



There is a lot of information to read here, lots of the questions that you may ask me as we go through the recruiting journey together are normally answered here, so please take your time and read carefully.

Eligibility to play

The NCAA, NAIA and the NJCAA are the organisations which govern the academic institutions which can offer **scholarships** they have very strict rules regarding your **academic eligibility** and your **amateur status**. Until you have submitted all of the correct documents and completed the processes listed below and until a school actually contacts the Clearing House to express an interest in recruiting you, you will not get a definitive answer regarding your eligibility.

Very briefly to be play at a Division 1 NCAA school you should have averaged good grades during the last 4 years of your high school and score a decent score on the ACT or SAT, which is normally quite easy to do if you found high school not too difficult. To be eligible for a Division 2 NCAA school you must record a minimum of a 820 on the SAT (combined score on the Verbal and Maths section) or sum score of 68 on the ACT. To play at a NAIA school you need a minimum of a 860 on the SAT or 18 on the ACT. To play at a Junior College you must have graduated which means you completed secondary school and sat your exams.

As an International student from a country that does not speak English as it's first language you will also need to sit the **TOEFL**.

What you have to do

This process should start before your last year of high school and any school recruiting you will only show a serious interest when you have started this registration.

- A) Register with the College Board to prepare for and take the SAT exam or the ACT.
- B) Register with the NCAA clearing house, which can be done and is valid for 3 years.

SAT Exam or ACT Exam

This exam is necessary for all high school/secondary school students applying to US college. Download practice exams at first opportunity and get started studying for the real thing.

The official web site of the SAT exam,

<http://www.collegeboard.com>

The exam dates are set for the entire year and you need to register at least 4 weeks before the exam date to gain entry.

<http://sat.collegeboard.com/register/sat-international-dates>

During the online application process there will be sections of the form that will not be relevant or you can not complete as the form is also used for athletes from the USA. However it is important to ensure that when you complete the section send scores you not only include schools that have requested info (i.e. that are seriously recruiting you) but you must enter the **9999** code which sends your scores directly to the clearing house. You can update your profile once registered so the main thing is to ensure you have paid for and registered for the exam. The test costs about 40 Euro's and you will find your nearest test centre on the website.

Some students find the ACT Exam easier follow this link for the ACT

<http://www.actstudent.org/regist/index.html>

The NCAA Clearing House

It is necessary for every high school student to register with this organisation.

Official Web site of the new NCAA clearing house

http://eligibilitycenter.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.html

NCAA Eligibility Center

In accordance with NCAA academic requirements, the eligibility center will certify all student-athletes who wish to participate in NCAA Divisions I or II athletics. Regardless of when a student graduated from secondary school, that student will be held to the initial-eligibility standards in place at the time of the student's initial enrolment at any collegiate institution.

Student Records Must Be Sent To:

NCAA Eligibility Center

Certifications Processing

P.O. Box 7136

Indianapolis, Indiana 46207-7136

877/262-1492 (Domestic callers only)

317/223-0700 (International callers)

What To Send To The Eligibility Center

The student's original records in the language of issue or true copies as certified by an appropriate educational authority (foreign and United States). All documents (transcripts, annual grade reports, certificates, statement of marks) representative of secondary-school education should be sent to the

eligibility center. If in doubt, include the documents; Complete, literal word-for-word, line-by-line certified English translations for all documents in the same format as the original documents; and a copy of the student's SAT or ACT scores (must be sent directly from the testing agency).

The recruiting process

If you are lucky enough to have schools recruiting you then your coach and advisors should be helping you through this process. There are many rules that govern how and when college coaches can contact you. Essentially the coaches will be trying to sell you the idea of their college and you want to 'buy' the college that suits you best. It is like going to buy a pair of shoes - the best looking shoes might seem great at first but when you have to wear them every day for 4 years they give you blisters and those shoes that didn't look appealing to start with were really very comfortable were actually a better choice.

What happens first?

At the start of the recruiting process you will receive information from the school, this will mainly be via email, this will include lots of information about the school, the coaches and the players on the team including any international players. If there are any players from your country you should ask the coach for the players e-mail address so you can get a players perspective.

