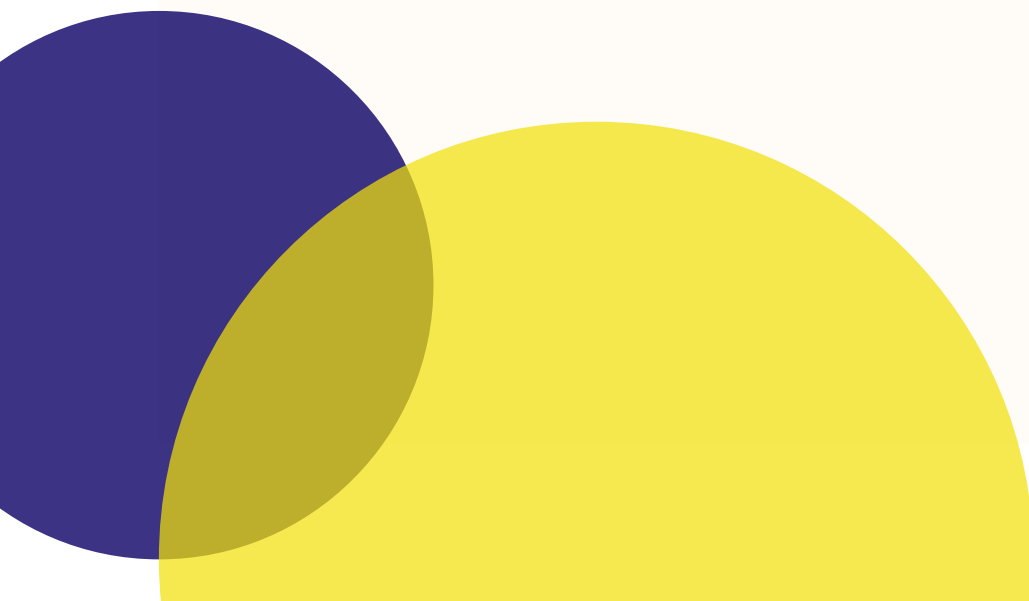




GUIDE TO THE

PERSONAL
INSIGHT
QUESTIONS

FOR THE UC APPLICATION



DO'S & DON'TS



Start early and allow enough time for feedback and revisions.



Be clear, focused, concise and organize your thoughts.



Write it yourself and about yourself: you are the focal point. Use "I" statements.



Get feedback early. Ask friends and family, but especially teachers, counselors & your college advisor.



Use concrete examples to illustrate your ideas and points.



Schedule appointments with your college advisor to brainstorm, draft & edit your PIQs.



Proofread and edit. Grammatical errors can be distracting to the reader and get in the way of what you are trying to communicate.



Save your responses on a computer as a plain text document, or use google docs, then paste the response into the UC application



Use acronyms, humor, text talk, clichés and generalizations.



Try to be wildly creative (e.g. using poetry, quotes, questions).



Repeat things unless you are adding depth or clarity to something you already mentioned on the application.



Try to use all four responses to tell a complete story. Treat each prompt separately



List accomplishments, experiences, and events without going into detail.



Write more about an inspirational person than about yourself.



Email your drafts to an individual without first asking.



Wait until the last minute to request feedback.



Write about a specific school because your responses will go to all the campuses you apply to.

ACTION VERBS

USE THESE STRONG, DESCRIPTIVE VERBS IN YOUR UC PIQ RESPONSES TO HIGHLIGHT YOUR EXPERIENCES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS. THE CATEGORIES BELOW ARE ONLY SUGGESTIONS.

