are taking the right courses. See a detailed summary regarding NCAA-approved core courses in the [NCAA International Academic Standards Guide](#). For information relating to Australia, scroll to pages 37-54.
- Sign-up for a free Profile Page at www.eligibilitycenter.org for information on NCAA requirements

4.8.2 Year 10 – REGISTER

- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Centre
 - Go to www.eligibilitycenter.org
 - Follow the directions to register as a 'Prospective Student Athlete (International)'
 - Ensure you complete the amateurism section and pay the registration fee.
 - Your high school will need to send official copies of your transcripts/grade reports, officially stamped.
 - This process can take up to one year to finalise so it is very important you begin the process as soon as you can.
- If you fall behind academically, don't take short cuts to catch up. Ask your Student Pathway Advisor/Careers Advisor for help finding approved courses for you to take.
- Sign up to take the SAT or ACT exam.
- Start creating a list of potential Colleges that suit your needs, requirements and ability – this can be a lengthy and difficult process and something that will require research.

4.8.3 Year 11 – STUDY

- Ensure you are on track to complete the required number of NCAA-approved courses to graduate on time
- Take the SAT or ACT exam and submit your scores to the NCAA
- Ensure your sports participation information is correct in your Eligibility Center account
- At the end of the year, ask your Student Pathway Advisor/Careers Advisor to upload your official transcript to your NCAA Eligibility Center account

4.8.4 Year 12 – GRADUATE

- Complete your final NCAA-approved core courses as you prepare for graduation
- Take the ACT or SAT again, if necessary, and submit your scores to the NCAA Eligibility Center
- Beginning April 1 (for Autumn/Fall enrollees) or October 1 (for Winter/Spring enrollees), request your final amateurism certification in your NCAA Eligibility Center account.
 - Only students on NCAA Division I or II College request lists will receive a certification
- After you graduate, ask your Student Pathway Advisor/Careers Advisor to upload your final transcript with proof of graduation to your NCAA Eligibility Center account

4.9 US Courses Recognised by Australian Industries

It is important to understand that not all College courses and qualifications from the USA are recognised in Australia.

It is best to check in Australia whether or not the particular course you are considering will be recognised.

Individual subjects that you study in the USA **may** count towards a degree at an Australian university, but this depends upon the individual subjects and the universities (both in Australia and the USA).



Further information about what recognition is given to qualifications from the USA is available at [Department of Education, Skills & Employment](#)



The above tool is helpful when you are looking for a job with no specific registration, licensing, professional memberships or other industry requirements. If this is the case for you, contact an Australian state/territory government Overseas Qualifications Unit (OQU) to understand how your overseas qualification compares in Australia.

It is recommended that for occupations requiring specialised knowledge and skills in Australia that have registration, licensing, professional membership or other industry requirements, advice is taken from the occupation-specific authorities responsible for these.

5. PRE-COLLEGE – From a Sporting Perspective

5.1 Amateurism

Only amateur student-athletes are eligible to participate in US intercollegiate sport under the NCAA. When you register for a Certification Account with the NCAA Eligibility Center, you will be asked a series of questions about your sporting participation, contracts, and any payments received to determine your amateur status. In some instances, the NCAA Eligibility Center staff may need to gather additional information to complete this assessment.

While the NCAA maintains an amateur model, rules have evolved. Prospective student-athletes must not have been paid to compete in their sport or entered into professional contracts prior to full-time college enrolment.

5.2 Financial Aspect of Amateuism

Prospective student-athletes may receive financial support related to their sport prior to college. This is assessed in two key areas:

a) Actual and Necessary Expenses

Athletes may accept payments that cover legitimate costs associated with participation in their sport. It is strongly recommended that you keep records and receipts of all expenses.

The NCAA defines actual and necessary expenses as including:

- Meals
- Accommodation
- Clothing, equipment and supplies
- Coaching and instruction
- Health/medical insurance
- Transportation
- Medical and physical therapy
- Facility usage
- Entry fees
- Other reasonable expenses directly related to participation

Payments exceeding these expenses, particularly where they resemble salary or prize money, may impact your eligibility and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

b) Name, Image and Likeness (NIL)

Under current NCAA rules, prospective student-athletes may earn income through the use of their Name, Image and Likeness (NIL). This can include sponsorships, endorsements, social media activity, coaching, or personal business ventures.