Included in this information package there will often be a questionnaire which you will have to fill out and send back with details of your school, club and playing statistics.

First Contact

The coaches will then try to contact you either by phone or e-mail. Coaches are not allowed to call you until your final year of High school or your senior year (the last year of school before you go) but they can e-mail with you before then.

When they can call you coaches are limited to 1 phone call a week but you can call them as many times as you like. Coaches are also allowed to use facebook and may chose to contact you on facebook, be aware that they will observe all that is on your pages! Likewise you may find it a good way to get to know them more.

Coaches Visits

If the coach likes your video tape or has heard good things about you they may want to come over and see you play live for your club or national team. If their visit is in a 'contact period' they will want to also come to speak with you and your parents in what is known as a 'home visit'. When they come to your home they will simply try to get to know you and give you a chance to get to know them a little. I suggest you write out a list of questions to ask them before they arrive as you might forget important questions in the excitement of the visit!! When the coach comes to your game or practice you should tell your coach they are coming as they might want to speak with him or he might want to speak with the US coaches.

Official Visits

Official visits are an invitation from the college that is recruiting you to come and see their college in person. The college pays for everything involved in the trip -airfare, accommodation, meals and all transport while you are there. You are allowed to take 5 official visits to colleges. They are an extremely important element in your decision making process. If you are lucky enough to have 5 schools offering a visit then take all 5 visits, you can speak to the different coaches at the colleges

that you would like to visit and get them to arrange 1 trip that would last about a week when you could visit all of the colleges on you are interested in. On these visits the coaches will be very friendly and it is a great time to ask questions and find out information. You can also speak to professors at the university who teach courses you are interested in. You will stay with players on the team so it is a good opportunity to find out what the coaches are like on a day to day basis.

Admin after you have committed to a school

Firstly you will think the stress is over and now you can relax, wrong, especially if you have signed late there will be a huge rush to get everything done. If you have signed very late you **MUST** be on campus on the 15th day of school starting, most schools start around 20th August do not under estimate how long this next process will take.

The coaching staff at the school will help you through the process but you will need daily access to the internet, fax machines, a scanner and a calling card to the US would help. Issues that will need to be done include

Applying to the school it self which is separate to the NCAA applications. This will also include choosing your playing number, sizes for kit, accommodation, room mate, medical insurance etc. It is very likely that you will need to book an appointment with your doctor to have a check up and for them to help complete the medical form.

Applying for your visa (this can take over 3 weeks to get one)

You will need the school to provide you with an I20 before you can get your visa. The school administrators will not release an I20 unless they are happy with all your paper work. You will need to apply for an F1 type visa. To apply for a visa you need to ring the US Embassy in London, at present the number is 09042450100 calls cost a lot so be sure you have all the following details A credit card to pay for the appointment (about \$135), your address, contact number, email address for appointment summary, DOB, passport number, if you are using somebody else's credit card they must be present to make the payment or they can call on your behalf. Do **NOT** book the appointment until you have confirmation that your I20 will have arrived beforehand. Once the appointment is made you also need to complete a SEVIS form (cost's another \$200) and you must be able to print the application form off when asked, you can not redo it and it must be brought to your appointment.

To complete the SEVIS form go to <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/> for more information about it go to http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/faq4.htm#_Toc81222051

Information about the Embassy can be found here <http://london.usembassy.gov/visas.html>

Non UK applicants will need to contact the USA Embassy in your country

Ensuring you have a valid passport and booking your flight once you have secured your visa (check with your school about booking your return flights, particularly if you are thinking about coming home at Christmas as you may have games scheduled around that time)

Attending summer school, most schools will want you to arrive in the summer before school starts so you can gain some extra credits before the season starts and thus avoid additional stress for you. If you can I would suggest you do summer school in your freshman year particularly if you have not been playing in the US at high school. Most freshman struggle with the transition to playing in the US and summer school helps, if you can't go try and get into the best shape you have ever been, good luck!!!