CREATIVE		OFFICE/ GENERAL	SALES	COMMUNICATIO N
built	consulted	adapted	added	addressed
changed	counseled	administered	appealed	articulated
composed	encouraged	activated	convinced	authored
conceived	facilitated	arranged	improved	clarified
conceptualized	inspired	categorized	launched	conducted
created	mediated	compiled	marketed	contacted
customized	mentored	completed	moderated	convinced
designed	referred	contributed	negotiated	corresponded
developed	served	distributed	persuaded	critiqued
devised	strengthened	expanded	proposed	defined
established	treated	identified	publicized	demonstrated
generated	LEADERSHIP/ MANAGEMENT	implemented	recruited	described
illustrated	achieved	incorporated	reduced	drafted
improvised	advanced	maintained	targeted	edited
invented	approved	organized	TEACHING	informed
performed	assigned	planned	assessed	interacted
preserved	attained	prepared	awarded	interpreted
redesigned	authorized	produced	certified	interviewed
restored	controlled	proofread	coached	lectured
shaped	delegated	provided	delivered	mediated
transformed	determined	recorded	educated	moderated
FINANCIAL	directed	scheduled	empowered	observed
adjusted	enforced	secured	evaluated	presented
allocated	ensured	solved	explained	promoted
balanced	executed	updated	facilitated	publicized
budgeted	formalized	RESEARCH	graded	published
calculated	founded	analyzed	instructed	recruited
conserved	governed	applied	lectured	reported
doubled	hired	collected	taught	simplified
eliminated	influenced	compared	tutored	summarized
exceeded	initiated	conducted	TECHNICAL	taught
financed	led	consolidated	assembled	translated
gained	managed	detected	built	verified
increased	motivated	discovered	eliminated	RETAIL/ CUSTOMER
invested	oversaw	documented	engineered	SERVICE
maximized	prioritized	examined	expedited	answered
minimized	promoted	exhibited	fabricated	assisted
projected	projected	explored	installed	greeted
reduced	recommended	extracted	mastered	listened
secured	selected	integrated	modified	interacted
HELPING	sponsored	investigated	prevented	operated
advised	structured	measured	processed	resolved
aided	succeeded	monitored researched	programmed	responded
assisted	supervised	reviewed revised	reconstructed	supported
clarified	trained	screened	remodeled	
coached		surveyed tracked	repaired	
			upgraded	

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What are the PIQs?

Personal Insight Questions(PIQs) are a set of questions asked by the University of California when applying to one or more UC campuses.

How many PIQs are there?

There are 8 questions total, but you are required to only answer 4 out of the 8. It's important to see the PIQs as short responses rather than essays.

How long should each PIQ be?

The maximum word count for each response is 350 words. It's recommended that your responses are between 250-350 words. You **do not** get extra points for maxing out the word count!

What questions are the best to answer?

No question is "better" than another, they all hold the same weight. You have a story to tell, the best questions you choose will be the ones that relate to you the most.

What is the purpose of the PIQs?

The purpose of the PIQs are to allow the readers to have a better insight of who you are as a person outside of your grades.

ACTIVITY:

WHO AM I?



- What is your intended major? What do you like about your intended major?
- Why is education important to you? What motivates you to continue your education?
- What inspires you and why?
- Where are you from? Where did you grow up?
- What do you value and why? Who and/or what inspires you?
- What degree of education is required to reach your career goal?
- What are your strengths? What do you enjoy doing?
- What is your career goal? Why do you want to pursue this career?
- What classes have been transformational and/or impactful?
- What are some of your weaknesses?

Using the space below, answer the above questions about yourself.

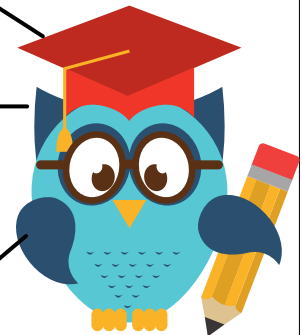
Prompt 1: Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes, or contributed to group efforts over time.

Name a leadership role you've had at school, community, church, organization or within your family/friends.

Did you help resolve a dispute or contribute to a group effort, what did you do?

What did you learn from the experiences?

What did you accomplish? What were your responsibilities?



Tips:

1. Think outside of the box with your definition of a leader & what a leadership role look like. It can mean:

- Being a mentor
- Being the person in charge of a specific task
- Taking a lead role in an organization or event
- Being a caregiver for a family member

Prompt 2: Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.