However, NIL activities must not:

- Be directly tied to athletic performance or results
- Be contingent on enrolling at a specific NCAA institution
- Be provided as an inducement for recruitment

All NIL arrangements should be carefully considered and, where possible, discussed with the compliance office at the recruiting institution.

c) National and State Sporting Body Support

Financial support received from organisations such as Rowing Australia, National Institutes or Academies (e.g. NSWIS, QAS), State Sporting Organisations, Regional Academies, clubs, or competition organisers is common.

This support does not automatically affect eligibility but will be reviewed based on its structure and purpose. Payments that go beyond actual and necessary expenses, or that are not clearly linked to participation, may impact amateur status.

Before accepting any payments, entering agreements, or engaging in NIL activities, you are strongly encouraged to check with the athletics compliance office at the NCAA institution recruiting you.

5.3 Recruiting Calendar

The NCAA defines recruiting as “any solicitation of prospective student-athletes or their parents by an institutional staff member or by a representative of the institution’s athletics interests for the purpose of securing a prospective student-athlete’s enrolment and ultimate participation in the institution’s intercollegiate athletics program.” Keep in mind that the first priority for rowing programs in the US College system is the performance of their team.

If you have been contacted by a coach from the US, they are primarily interested in bringing in the best athletes they can recruit to increase the success of their own teams/programs - this may or may not fit in with your own rowing goals or personal needs and expectations.

NCAA member schools limit recruiting to certain periods during the year. Recruiting calendars promote the wellbeing of college-bound student-athletes and ensure fairness among schools by defining certain periods during the year in which recruiting may or may not occur in a particular sport.



For **rowing-specific recruiting calendars**, visit the [NCAA Recruiting Calendar](#) site



5.4 Key Terms in the NCAA Recruiting Period

The **NCAA Evaluation Period** is a specific time of year when college coaches are allowed to watch an athlete compete in person or visit their school. However, coaches are not allowed to communicate with that athlete (or parents) off the College campus. Coaches can sit on the bank during a recruit's training, as well as visit the recruit's school. This gives College coaches a chance to talk to your coach, teachers or your Student Pathway Advisor/Careers Advisor to get a better understanding of your character. After the visit, the coach may call or email you and let them know how their experience was at the school, training or regatta.

The **NCAA Contact Period** is a time when all communication between athletes and coaches are open. Coaches can email, text, call, direct message and generally contact athletes and their parents through any NCAA-approved method. In-person contact can occur on the College campus, as well as at regattas and the recruit's school and home. At this point, the communication floodgates are open - take advantage of this opportunity to get unlimited access to talk to coaches.

The **NCAA Dead Period** is the most restrictive recruiting period. During a dead period, **college coaches are not permitted to have any in-person recruiting contact with prospective student-athletes or their parents, either on or off campus**. This includes contact at college campuses, high schools, training environments, competitions, or any other location.

Although in-person recruiting activity is prohibited, **recruiting communication does not stop entirely**. Coaches and prospective student-athletes **may continue to communicate through permitted electronic means**, such as phone calls, emails, text messages, and social media, in accordance with NCAA recruiting rules. The Dead Period is intended to limit in-person recruiting activity and provide prospective student-athletes with time and space to consider their options without the pressure of campus visits or face-to-face recruiting engagements

The **NCAA Quiet Period** is a recruiting period during which college coaches may not have face-to-face recruiting contact with prospective student-athletes or their parents off the college campus, and may not watch a prospective student-athlete compete or visit their high school.

During a quiet period, in-person recruiting contact is permitted only on the college campus, such as during an official or unofficial visit. Coaches may continue to communicate with prospective student-athletes through phone calls, emails, text messages, and other approved electronic communication methods.

The Quiet Period is designed to reduce off-campus recruiting activity while still allowing ongoing communication and on-campus engagement between prospective student-athletes and college programs

5.5 Official & Unofficial Visits

Any visit to a College campus by a College-bound student-athlete or his/her parents, paid for by the College, is an 'official visit'. Visits paid for by the prospective student-athlete or their parents are 'unofficial visits'.

- **Official visits** – the college can pay for transportation to and from the college, accommodation, meals, as well as reasonable entertainment expenses including three tickets to home sporting events.
- **Unofficial visits** – the only expense that a college may pay for is three tickets to a home sporting event.

