



# **Letters of Recommendation**

*Policy for The Science Academy*

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### **Resource:**

Click [here](#) for a presentation which summarizes this policy in a different format.

# **SECTION I**

## **POLICY OVERVIEW**

### **Students should understand...**

- Each teacher will have their own specific needs/requirements for a letter of recommendation - they have the final say, and you must abide by their specific policies
- You should give teachers (or others) at least one month in advance of the deadline, but more time is preferred
- Each program/scholarship/college has specific requirements for the letters of recommendation; it is in your best interest to understand these requirements before asking for a recommendation
- Teachers (or others) have the right to refuse providing a recommendation; teachers might “cap out” of the number of recommendations they have been asked to complete
- The more information you are able to provide about yourself and the program/scholarship/college you are applying, the better
- Recommendation letters do have the ability to make or break acceptance - do all that you can to make sure you get a good one!
- The easier you make it for your recommender, the better!

## POLICY

<p><b>General Policy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recommenders are to be given at least <u>one month</u> to complete the recommendation</li> <li>● More than one month is generally preferred</li> <li>● Must ask the teacher (or other) for permission before putting in the request on the application</li> <li>● Must waive the right to see the recommendation</li> <li>● If needing multiple recommendations for multiple applications, the applicant must approach several recommenders so as not to monopolize one person's time with requests</li> <li>● Recommendations for college or recommendation requests by Juniors/Seniors <u>have priority</u> to other requests</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommender's Rights</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recommenders are not expected to have more than 7 recommendation requests at one time</li> <li>● Recommenders can refuse to offer a recommendation for any reason</li> <li>● Recommenders can have their own requirements beyond what is outlined in this document</li> <li>● Recommenders can expect to be fully informed of the application process by the applicant</li> </ul>
<p><b>Applicant's Rights</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If the request is accepted, the applicant can expect the recommender to do their professional duty and complete an honest assessment of the applicant</li> <li>● Applicants have the right to ask any person for a recommendation they feel is a good fit             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For example, if an opportunity comes up where there is less than a month to the deadline, Applicants have the right to ask for a recommendation, but they embark in the request knowing this goes against the school's policy and that Recommenders have no obligation to accept</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## **SECTION II**

### **PLANNING FOR A RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Some things to consider when seeking a recommendation...**

1. Review the application's requirements, deadlines, and everything that you will need to complete your application. If it is provided, find out what type of recommendation is needed for your application - if it's a formal letter, you will need to provide as much time as possible for your recommender.
2. Consider the type of recommendation that the application needs:
  - a. Academic - What teacher is a good fit for this specific program? What class did I get an A in? What teacher knows me well?
  - b. Character - What teacher/mentor do I have a good rapport with? What teacher/mentor knows me well beyond my academic achievements?
3. Gather the following information to share with your recommender:
  - a. Resume - This should show any experience you have and provide a good "one page" look at who you are outside of school (this may not be necessary for some types of recommendations, but if you have one, give it!)
  - b. Brag Sheet - A list of distinctions, honors, achievements, etc.
  - c. Work Samples - If needing an academic recommendation, remind your teacher of specific assignments you did in their class that you are particularly proud of; provide copies of this work if possible! Don't expect your recommender to be able to find this for you.
  - d. Program Info - Provide concise information about your program/application; definitely give them the link to the website, etc., but it also would probably be worth it to write up short information about it so your recommender can get a good grasp of the program (very necessary for something you really want)

## ASKING FOR A RECOMMENDATION

### When going to ask for a recommendation...

1. Ask as early as possible. One month is the bare minimum, but the earlier, the better. If the program requires an actual letter or ANY long-form writing (as compared to clicking checkboxes), the more heads-up you give, the better your letter will be.
2. Your request should be made in person. This means hanging back after class in zoom or, when we are in person, talking to the teacher. Be prepared to explain the program and provide all the information you gathered previously.
3. Be able to articulate why you chose this recommender. The reason should not be “I did well in your class” or “I need a math recommendation.” You have multiple teachers who have taught you in multiple subjects, have a good reason for choosing THIS teacher and explain that when you ask.
4. Ask about that teacher’s requirements for recommendations. They might want you to complete a google form, send them an email, etc. If you have followed all the previous steps, you are well-prepared for any additional requirements they might have.
5. Be prepared to be told “no.” Teachers have the right to refuse a letter for any reason - including that they have received too many requests from other students (one reason to ask as early as you can).
6. Clearly articulate the deadline. Make sure your teacher understands when you need it by. Talk to the teacher about what sort of reminders they will need/want. Keep that in mind.

## AFTER ASKING

### Be supportive and responsible for your application by...

1. Thank your recommender via email. Don't send a Schoology message - send an email (you can often find this on your teacher's syllabus!). Make sure to use your LAUSD Email account to send the message, otherwise it might go into their "Junk" folder. Send a "thank you" for them simply accepting your request. You might also want to attach to the email some of the info you have compiled (link to the program, work samples, etc.). This is also a good time to put a small reminder of the deadline you both agreed on.
2. Set-up your recommender. Some applications may require you to sync them to your application. This could send your recommender an email with the appropriate form. Make sure you have all the info from your recommender so you can set this up properly in your application.
3. Send reminders (*maybe*). Your teacher may have asked you to remind them; make sure you support them with these reminders. This will probably be most necessary close to the deadline. However, do not swarm them with reminders - be reasonable with your expectations.
4. Continue to work on your application. Make sure you have everything you need for your own application!

## **AFTER RECEIVING THE RECOMMENDATION**

### **Now that it's all over...**

1. You have waived your right to see the recommendation. Though you might really want to see what was written about you, you should have waived the right to see your recommendation. In general, blind recommendations are more trusted as recommenders can, in general, be more honest. This is why it's so important in who you choose!
2. Send a thank you note. A handwritten note is best!
3. Follow-up with the results. Let your teacher know the outcome of your application - they're a part of your application now; they'll want to know! Even if the results are not what you want, they will still want to support you, so let them know.