For the first 5 minutes, write as though you are talking to someone. Write down everything that comes to mind.

- Write without editing yourself
- Write whatever comes to mind
- Keep your hand moving



TIPS:

1. Do you have a passion for music, theatre, visual arts, dance, etc...? What have you gained from it and how has it impacted other parts of your life?
2. If you used creativity to solve a problem, what was the solution? What steps did you take to solve the problem?
3. How does your creativity influence your decision inside and/or outside the classroom?
4. Does your creativity relate to your major or future career?

Prompt 3: What would you say is your greatest talent OR skill? How have you developed and demonstrated that talent over time?

WHAT

WHO

WHERE /WHEN

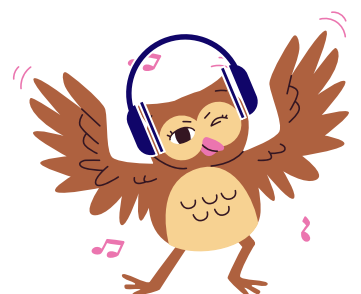
HOW

WHY

List one of your skills or talents:

TIPS:


1. Choose to talk about a talent or a skill. DO NOT TALK ABOUT BOTH.
2. Remember that you do not have to have been recognized or have received awards for your talent/skill.
3. Does your talent or skill allow you opportunities in or outside the classroom? If so, what are they and how do they fit into your schedule?



Prompt 4: Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity. OR worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.



WHAT?



HOW?



RESULTS?

[illegible][illegible]This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. A vertical red margin line runs down the left side of the page. The paper is slightly wrinkled and has some faint smudges. It is set against a dark background.

TIPS:

- 1) An educational opportunity can be anything that has added value to your educational experience and better prepared you for college.
 - Participation in honors or academic enrichment program.
 - Taking advanced courses that interest you.
- 2) Only talk about an educational opportunity or an educational barrier **DO NOT TALK ABOUT BOTH.**
- 3) If you write about an educational barrier you have faced, it is crucial to discuss how you overcame **OR** are striving to overcome the barrier.

Prompt 5: Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge. How has this challenge affected your academic achievement?

Significant Challenge:

How did this challenge affect your academic achievement?

What steps did you take to overcome this challenge?

Step 1:

Step 2:

What impact does this challenge play presently or in the future?

TIPS:

- 1) A challenge could be personal or something you have faced in your community or at school.
- 2) Why was this challenge significant to you?
- 3) How has your life changed at home, at school, with friends, or with family as a result of having experienced this challenge?



Prompt 6: Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom.

Academic Subject:

How did this interest begin
& how has it been developed?

List experiences in and out
of the classroom.



Has your interest in the subject
influenced a choice in
major/career path?

What academic opportunities
have allowed for further
exploration in this interest?

Tips:

1. Make sure the subject you choose is an a-g subject.
2. There is no preference in subjects.
3. Reflect more on the subject than the actual class or classroom experience.

Prompt 7: What have you done to make your school OR community a better place?

First,

Next,

Then,

In the end,

TIPS:

1) You can define community as you see fit, just make sure you define it & talk about your role in that community.

- Was there a problem that you wanted to fix in your community?
- How did your actions benefit others, the wider community or both?

2) Did you contribute to positive change in your school or in your community?

- What steps have you taken to accomplish this?



Prompt 8: Beyond what has already been shared in your application, what do you believe makes you stand out as a strong candidate for admissions to the University of California?



What do you value in your life?
What's important to you?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are you passionate about?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What makes you an
excellent choice for the
University of California
(UC) system?

When you attend UC, what are
you most looking forward to?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Does anything overlap? Is there
anything from the lists that you
want to expand on?



TIPS:

- 1) What have you not shared with UC evaluators that will highlight a skill, talent, challenge or opportunity.
- 2) You can use this question to go more in depth with something you lightly mentioned before or an extracurricular activity you want to expand on.
- 3) Don't be afraid to brag!