5.6 Scholarships

NCAA schools provide nearly \$3.5 billion in athletic scholarships annually to more than 180,000 student-athletes. Division I schools may provide you with multi-year scholarships, whilst Division II schools must provide you with a one-year scholarship.

If your College plans to reduce or not renew your aid, you must be notified in writing by July 1 and provided with an opportunity to appeal.

In most cases, it is the Head Coach that decides who receives a scholarship, the scholarship amount and whether it will be renewed. The table below details the scholarship types and financial aid available:

	DIVISION I	DIVISION II	DIVISION III
TYPE	Multi-year, cost-of-attendance athletic scholarships available	Partial athletic scholarship	No athletic Scholarships
AID	57% of student-athletes receive athletic aid	62% of student-athletes receive athletic aid	80% of student-athletes receive non-athletic (= academic) aid

Source: <http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/media-center/ncaa-101/our-three-divisions>



5.7 Examples of Scholarships

Full scholarships are relatively limited. Each sport program has a specific number of scholarships available, set by College Athletic Associations.

These scholarships are typically divided across the squad – for example, a program may allocate a number of partial scholarships rather than only offering full scholarships, allowing more athletes to receive some level of financial support.

Each academic year, scholarships are reviewed by the athletic department, and scholarship levels may increase, decrease, or remain the same based on athletic performance, academic standing, and team needs.

For example, an athlete may receive a 25% scholarship in their first year and, based on strong performance academically and within the program, may be offered increased support in subsequent years.

A full scholarship (often referred to as a “full ride”) will typically include, but not exceed, the following components:

- Full or near-full coverage of tuition and compulsory fees
- Full or partial coverage of required textbooks and course materials
- Room and board in an institution’s dormitory or an equivalent stipend for student-athletes who live off campus
- On-campus meal plan or an equivalent stipend for student-athletes who live off campus

In addition to the above, institutions may also provide further athlete support within current NCAA guidelines, which can include:

- Cost of attendance stipends (to assist with incidental living expenses)
- Health insurance (in some programs)
- Access to academic, medical, and performance support services

This represents the typical maximum level of financial support an institution may allocate to a student-athlete in one academic year, noting that the structure and inclusions can vary slightly between institutions

5.8 Different Types of Scholarship Offers & Support

It is important to note that Ivy League Colleges do not offer sport scholarships, but instead offer funding on a financial needs basis. These Colleges assess family financial circumstances (typically using multiple years of financial documentation) and determine tuition contributions accordingly.

5.8.1 Full Ride Scholarship Offer

A full ride covers the major costs of attending college such as tuition, room and board, books, and some course-related fees. The term “full ride” does not necessarily mean for the full four years. Scholarship offers are typically reviewed on an annual basis and may be renewed, adjusted, or withdrawn depending on performance and program needs.

5.8.2 Partial Scholarship Offer

While not a full ride, a partial scholarship offer can still cover a significant portion of college costs (or in some cases, a smaller contribution). For example, one student-athlete may receive support covering tuition, while another may receive support for accommodation or books.

5.8.3 Preferred Walk-on Offer

Not all offers come with a financial component. A preferred walk-on offer means the coach would like the athlete on the team and will typically guarantee a roster spot, but cannot (or chooses not to) offer financial assistance initially.

Preferred walk-ons may be considered for scholarship support in subsequent years, but this is not guaranteed. Some student-athletes will choose this pathway at larger or more competitive programs over scholarship offers at smaller institutions.

5.8.4 Recruited Walk-on Offer

A recruited walk-on offer indicates interest from the coach, however there is no financial assistance and no guaranteed roster position. The athlete is expected to earn their place on the team through additional assessment (e.g. training camp or trials).

5.8.5 Un-Recruited Walk-on Offer

This is when a student-athlete gains admission to a College independently and seeks to join the team through an open tryout process. In most cases, there will be some level of communication with the coach prior to enrolment to confirm the opportunity to trial.

There is a lot to consider with any type of walk-on pathway, particularly if scholarship offers from other institutions are available.

5.9 Budgeting

Regardless of the level of financial support provided, it is important to understand the overall cost of the College experience. Actual costs will vary depending on the level of scholarship support, the location of the institution, and personal expenses not covered by the rowing program.

As an Australian student-athlete, additional costs such as international airfares, visas, and travel should also be considered.

