

NUS COLLEGE AY2024 APPLICATION ESSAY QUESTION & DECLARATION

III. Demonstration of How You Think

Write an original essay of about **600 words** responding to one of the following questions. Please indicate, by writing the question number, which one you are answering. Use new paragraphs where appropriate to clearly present your thinking; ample space is provided.

Your essay should give us some insight into you and your thought processes—and therefore whether you are a good fit for NUS College. Thus, your essay should be your own work. Note that the National University of Singapore expects academic integrity of all its students (including prospective students); you can find guidelines on what constitutes plagiarism (including the use of generative Artificial Intelligence) [here](#). Not only does using AI constitute plagiarism, but doing so results in essays that we consider generic and uncommitted, and unable to give us insights into you and your thinking processes. We know this from our rigorous testing of these questions. In the next section, you will have to affirm that your responses are your own, or declare the help you have received.

Not only should your essay be original, but we urge you not to reuse essays you have written for other occasions and purposes.

All the questions typically ask you to:

- demonstrate how you think, about a specific subject or example;
- and therefore, more generally, how you think thinking works.

You will have to provide the example, which can come from anywhere (pop culture, everyday life, the academic realm) and from any discipline (whether the humanities, social sciences, sciences, etc). If you do choose a technical subject, you should write about it using more generalist language. On the whole, you should assume an intelligent but non-specialist audience. Because we also want to know about you and your interests, you should use a personal and individualized example. Therefore, your essay may first need to explain or narrate your personal relationship to your example.

Following your explanation of how you came by your example, we would then like you to be, in roughly equal measures, analytical and reflective.

- Being *analytical* may require you to consider various facets of an issue, but it usually means that, overall, you take a firm stance, and have a clear, reasoned, committed, and distinct view and argument.
- Being *reflective* means that you are able to carefully draw some larger conclusions that go beyond the personal, or that you consider the status of your own analysis.

Here are the two questions, from which you should choose one:

1. What does it mean to you to be “intellectual”? What idea, topic, or subject are you most intellectual about, and what does “being intellectual” about it entail? Do you think there are some (and only some) subjects that warrant and even deserve an intellectual approach?
2. Let’s imagine that you somehow gain the power and ability to eliminate all or some types of ambiguities from this world. Drawing on one or more specific encounters you have had with ambiguities, tell us what you would do, and why.

Compulsory, ~600 words.

IV. Declaration

Ideally, you should have prepared your written responses by yourself. In the textbox below, please declare this by typing out this statement: "I affirm that my responses represent my own work." If, however, you have used sources (e.g., books, websites) and/or tools (e.g., ChatGPT) to help with your writing and thinking, you should include citations of these sources, as well as a description of what queries you posed to ChatGPT. Likewise, if you received help from a mentor, please declare and describe the help as well. But there is no need to declare your use of spelling or grammar checkers.

Compulsory, up to 600 words.