

## **Compilations of the DSA Webinar Q&A segment**

### **Section 1: General Questions**

1. Can I visit NYJC for a better understanding of the environment?

In view of the current Covid-19 restrictions, we regret that our college will not be able to receive guests. However, you can visit our DSA microsite to gain a better understanding of our school environment.

2. After accepting the DSA-JC offer and joining the Junior College, can I still join another CCA? For example, if I am offered a place through DSA via leadership, can I still join another CCA such as Floorball?

Yes, but this only applies to DSA applicants who are accepted via Leadership or Science Research. For applicants who have been accepted via a specific CCA, the college expects your utmost commitment to the CCA that has offered you a place. Furthermore, given the rigour of the GCE A-Level examination, DSA students should avoid taking on more than one CCA so as to better manage their CCA and academic commitments.

3. How long are CCA sessions and how frequent are they?

The number of CCA sessions per week depends on the nature and requirement of the specific CCA. In general, most sport and performing arts CCAs will meet twice a week for approximately 3 hours for each session. This will usually increase to three sessions a week when approaching SYF or competition season.

4. How long is a normal day in JC?

The timetable will vary depending on your subject combination. In general, students can expect to have lessons from 8.30am to 3.00pm, especially for the more common subject combinations. The timetable will include break times for meals and for recharging in between lessons.

### **Section 2: Questions on NYJC DSA Criteria and Application Procedure**

5. What is the DSA application procedure and when is the deadline to submit the application?

The DSA-JC timeline (including the application and online interview period) and application procedure can be found in our DSA microsite.

6. What is the selection criteria for DSA in relation to each talent area?

Applicants can review the selection criteria [here](#).

7. What are the documents to submit?

You do not need to submit any documents/video when submitting the online application form. If you are shortlisted for the online interview, we will inform you of the documents/video to submit and how to submit them. Possible documents to prepare for the online interview are relevant certifications and records of achievement in zonal or national competitions related to the area of talent/skill, art portfolio (applicable for students interested in pursuing Art Elective Programme) and academic result slips.

8. Can I apply for DSA to more than one Junior College?

Yes. However you can only accept one offer even if there are more than one Junior College offering you a place.

9. What can I use to apply for DSA to NYJC?

You can apply for DSA to NYJC via one of the following Talent/Skill Areas.

Art Elective Programme	Contemporary Dance	Badminton	Netball (Girls)
Debate - English	Guzheng Ensemble	Basketball	Table Tennis
Leadership	Symphonic Band	Floorball	Tennis
Chinese Orchestra	Science Research	Football (Boys)	Volleyball
Choir			

10. Can I apply for DSA to NYJC via more than 1 talent area?

Yes, applicants may apply for DSA through 2 or more areas of talent. Please submit a separate application for each area of talent. For example, a student should complete one full application if he/she applies through Volleyball and another full application if he/she also wishes to apply through Science Research. The panellists of the talent areas will shortlist the applicant according to the selection criteria.

11. Do I apply for DSA through my secondary school or on my own ?

You will apply for DSA on your own by submitting the online application provided by each Junior College.

12. What is the selection criteria for Phase 2 if I am not offered a place after Phase 1? Do I need to submit another application form for Phase 2?

The selection criteria for Phase 1 and 2 are the same. You will be considered for Phase 2 if you do not receive an offer under Phase 1. You do not need to submit another application form for Phase 2 if you have already submitted one during Phase 1.

13. When will I know if I am rejected or accepted in NYJC based on DSA?

The college will contact successful candidates by telephone. All applicants will also be notified of the outcome of their application by email, latest by 6 Sep 2021.

### **Section 3: Questions on DSA Selection Process**

14. What kind of questions will be asked during the interview?

The panel aims to know more about the applicant through the questions asked. Some areas of interest would be to find out from the applicants, their aspirations, their learning attitude and their approach towards developing their talent in the specific talent area they are applying for.

15. What will the interview process (including audition/trial) be like?

16. What must students prepare for the interview process (including audition/trial)?

*Response to Q15 & Q16:*

According to MOE guidelines, we can only conduct selection via electronic modes (e-mode) for all DSA talent areas (i.e. similar to the 2020 DSA-JC exercise). We will contact you if you are shortlisted to make arrangements for a video conference (trial/audition) via zoom. The video conference will likely be conducted at your secondary school to ensure a conducive environment, and to place all students on a common platform. You will have to liaise with the relevant teacher from your secondary school to book video-conferencing equipment, a suitable venue for the interview and any other equipment or instrument needed for the video conference.