6. PRE-COLLEGE – From a Recruitment perspective

6.1 Methods of recruitment

6.1.1 College Recruiter Approaches Potential Student-Athlete

For some potential student-athletes, a College coach will directly approach, or 'scout' you. This can occur at underage International Events (i.e. World Championships), National Events (i.e. National Championships, Head of the River) and/or State Events (i.e. State Championship Regattas).

The relevant College coach may continue to assess your athletic attributes through other events once you have been identified and once they know your competition schedule. This could be conducted in person or by video.

6.1.2 Potential Student-Athlete Approaches College

College coaches receive hundreds of emails each week regarding recruitment for scholarships. It is vital that you are able to grab their attention. For further information, please refer to [8. TIPS - How to get recruited.](#)

The subject line of your email should have your name, current grade and potentially a key stat. For example, '*John Bowes: Australia - Year 11, 5:49 2k erg*'. Make sure the email includes your current athletic resume and a highlight video, so the coach can conduct an initial evaluation.

Tailor the email to the individual coach and avoid creating a mass email to all coaches. While keeping the email brief, you may want to include why you are interested in that particular College's program. A follow up call to the coach after sending an email is recommended - prepare well for the call. Do some research about the College, including past performances and why you are interested.

6.1.3 Engagement of an Athletic Placement Company

There are a variety of generic and sport-specific third-party Athletic Placement Companies that can assist in the process of recruitment on a 'fee for service' basis. This service includes evaluating your athletic and academic abilities, providing guidance around collegiate rules and regulations, assisting with the development of your athletic resume and trying to locate or find potential Colleges and scholarships.

It is crucial that before you provide payment to a company you conduct your own research and fully understand the terms and conditions of the contract.

7. TIPS – How to get recruited

1. Understand what Division and College standard best reflects your current developmental status from both an athletic and academic perspective.
 - Discuss with your family, coach, teachers, club, State Sporting Organisation, State Institute or Academy, RA, and/or Athlete Wellbeing & Engagement Officer to help in assisting you identify your current and potential athletic and academic goals.
2. Start researching Colleges and compile a list that reflect your developmental needs. Start with a bigger list of Colleges and narrow it down as you progress.
3. Gather all your personal information regarding athletic and academic capabilities and compile this into a resume. For further information about this, please refer to [8. Tips – Athletic Resume.](#)
4. Start communicating with College coaches.

It is important at this time that you understand the NCAA recruiting rules and recruiting calendar. It is also essential you understand the academic requirements to be eligible.

8. TIPS – Athletic Resume

Athletic Resumes are considered one of the most important aspects for a prospective student-athlete and a well-written resume can broaden your chances of obtaining a scholarship.

It is imperative the resume captures the attention of the College coach, is professional and has all the required detail, but is simple, relevant and concise (1-2 pages).

It is critical that you proof-read your resume to ensure correct grammar and punctuation before it is sent to a College coach.

Triple check all details and ask a parent, coach or Student Pathway Advisor/Careers Advisor to look over the document for you. Although this should be a professional document, you also want your resume to stand out – be creative to set you apart from every other resume the coach has received. This could be achieved by the addition of a photo of you in competition or receiving an award – remember you are competing against the rest of the world for a scholarship and highlighting what separates you from the rest is vital.

The content of your resume has to be informative but precise and should include the following:

Personal details and information.

- Name
- Date of birth
- Phone number (with country and area code)
- Email address
- Hometown

Education

- Name of High School/University
- Date of Graduation (or anticipated date of graduation)
- Accreditation you received (eg Higher School Certificate, Victorian Certificate of Education etc)
- List of subjects completed from Year 9 to Year 12.
- SAT/ACT score (or date you intend to take the test)
- Potential core academic course and desired major

Athletic capabilities and achievements

- Anthropometrics – height, weight and arm span
- 2k erg results (and any other testing results (eg 5k, 30 min) and measurements against RA benchmarks)
- Regatta results
- Highlights, achievements or awards.

Diversity is important, so also list your achievements in other sports. For example, if you made it to the state level of competition in the 200m freestyle or came second nationally in the long jump, be sure to include that information.

References

Provide at least three references – each person can provide either a written reference or you can include their contact details at the end of your resume. You should include an athletic (coach), academic (teacher) and character (esteemed figure) reference.

