

# Yale Office of Undergraduate Admissions

## Recommendation Letters

Letters of recommendation from counselors and teachers serve a crucial role in a whole-person evaluation process. Through written testimony, educators share relevant insights into an applicant's academic achievements, character, values, and contributions to both the school community and classroom dynamic. They help admissions officers understand a student's progress thus far and how the student could continue developing in the future. Please consult the advice included below as you write your recommendation letters for your students so that you can best advocate for them in the admissions process, both at Yale and elsewhere.

### Requirements

- 1 **counselor recommendation**
  - Preferably school counselor
  - School official or academic advisor also accepted
- +
- 2 **teacher recommendations**
  - Core academic subjects (English, Math, Foreign Language, Science, or Social Studies)
  - Preferably junior and/or senior year
- =
- 3 **total recommendations**

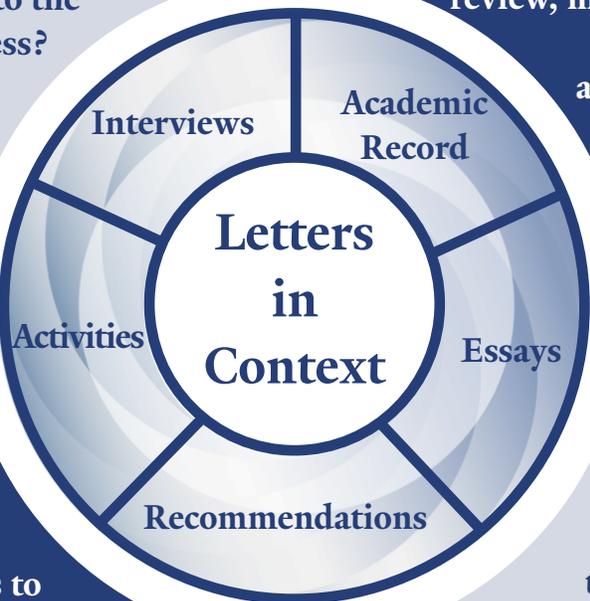
### Should my student submit a supplementary recommendation?

Most successful applicants only submit the required recommendations

Additional recommendations must provide new information and dimension to a candidacy

The most common extra recommenders are CBO/CAO staff, club advisors, & research mentors

How does my letter fit into the process?



It helps to contextualize

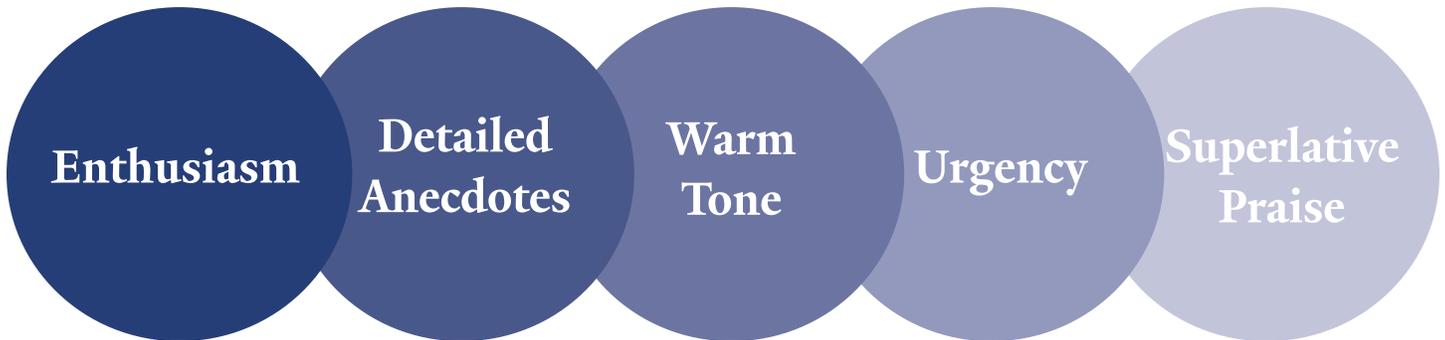
Yale conducts what is known as a whole-person application review, meaning that we consider each individual aspect of the application within the context of the application as a whole. One score or grade can't make or break an application. Letters of recommendation are an important piece of a much larger puzzle.

The recommendation letter will help to piece together the context. A counselor can write about their experiences with a student, but they can also touch on other components of their application (activities, academics, tests, etc.) that they think might benefit from further explanation or contextualization. We consider all information presented.



# How do I write an effective letter of recommendation?

5 key elements that admissions officers look for in a recommendation:



What should you mention when you talk about . . .

Academics	Personal Qualities	School Context
Curriculum rigor	Classroom engagement	Campus setting
Intellectual curiosity	Leadership	Available resources
Growth	Inclusivity	Curriculum type
Responses to challenges	Peer interactions	Commute
Noteworthy achievements	Emotional intelligence	Student performance
Superlative distinctions	Superlative traits	COVID-19 disruptions

## Letter format & key information to include

1-2 pages in total

Bullet-point or prose

Information about yourself & your role

Frequency of meetings with the student

### Don't forget!

Check to make sure your contact information is correct. Admissions officers may contact you with questions. You can always call our office (203-432-9316) to speak with an admissions officer directly if you would like to provide further clarification or include an addendum to your letter.

