

**SPECIAL ISSUE
SUMMER 2024**

PRÊT ADMISSIONS GUIDE: NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

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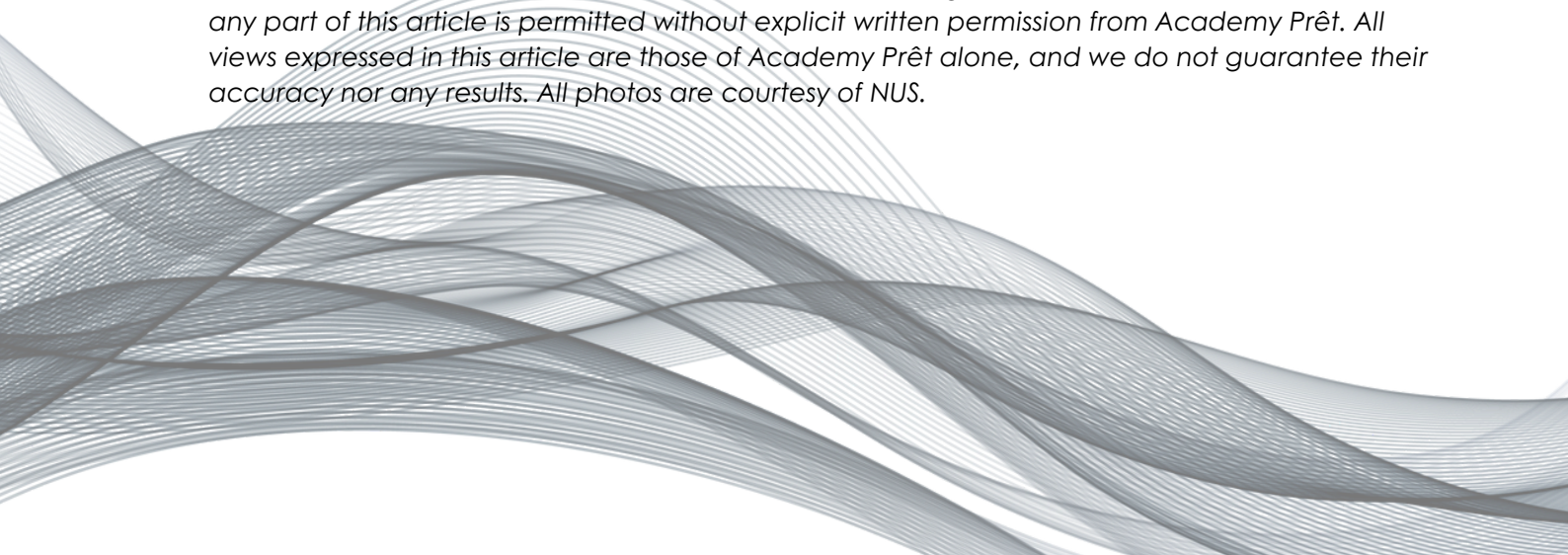
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Prêt Review: NUS Crowned **#8** in World University Rankings

June 2024 - In the recent 2025 Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Ranking, National University of Singapore (NUS) retains its global ranking of 8th place.¹ This puts NUS within the top 1% of all Universities evaluated this year, ranking amongst many highly prestigious institutions worldwide. This is a historic first for NUS to be placed in the top 10 globally for the second consecutive year. NUS is also the #1 University in South-East Asia.²

NUS now adopts a holistic approach when assessing applicants for admissions into their chosen degree programmes. This means that besides academic grades, other factors such as the students' interest, aptitude, and prior preparation, will be evaluated for admission. This holistic assessment now supplements the Aptitude-Based Admission of earlier years.³

The new holistic approach has an essay component which requires applicants to answer short response questions and list up to three achievements or non-academic activities. The adapted process entails diverse essay prompts, probing applicants about their extracurricular activities, resilience in the face of failure, personal values, proudest achievements, and any additional information they wish to share. Applicants must also highlight up to three significant achievements, ranging from international accolades to community service, internships, leadership roles, entrepreneurship, and innovative contributions such as software development.⁴

Rank	Name of Institution	Rank	Name of Institution
1	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	6	Stanford University
2	Imperial College London	7	ETH Zurich
3	University of Oxford	8	National University of Singapore
4	Harvard University	9	University College London
5	University of Cambridge	10	California Institute of Technology