Make sure you follow up once you have sent off your resume – this can be a simple email or phone call to check they have received it. Coaches are very busy and receive hundreds of resumes so being proactive and following up demonstrates your enthusiasm and drive.

9. TIPS - How to make a College decision

It is important you have all the information required to make an informed decision. Section [11. What are some questions I should ask of the Recruiter/Coach/College?](#) should help you collate additional information that may not be publicly available.

If a College has made an offer, or is likely to make an offer, it is recommended you go on a **campus visit**. Seeing the campus is a great way to understand if the College is a good fit for you. You get to see the College's culture, infrastructure and meet with the coach in person. This gives you the ability to gain more information and insights to help with making a decision.

You should compare the financial aid/scholarship packages that have been offered to and negotiated with you, during the recruiting process.

Once you have gathered all the information regarding a relevant College, overlay this information with your athletic and academic goals to determine whether this College has the right environment to assist you with achieving your goals.

10. GOING TO COLLEGE

10.1 Visas

Applying for and securing a student visa is another significant task during the recruitment process. Once you have been formally accepted into an institution, you will receive documentation required to apply for an **F-1 student visa**, which allows you to study in the United States for the duration of your academic program.

The F-1 visa requires you to maintain full-time enrolment and remain in good academic standing. It also allows limited employment, typically restricted to **on-campus roles** or approved employment under specific visa provisions.

You will not be able to complete the visa application until you have received your **official College letter of acceptance**. Communication from a coach alone is not sufficient. The College will issue you a **Form I-20**, which outlines your program of study, duration, and institution details.

Once you have received your I-20, you will need to pay the **SEVIS fee** and complete the visa application process. This includes submitting required documentation and attending an interview at a US Embassy or Consulate. Processing times can vary, so it is recommended to begin the process as early as possible. A summary of the application process is as follows:

ACTION	
STEP 1	Receipt of the official College letter of admission
STEP 2	Pay the SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) fee and ensure your details are registered
STEP 3	Receive your Form I-20 from the College (issued after admission and financial certification)
STEP 4	Complete the online DS-160 visa application form
STEP 5	Book and attend a visa interview at your nearest US Embassy or Consulate. Ensure you bring all required documentation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Passport• Form I-20• DS-160 confirmation• SEVIS fee receipt• Proof of financial support

- Passport-sized photo
- Admission letter

10.2 Employment

Student athletes on F-1 visas are permitted to work on-campus up to 20 hours per week during regular full-time semesters and more than 20 hours during official school breaks.

On-campus work is typically at locations such as the cafeteria, library or admissions office, and you are usually employed directly by the university.

After the first academic year in the US, athletes with F-1 visas may be eligible for limited off-campus employment under specific programs, while still maintaining on-campus work where permitted:

1. Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

- Training must be directly related to your field of study
- Can be full-time or part-time, paid or unpaid
- Must be approved by your institution and typically form part of your academic program (may or may not carry academic credit depending on the course structure)

2. Optional Practical Training (OPT)

- Employment must be directly related to your field of study
- Maximum of 12 months in total
- Can be completed during or after your studies (pre-completion or post-completion OPT)
- Any OPT used during your studies will reduce the available post-graduation allowance. For example, if you complete a three-month internship using OPT during your degree, you will have nine months of OPT remaining after graduation

3. STEM Optional Practical Training Extension (STEM OPT Extension)

- Students studying eligible science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) degrees may be eligible for a further 24-month extension of their OPT

The international student office at your College will assist in navigating and approving employment arrangements and will provide the most up to date guidance regarding visa and employment regulations.

10.3 Schedule

Time management is a key component of College success – juggling classes, training, work and competition, your schedule can be very busy.

It is important to understand the expectations of your training activities as the NCAA limit and monitor the time commitment of these activities each week.

Activities that are considered athletically related activities are:

- Strength and conditioning
- Competition
- Training
- Supplemental workouts (such as yoga etc); and
- Film review

During a typical day, you can expect to spend anywhere from four to nine hours on activities associated with rowing.

Activities that are NOT considered towards the athletically related activity limit are:

- Academic meetings
- Community service
- Sports psychologist sessions
- Injury treatment/prevention (massage, physio etc)
- Team fundraising
- Prospective student-athlete host duties
- Compliance meetings
- Professional development
- Study Hall
- Media activities; and
- Nutritionist sessions

10.4 Medical Cover

The NCAA requires Colleges to certify that their student-athletes have coverage for medical expenses incurred from athletically related injuries. This coverage may be provided through personal insurance, a basic accident medical policy maintained by the College, or through an institutional self-insurance plan.