For a more detailed response according to specific talent areas, please refer to Sections 3.1 to 3.6.

17. What will the interviewers be looking out for during the interview?

Interviewers will be looking out for the applicant's skill level in the specific talent area as well as his/her overall attitude.

18. How many interviewers will there be?

There will be 2 to 3 interviewers. There will usually be one to two teachers, with a coach/instructor (if applicable).

19. Is a testimonial required for DSA application?

No, testimonials are not required.

20. How much emphasis does NYJC place on students' academic performance (Common Test, MYE or EOYs) when selecting DSA students?

The intent behind requiring the submission of academic results for shortlisted applicants is to allow the teachers to have an understanding of the subjects the applicant is reading currently, as well as the potential subjects the applicant wishes to read if he/she is admitted to NYJC. With the current results of the applicant, teachers are also able to find out the challenges the applicant is facing currently in his/her learning as well as how the applicant is managing the situation and coping with these challenges.

### **Section 3.1: Questions on DSA through Sports**

21. With Covid-19 restrictions on NSG, how will DSA sports trials take place online and how will the applicants be assessed?

Performance task(s) will be set by coach/instructor/ teachers of the different talent areas, and the area/ venue (e.g. ISH) suited for the task will be suggested to the secondary school teacher. The shortlisted applicant will be informed of the task and proposed date and time of the trials and interview. Our teachers will also liaise with the applicant's secondary school teacher to arrange a suitable time for the trial. Shortlisted applicants will perform the tasks in front of the camera/laptop set up in their secondary school, followed by the interview, or vice versa.

22. Will the absence of awards or lack of competition experience disadvantage them?

Students applying for the same talent area will be in the same situation. For example, all basketball or football players did not have the opportunity to play in the NSG in the years 2020 and 2021. Hence the selection panel is aware of the situation and the absence of awards or lack of competition experience will not disadvantage them. The college is committed to accept applicants who are strong in their talent area and passionate in developing themselves to be better players, hence selection is not based purely on awards and competition outcomes.

## Section 3.2: Questions on DSA through Performing Arts

23. How will performing arts auditions take place online and how will applicants be assessed?

The audition can consist of performing a prepared item, audition tasks and interview components. Shortlisted students are to prepare an item of about 2-5 min, to be performed in front of the camera/laptop set up in a suitable venue in their secondary school. The audition tasks could be to do sight-reading or to do certain dance movements on the spot. The last component is an interview. Shortlisted students will be assessed based on their competency in the talent area as well as their overall attitude.

24. Can I still apply for DSA through Contemporary Dance even if my dance background is in other areas e.g. Chinese Dance, Ballet etc.

Yes you can. You will be assessed based on your competency and potential during the video conference session.

25. Will I need to prepare my own instrument for the audition?

Yes. For bulky instruments (e.g. piano, drum set, double bass), you will need to arrange with your secondary school to borrow the instrument and ensure its availability for your use on the day and time of your video conference session.

## Section 3.3: Questions on DSA through AEP

26. What traits and attributes does the school look out for in a successful DSA AEP applicant?

We are looking for students with a deep interest and strong aptitude for Art. Besides showing competency in handling a range of materials, successful applicants are typically able to articulate the concepts behind their work and their views on certain art-related issues. We are interested in students whose artworks effectively communicate their personal perspectives and demonstrate that they have worked through various problems and challenges. As the study of Art at A-Level is rigorous and demanding, we will also look out for evidence indicating that applicants are coping with their studies.

27. For the Art Elective Programme application, what must be included in the art portfolio?

A good portfolio should highlight a range of **craft types, mediums, subject matter and processes** that the applicant has explored. They can come in various forms, for example, drawing, painting, photography, graphic design, sculpture, digital work, video or animation, just to name a few. The works can also range from quick, spontaneous sketches to something more detailed and refined.

28. How do I submit my portfolio?

Shortlisted applicants will be required to submit an e-portfolio prior to an online interview conducted via Zoom. They will either email or share the e-portfolio with NYJC's art teachers via Google Drive. More detailed instructions on portfolio submission will be given to shortlisted applicants via email.