Figure 1: QS World University Rankings 2025¹

¹ QS (2024, June 04) QS World University Rankings 2025, QS World University Rankings 2025: Top global universities. Retrieved from: <https://www.topuniversities.com/world-university-rankings>
² QS Top Universities. (2023, November 8). QS World University Rankings: South-Eastern Asia 2024. Top Universities. Retrieved from <https://www.topuniversities.com/asia-university-rankings/south-eastern-asia>
³ NUS Aptitude-Based Admissions. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://nus.edu.sg/oam/admissions/aptitude-based-admissions>
⁴ Ibid

Academy Prêt Recommended Activities

- ✓ Olympiad Competition Medals
- ✓ National Level Sports or Arts Competition
- ✓ Internships/Work Experience Related To Major
- ✓ Community Service Activities
- ✓ Key Leadership Positions In and Out of School
- ✓ Entrepreneurship Initiatives
- ✓ Fundraising Activities
- ✓ Student Projects Related to Major

Figure 2: New Holistic Approach ⁴

While academic performance and national or global level competition performances continue to be the primary evaluation criteria, NUS, alongside NTU and SMU, is gradually prioritizing holistic evaluation, acknowledging and embracing the multifaceted qualities that contribute to student success and enriching the University community.

At Academy Prêt, our holistic approach supports students to not only excel academically but to develop passion, apply academic curiosity, and to immerse themselves in opportunities to develop their character, interests and career pathways.

Read on for an exclusive interview with the NUS Admissions team!



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02

**Exclusive Academy
Prêt Interview with
NUS Office of
Admissions**

Academy Prêt Interview with NUS Office of Admissions

June 2024 - Academy Prêt is thrilled to speak with **Ms. Carine Ng, Senior Associate Director of the NUS Office of Admissions** for exclusive insights.

Question

As the #1 ranked university not only in Singapore but across Asia, what sets NUS apart and what kind of academic & university life can international students expect when attending NUS?

As the #1 ranked university in Singapore and across Asia, NUS has several distinguishing factors that sets it apart:

Academic Excellence

NUS is known for its commitment to academic excellence and has a reputation for delivering high-quality education. The university offers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs across various disciplines, like Arts and Social Sciences, Business, Dentistry, Design and Science Nursing, Pharmacy, Engineering, Law, Medicine, and even Music, and achieved a commendable position within the top 10 in 19 subjects based on the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2024.



NUS faculty members are renowned experts in their fields, and the university has research collaborations with leading institutions worldwide.

State-of-the-Art Facilities

NUS boasts modern facilities and infrastructure that support both teaching and research endeavours. Students have access to well-equipped libraries, laboratories, computer labs, and specialized facilities for specific disciplines. The university continually invests in updating and expanding its facilities to provide an optimal learning environment.



Multicultural Environment

NUS is a vibrant and multicultural community, welcoming students from over 100 countries. As an international student at NUS, you can expect to interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, fostering cross-cultural understanding and providing a global perspective.

Interdisciplinary Opportunities

NUS encourages interdisciplinary learning and offers various programs and initiatives that allow students to explore multiple disciplines. This approach helps nurture well-rounded individuals who can tackle complex real-world challenges from different angles, especially in this VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) world.

Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities

NUS offers a wide range of co-curricular activities with over 200 interest groups, including sports, arts, clubs, and societies. These activities provide opportunities for students to pursue their interests outside of academics, develop leadership skills, and form lasting friendships.

Overall, international students attending NUS can expect a world-class education, exposure to diverse perspectives, modern facilities, a multicultural environment, and ample opportunities for personal and academic growth.

At NUS, we nurture a community of high achievers, both locally and internationally, who excel in academics, sports, and community work.

Join us and be inspired to reach new heights as you embark on your educational journey.





As Singapore's oldest university, NUS boasts a vast and influential alumni network. Our alumni can be found thriving in major cities around the globe, providing you with unparalleled opportunities to connect and advance your career on an international scale.

Not only will you benefit from NUS' prestigious reputation, but also enjoy the strengths of Singapore itself.

With its safe environment, strong laws, and effective law enforcement, you can feel secure while immersing yourself in a multicultural and multi-religious society, effortlessly adapting to your new surroundings. Singapore's top-notch medical care ensures your well-being throughout your studies.