In addition, the NCAA maintains a **Catastrophic Injury Insurance Program**, which provides coverage for student-athletes who are injured while participating in intercollegiate athletic activity, with expenses exceeding a high financial threshold (generally around \$90,000 USD, subject to periodic updates).

You should ensure the following before agreeing to compete in US College athletic activity:

- You are covered by an appropriate medical insurance policy and understand any deductible or out-of-pocket requirements
- The College has confirmed that an insurance policy is in place and active
- Confirmation that coverage will remain active for the duration of your participation in college-level NCAA sport

11. WHAT ARE SOME QUESTIONS I SHOULD ASK OF THE RECRUITER/COACH/COLLEGE?

When speaking with College coaches or recruiters, it is important to be pre-prepared to ensure you are asking the right questions to fully understand the College program you are interested in. These will differ from person to person based on your priorities and goals, both from a rowing and academic perspective. The following questions may prove helpful in shaping your conversations and guiding your list of questions.

11.1 General Questions

- Why should I pick your program over another?
- What is a typical day for an athlete? What does a normal training week look like?
- In what areas is this College better than the options we have available in Australia? What can you offer that isn't available in Australia?
- Does the university/college support athletes seeking selection in the Australian Rowing Team, including flexibility to complete ergometer testing and other event requirements?
- Have other Australian athletes been part of the rowing program at the College?

11.2 Academic & Entitlement Questions

11.2.1 Scholarship

- Specifically, what expenses does the financial aid and/or scholarship package being offered cover? (tuition, board, meals, books, special assessments, supplies, rowing uniform etc)
- Is financial aid available for summer school?
- If I'm injured, what happens to my financial aid?
- What conditions are used to determine the annual renewal of a scholarship?
- How many credits are required for me to keep my financial aid?
- For what reasons could I possibly lose my scholarship?
- Do you typically increase scholarship amounts after freshman year?

11.2.2 Study or Classes

- Are there team/athletic study halls/tutoring?
- Am I allowed time to make up classes and tests missed because of the competition schedule?
- Do athletes attend summer school to reduce the in-season course load?

11.2.3 Study Major

- Are any athletes majoring in _____?
- Will I be able to major in _____?
- What is the graduation rate of the team/program?
- Are the qualifications received in _____ internationally recognised?

11.2.4 Accommodation

- What accommodation would I have access to? (on/off campus, with teammates/regular students, location to college/training facilities/shops etc)
- Is the accommodation provided between semesters?

- Are there separate dorms/dining/work out facilities for the athletes? Are athletes required to use them?

11.2.5 Medical

- What medical expenses are covered by the College?
- What access will I have to medical practitioners?
- What level of support will I be provided with in terms of physiotherapy, massage therapist, physicians, nutritionist, and recovery physiologists?
- Can I receive injury advice from my National Sporting Organisation?
- What are the injury rates and types within this rowing program?
- What happens to my place in the squad if my injury/illness is prolonged?

11.2.6 Equipment

- What equipment and apparel costs are covered and what will I be required to provide?

11.2.7 Employment

- What are my opportunities for employment while I'm a student?
- Does the College offer assistance in locating internship opportunities?
- Does the College offer assistance with job placement and resume building?

11.2.8 Wellbeing

- What policies do you have in place around athlete wellbeing and engagement matters?

11.3 Athletic Questions

11.3.1 Coaching

- Who is the program coach? What is their coaching record? What is their coaching philosophy?
- How would you describe your coaching style?
- What kind of athletes perform best with your coaching style?
- What makes you different from other coaches in your Division?
- What kind of athletes succeed in your program?
- How do you balance athlete development and wellbeing with the importance to win?
- Have you ever recruited/coached international or Australian athletes before? What was your experience?
- When does your coaching contract end? Do you see yourself here in 4 years?

11.3.2 Training

- What would a typical schedule look like?
- How many kilometres are being covered each week?
- What other sessions are completed off-water?

11.3.3 Competition

- Do freshmen compete?
- How many regattas do you envisage me attending?
- What is the travel schedule like?

11.3.4 Current Team

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the team?
- What is the biggest need of the team?
- Which boat do you see me competing in?
- What is the team GPA?