29. Must I have any achievements in the art field (ie competitions)?

You will need to fulfil **at least one** of the following criteria to apply for DSA through AEP:

- Outstanding performance in Art for major school exams (e.g. top performer in Art for Sec 3 cohort, or 'A' grade for Art in Sec 3 end-of-year exam and/or Sec 4 mid-year exam.)
- Achievement in SYF Art Exhibition, obtaining a Certificate of Accomplishment/Recognition/Recognition (Special Mention)
- Achievement in national and/or international art competitions

30. Will it be a bonus if I am in AEP in secondary school?

No. We will consider all applicants regardless of the type of secondary art programme they are enrolled in, i.e. AEP, EAP or General Art. Students who did not have the opportunity to offer O-Level Art, but have been taking external art lessons and have attained achievements in national / international art or design competitions, are also eligible to apply.

31. Can I apply to DSA through AEP if I did not get an A1/A2 in Sec 3 or Sec 4 school based assessments, and/or did not take Higher Art at O-Level?

You can still apply, but there is no guarantee that you will be shortlisted. Do check if you can fulfil one of the other 2 listed criteria if you are not confident about your Art grade. It is not a pre-requisite to have taken O-Level Higher Art to apply for DSA through AEP.

32. What will students learn under the AEP syllabus and what are the special programmes/outdoor learning trips offered by the AEP department in NYJC?

Our art programme places equal emphasis on the practical and theoretical aspects of art making, encouraging students to explore their thoughts, feelings and ideas through a variety of art practices and processes.

In JC1, the AEP students will go through a series of modules which expose them to different types of art making, for example, drawing, painting, photography, sculpture, design and video. In JC2, the AEP students will embark on their A-Level Coursework for 9 months, working on their chosen topic and craft type. During this time, students will be guided by their tutors through one-to-one consultation.

AEP students can also look forward to exciting combined-schools art workshops, artists' talks, competitions and learning journeys to graduation shows, museums and galleries. There is also a biennial AEP exhibition in which students from all secondary and JC AEP schools will have an opportunity to showcase their work to a larger public audience.

33. What opportunities can I get in the future using AEP?

Our AEP alumni have gone on to do well in different courses of study, including both art-related and non-art related courses. Our rigorous art programme has helped our AEP students develop a broad set of skills, sound work habits, strong conceptualisation and communication skills which prepare them well for undergraduate studies. Graduated students will have a strong portfolio of works to show when they apply for art and design-related undergraduate studies.

34. What are some recommended subject combinations for AEP students to take to hopefully have a better overall balance?

NYJC has a very flexible subject combination system. Usually, students would be granted their choice of subjects if they meet the individual subject prerequisites and fulfil the contrasting subject requirement. Over the years, we have had students, from both the Arts and Science Streams, taking Art with a wide range of other subjects. Students are strongly encouraged to reflect on their interest, aptitude as well as future educational and career aspirations when choosing their subject combination.

### **Section 3.4: Questions on DSA through Debate**

35. I understand that one of the areas students can apply for DSA is English Debate. What are some of the qualities interviewers will particularly take note of during the selection process?

We primarily look at the case-set, choice of substantives & depth of analysis. Basically, we are looking for debaters who can lead in deciding case set-up for the team. Content & Strategy play a bigger role than Style in assessing whether the applicant is a suitable candidate. The applicant will also be judged on his/her rebuttals (both quality and delivery - confidence and familiarity with the case are key here).

36. What if my main role is the 3rd speaker, will I still need to craft a 1st speaker's speech?

Yes. All applicants will be required to do a 1st speaker's speech. It is usually in the 1st speaker's speech that the case, stance and burdens are presented & these will allow us to assess the competence of the debater. Because the 3rd speaker does not deliver any substantive or new material and focus purely on rebuttals, it is not possible to audition a candidate based on the 3rd speaker's role in the absence of the remaining members of a team. We are also looking for a versatile debater who can easily slip into more than one role.

### **Section 3.5: Questions on DSA through Science Research**

37. What criteria/qualities do you look for in DSA via Science Research?

38. What should be in my portfolio when applying for DSA via Science Research? What documents specifically should be submitted? (e.g. competition experience, participation in Math Olympiad etc.)

Response to Q37 & Q38:

We are looking for students who have a strong interest and good grounding in Math and Science, as most research work involves independent study and understanding concepts from a multi-disciplinary approach. We are also looking for students who have special skills such as computer coding skills as research projects often involve basic coding knowledge.