Additionally, this vibrant city offers a plethora of activities in the performing arts, recreational sports, and entertainment sectors, guaranteeing an enriching student life experience. Furthermore, as a global air travel hub, Singapore makes it convenient for visitors to come and for you to explore the region through short trips, expanding your horizons and broadening your cultural understanding.

Embark on a transformative journey at NUS and let us guide you towards global success.

Join our vibrant community of exceptional students and tap into boundless opportunities for personal growth and professional development. Apply to NUS today and unlock your potential on a global stage!





Question

NUS recently announced the holistic approach to admissions encompassing the student's interest, aptitude and prior preparation. Could you share with us more about what makes a potential candidate stand out in your evaluation process?

When evaluating potential candidates, NUS adopts a holistic approach that encompasses various aspects of a student's profile. Here are some factors that may make a candidate stand out:

Academic Achievements

Strong academic performance is usually one of the primary considerations. This includes factors like high school grades, standardized test scores (such as SAT or ACT), and the rigor of the courses taken. Consistency in performance and a challenging academic curriculum can demonstrate a candidate's ability to excel in a university setting. As part of the NUS application, you will be required to answer 5 short-response questions. This is an opportu-

-nity for candidates to demonstrate their motivation, goals, and unique perspectives. A well-written, thoughtful, and concise response has the potential to set them apart and showcase their passion, aptitude, critical thinking skills, and suitability for the degree programme they are applying to.

Extracurricular Activities and Leadership

Participation in extracurricular activities, such as sports, clubs, community service, or leadership positions, can highlight a candidate's well-roundedness, time management skills, teamwork, and leadership abilities. We value candidates who have made significant contributions outside of the classroom. If the applicant has participated in activities like campus visits, attending information sessions, contacting admissions officers with thoughtful questions, or participating in university-specific programs or initiatives, do include them in the application form as well.





Special Talents or Achievements

Exceptional talents, accomplishments, or recognition in areas such as music, arts, athletics, research, or entrepreneurship also makes a candidate stand out. These unique qualities showcase a candidate's dedication, passion, and potential for future success.

Letter of Recommendations

Strong letters of recommendation from teachers, mentors, or professionals who can speak to a candidate's character, academic abilities, and potential can significantly impact the evaluation process. These letters provide insight into the candidate's qualities that may not be evident from other parts of the application.

Question

What programs and support does NUS have for international students?

NUS provides a range of programs and support services, designed for international students to live, learn, and thrive in Singapore, at NUS. There are also numerous scholarship opportunities available through



NUS, Ministry of Education (MOE) and external organisations.

Here is an overview of the programs, support services, and scholarship opportunities:

International Students Coordinating Office (ISCO)

NUS has dedicated support services to assist international students throughout their academic journey. ISCO provides guidance on immigration matters, visa applications, student pass renewals, counselling services, and various student support programs aimed at ensuring that international students have a smooth transition and a fulfilling university experience.



Campus Accomodation

NUS offers various residential accommodation options for international students, which provides them with the opportunity to live in university-managed housing on or near campus. Depending on the type of housing option that the student chooses, there are ample opportunities for interaction and cultural exchange between local and international students, creating a supportive and inclusive living environment.

Career Services

NUS offers comprehensive career services to assist international students in their career development and job search. The Centre for Future-ready Graduates provides resources, workshops, and career counselling to help students explore career options, develop job search strategies, and enhance their employability.
<https://nus.edu.sg/cfg/>

Health and Wellness Services

NUS provides access to healthcare services through the University Health Centre (UHC). The UHC offers medical consultations, vaccinations, health screenings, and counselling services. NUS also promotes student well-being through initiatives like mental health support, stress management workshops, and sports and recreational facilities. Find out more here
<https://nus.edu.sg/uhc>





Scholarships and Financial Aid

NUS offers a range of scholarships specifically for international students, such as the NUS International Undergraduate Scholarship, offered to support exceptional international students with outstanding achievements.

For a full range of scholarships for international students, check out [https://nus.edu.sg/oam/scholarships/scholarships-for-freshmen-\(international-students\)](https://nus.edu.sg/oam/scholarships/scholarships-for-freshmen-(international-students)).