11.3.5 Recruiting

- How many other students are you looking at to recruit right now?
- What are you looking for in an athlete?
- Where do you rank me on your list of possible recruits?
- What is your recruiting timeline?

11.3.6 Obligations or Restrictions

- Are there any summer obligations?

- Can I compete in other sports?
- Can I travel back home to Australia for Christmas?

11.3.7 Team Policies

- How are conflicts between academic and athletic commitments handled?
- How accommodating are faculty staff with balancing athlete work-loads?
- What is the program policy on athletes missing training/regattas to attend National Team duties?

12. OTHER NOTES & POINTS OF INTEREST

- Perhaps the most important thing to consider is finding the right match academically, athletically and otherwise – the culture shock of living abroad and away from your support system can be very challenging.
- Advice we have received from US College alumni suggests that getting to know the campus and the town as soon as you arrive in the US is one of the most important things you can do. This reduces the stress of finding your way around on the first day of classes. Wander around, orientate yourself, and figure out what your commute will be between classes, the boatshed, shops etc. Talking to the locals helps make the process easier – not only your peers, but also students and teammates who have been around for a few years.
- Experience shows that US programs make very late determinations about travel and representation at international events such as Henley, based upon season results of the crew. This results in a high level of uncertainty about athlete's ability to commit to the trialling process for national teams, if invited.
- Use the resources available to you, in particular, mentors and counsellors. There are people whose job it is to shepherd you through the processes and complexities of college administration.



13. CONTACT DETAILS

The role of Rowing Australia's Pathways Transition Manager, John Bowes, primarily focuses on better understanding the local and US environments in order to develop and maintain better connections with student athletes based in the US. John has established relationships with Head Coaches and Recruiters in numerous College Rowing Programs, providing him with a broad knowledge of the principles and expectations of each program, how they're run and the academic standards of each College. John's information and advice will be invaluable for athletes and parents seeking information when considering a US College experience and we recommend you contact John as your first point of call for accurate advice and information.

John Bowes
Rowing Australia – Pathways Transition Manager
Email: jbowes@rowingaustralia.com.au
Phone: +61 439 958 367



Additionally, the following Pathway network contacts can provide guidance and information:

ROLE	NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
Head of Pathways -Rowing Australia	Jason Lane	jlane@rowingaustralia.com.au	0458 769 631
Pathways Transition Manager and US Men's Lead Coach	John Bowes	jbowes@rowingaustralia.com.au	0439 958 367
National Talent ID and US Based Women's Lead Coach	Hally Chapman	hchapman@rowingaustralia.com.au	0400 781 276

It is also important to note the following DFAT and Consular details as essential contacts for emergency and crisis situations once you've arrived in the US. These contacts will be vital if you:

- Require a replacement passport
- Have been the victim of assault or a crime
- Require details of local doctors, hospitals, lawyers etc
- Require support in cases of terrorism, natural disasters etc
- Require access to voting services

CONTACT	DETAILS
Smartraveller	Latest information and advice to stay safe overseas https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/
Embassy/Consulate contacts	US locations 24-hour consular emergency assistance: +61 2 6261 3305 from overseas

14. WEB LINK SUMMARY

AREA	LINK
Structure of the US Collegiate Sport System	<p>NCAA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing a College • Scholarships • International Academic Requirements • International Academic Standards (scroll to pages 37-53 for AUS) • Eligibility • Grade Point Average (GPA) • Amateurism • Recruiting - NCAA.org • Recruiting Calendar • Transfer Terms <p>Intercollegiate Rowing Association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative — Intercollegiate Rowing Association
Pre-College: ACADEMIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Guide.pdf • International Eligibility Fact Sheet • International Country-Specific Information - NCAA.org • NCAA Division II Academic Requirements Fact Sheet
Medical Cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCAA Catastrophic Injury Insurance Program
SAT vs ACT Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT information • SAT information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current research and reputable articles comparing the SAT and ACT to help determine which exam best aligns with your child's strengths and future academic goals.
Checking qualifications are recognised in AUS	Department of Education, Skills & Employment
US Visa Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). • Apply for your Student Visa - U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Australia
Emergency travel contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smartraveller • Embassy/Consulate locations

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PRINCIPAL PARTNER

HANCOCK PROSPECTING

MAJOR PARTNER