39. What will the online interview process for DSA via Science Research be like?

The DSA applicant will be interviewed by 2 teachers, and we will ask about the candidate's experience in science research. The candidate can also share about any special skills that they may have and have mentioned in the application form.



40. What commitment is required if a student is offered DSA Science Research?

The student is expected to take up a research project with an external research institute. The student will have to choose an area of interest and apply to the respective research partners. This will involve literature research and independent study. The research project will be a year-long commitment.

41. What opportunities are available in NYJC for Science Research (both in-house and external)?

Selected students will be given opportunities to develop their interest and deepen their learning in various fields such as environmental engineering and machine learning etc.

You can click [here](#) for more information

42. If I apply for DSA through Science Research, do I have to take H3 Science Research?

No.

43. What is the content of H3 Science Research?

H3 Science Research is an examinable A-Level subject. H3 subjects are only offered to students who are academically able to cope with an additional subject(s) on top of their H1 and H2 subjects. For H3 Science research, students undertake projects under the supervision of researchers with research institutes such as NUS, NTU or A\*Star.

You can click on the following links for more information.

<https://www.ntu.edu.sg/education/talent-outreach/NRP/nrp-as-h3-science-research>

<https://nusmods.com/modules/SP1230/nus-h-3-science-research-programme>

44. Will my Mid Year Exam (MYE) results for Math or Sciences affect my chances for admission? What if my school did not have MYE for Sec 4 students?

The candidate's Mid-Year Exam results for the Math and Science subjects will be considered as it gives an indication of the student's strengths. The selection panel will also look at the candidate's portfolio and consider other relevant experience. Students without Sec 4 MYE results can also submit their Sec 3 results.

## Section 3.6: Questions on DSA through Leadership

45. What leadership qualities do you look out for in Leadership DSA applicants?

We will be looking out for students with an excellent leadership history, as well as the quality of answers submitted in response to the questions posed on the DSA application form.

46. What is required in the portfolio when applying for Leadership in DSA? Is there a minimum hierarchical position I must have served as?

There is no portfolio needed for submission. In terms of the application process and requirements, all the details are on the DSA microsite. But generally we will be looking for students with an excellent leadership history, as well as the quality of answers submitted in response to the questions posed on the DSA application form.

47. Can I include leadership positions in external organisations or self-initiated values in actions projects (e.g. raising funds)? Will these positions/projects give students an advantage in being selected for DSA via Leadership?

Yes, you are free to include leadership positions beyond those in your secondary school. But we cannot say for certain if these will give you an advantage as it would depend on the project itself and the complexity of the work involved in the planning of it, especially if compared to leadership in CCAs.

48. What will the online interview process for DSA via leadership be like?

There will be a group interview session with a series of questions about leadership styles or scenario planning. Once we have arranged an interview slot, we will inform you of all the details. Our advice is not to worry, as the questions are meant for us to know more about your leadership history and to help us to understand you as an individual.

49. If a student is accepted into the school through Leadership DSA, what would their commitment or CCAs be in the school? Are they immediately part of any leadership board?

You are not automatically part of any leadership board, but you will be required to run for elections for a leadership CCA e.g. the Student Council, and once you are elected into the council, you will be part of the organising committee of various events that the Student Council is in charge of.

50. If I DSA through Leadership, is it a must to join the Student Council? Can I be a CCA leader instead or serve through another form of leadership?

You must join a leadership CCA, one of which is the Student Council. Of course, if you are able to manage your time, you could also join another CCA, but this is dependent on your ability to cope with the additional commitment and responsibility.

## Section 4: Questions on Eligibility Criteria for Admission to JC

51. What is the cut-off point for students who are successful DSA-JC applicants?

Students who are successful in seeking admission through DSA-JC based on their achievements and talents will only need to fulfill the minimum eligibility criteria for admission to a Junior College after completing their O-Level examinations. In other words, they need not meet the cut-off points of the Junior College if they are successful DSA-JC applicants.