Tuition Grant Scheme

The MOE Tuition Grant Scheme is available to eligible international students. It provides subsidies for tuition fees, making education at NUS more affordable. More information can be found here

<https://www.moe.gov.sg/financial-matters/tuition-grant-scheme>.

International Student Resources

NUS organizes buddy programs/guidebooks/events that offer incoming international students with assistance, guidance, and support to help settle into campus life, navigate the university, and adjust to the local culture.





03

Academy Prêt Interview with NUS Students

Meet Nora & Michelle

Now, let's hear from current NUS undergrads on what studying at NUS is like!

Why did you choose to study at NUS?

“ —

Nora

I chose to study NUS because of its **exceptional reputation and strong academic programs, particularly in Business Administration**. As the top-ranked university in Asia and globally, NUS offers a **comprehensive and rigorous curriculum that is both challenging and rewarding**.

Additionally, the **diverse and vibrant campus environment** provides the opportunity to interact with students from various cultural and academic backgrounds, enriching my learning experience. **The strategic location of Singapore as a global business hub further allows for numerous internship and networking opportunities with leading companies**, which is essential for my career aspirations in the field of finance and investment. Moreover, NUS' commitment to innovation and research aligns perfectly with my personal and professional goals. **The university's strong focus on experiential learning, ensures that I can apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations effectively**. Overall, NUS offers the ideal environment for me, making it the perfect choice for my higher education.



Nora

Nora graduated with a perfect IB score of 45 points from ACS International and is a Korean citizen who moved to Singapore 3 years prior to her IB Diploma. Nora is currently a Business Administration undergrad at NUS.



Michelle

Michelle is a year 4 NUS undergrad who is currently on her last semester of study. She is currently a Business Administration major with a specialisation in Accountancy.

Michelle

“ —

Similar to Nora, I chose to study at NUS because of its esteemed reputation. Additionally, the university provides a **lively campus environment**, including residential halls and various events like Rag and Flag. Furthermore, there is a **broad selection of CCAs** available to consider. Lastly, the convenient location of NUS ensures easy access.

What are some of the highlights of your student life at NUS?

Nora

“ — One of the highlights of my student life at NUS is the **numerous opportunities to take part in case competitions, societies, and clubs**. These experiences have allowed me to apply what I've learned in the classroom to real-world scenarios and to develop my skills in teamwork and problem-solving.

Additionally, NUS Business School hosts various mentorship and networking events where current undergraduate students can receive advice from alumni who are now working in the industry. These events have been incredibly valuable for gaining insights into the workplace and for building a professional network.



—”



Michelle

“ — One of the most memorable aspects of my NUS experience has been the **vibrant hall life**, where I had the opportunity to explore different sports like softball and volleyball. Additionally, I also **learned to organize large scale events** such as Night Cycling and Halloween Haunted Houses with friends, all contributing to a lively and enjoyable university life.

—”



What are your future plans after graduating from NUS?

Michelle

“ Upon graduating from NUS, I intend to pursue a career in the Accounting Industry, and I am keen to develop a professional network within the industry and obtain invaluable experience through work.

Nora

“ After graduating from NUS, I plan to pursue a career in banking, particularly in the investment industry. My interest in investment and trading has been a significant driving force behind my academic choices. I realized that my passion lay more in forward-looking tasks, such as devising investment strategies and planning for the future. Therefore, this curiosity led me to focus on finance and investment banking.

Nora, you received a Ministry of Education scholarship for international students. Could you tell us more about that, and what it means for you?

Nora

“ Receiving the Ministry of Education tuition grant has been incredibly beneficial for me. It **significantly reduces the cost of education, making it much more affordable** to study at a prestigious institution like NUS. This financial support allows me to concentrate on my studies without the added stress of financial burdens.

In return for receiving the tuition grant, I am required to work in Singapore or for a Singapore-based company overseas for three years. Since I have decided to extend my future career path in Singapore, it ensures that I can gain comprehensive and enriching work experience right after graduation, which aligns perfectly with my career goals. Overall, the tuition grant has been a huge privilege and has greatly enhanced my educational journey.



Academy Prêt

Get In Touch



Orchard Ngee Ann City Tower B Level 22,
Singapore 238874



+65 8181 4770



www.academypret.com



hello@academypret.com



@academy_pret



academypret