The eligibility criteria for admission to Junior College is to have a L1R5 of 20 or less. In addition, students will also need to fulfill the following O-Level subject requirements:

- A1 to C6 for English Language
- Mother Tongue Language
  - A1 to D7 for Chinese Language, Malay Language, Tamil Language
  - **OR** A1 to E8 for Higher Chinese Language, Higher Malay Language, Higher Tamil Language
  - **OR** Merit or Pass for Chinese Language 'B' Syllabus (CLB), Malay Language 'B' Syllabus (MLB), Tamil Language 'B' Syllabus (TLB)
- A1 to D7 for Mathematics or Additional Mathematics

## Section 5: Questions on Subject Combination

52. Can I have a list of subject combinations offered by NYJC?

NYJC takes pride in its flexible subject combination system. As long as a student meets the individual subject criteria and fulfils the contrasting subject requirement of the posted stream, he will most likely be offered his choice of subjects.

On average, the college offers more than 60 different subject combinations each year. We also offer what students commonly call 'hybrid subject combinations' – where students can read 2 subjects from the Mathematics and Sciences as well as 2 subjects from the Arts and Humanities.

To make a more informed decision on what subject combinations to take, you may also refer [here](#) to find out more about the A-Level subject requirement by various university faculties for their 2021 Admissions.

53. If my DSA application is successful, will I be able to choose the subjects I want to study in NYJC? For example, I'd love to take biology and chemistry. Will there be a cut off point for me to take that subject?

No, there is no cut-off point. (pls refer to Q54 below for further elaboration)

54. Can I still take H2 Science subjects if I took Combined Science at O-Level. Are there specific requirements/criteria that I will need to fulfill to do so?

Yes, students can take science subjects as long as they have taken the relevant science subject at O-Level. For example, a student who took Combined Science (Biology/Chemistry) can offer H2 Biology or H2 Chemistry. Students are also advised to consider their aptitude and future career and university aspirations when choosing their subject combination.

Please refer [here](#) for more information

55. How do I apply to the Chinese Language Elective Programme (CLEP) in NYJC?

You would need to indicate that you wish to read CLEP when completing the acceptance form. We will then inform you whether your application to read CLEP is approved during the subject combination period which will take place within the first two days of reporting to NYJC, after posting results are released for all 'O' level students.

56. What is the criteria to be eligible for Chinese Language Elective Programme? What will be covered in the Chinese Language Elective Programme?

Please refer [here](#) to find out the eligibility criteria and the overview of the Chinese Language Elective Programme.

## Section 6: Sharings by current DSA Students

### Question on Student Life

How do you balance between CCA & Academic commitments?

The JC curriculum is definitely more demanding and the JC life is tough, though it will vary based on the subjects you take, especially if you choose to take less common subject combinations or extra-curricular programmes like H3 subjects or research projects

One thing that helps me is to maximise the little pockets of time that I have between lessons or after school to do more productive things like completing my work, revising for tests, or even taking a power nap which is what I do when I am on the bus home. I think this helps me to make sure I can strike a balance between CCA and academic commitments and not get exhausted.

However, I admit that this is easier said than done but I think going through each day will help you to understand yourself better and find your own balance. You will really need to be disciplined and find the drive to persevere and excel and I believe having a strong support system with your friends will definitely help you to pull through the few years you will spend in JC. *(response from a current JC2 DSA student, Lucas Ng)*

### Question on Students' Interview Experience

What was your experience with the online interview process? Do you have any advice for students who are worried about this?

Honestly, I was pretty disappointed when I heard that the DSA interview had to be carried out online because I feared that I would not be able to showcase the best of my abilities. However, it went better than I had expected. I was required to send a video montage of some of my previous games which enabled the teachers and coach to have a better gauge of my playing style. On top of that, I was able to showcase my individual skill set, which is shooting. Hence, I feel that through the online DSA interview, I was still able to showcase my skills and abilities.

I have two pieces of advice for students who are worried about the online interview. My first advice is to be confident. Interviewers tend to look out for confidence when asking questions such as "What are your strengths?" or "How have you demonstrated your strengths?". So when asked these questions, do not be shy about sharing how well you have done or sharing about your tenacity to improve in certain areas. Just be yourself and give honest responses. Sounding indecisive or uncertain will give interviewers the impression that you may not be keen to be part of the school.

Secondly, it is essential to think about the possible questions that you will be asked and prepare in advance so that your answers and points are more organised. By giving more organised and structured answers, you show the interviewers that you have a clear train of thought. A

well-structured answer reflects coherence and composure as well. (*response from a current JC1 DSA student, Tabitha Hsay*)