



HARVARD COLLEGE

Advising Programs Office

PAF Application Preview for 2026-27

Information about the PAF role and the application process is available on the [Advising Programs Office \(APO\) website](#). Questions should be directed to the Advising Programs Office at advising@fas.harvard.edu.

The direct link to the application is:

https://harvard.azure.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_29x2Po974qsRdFs

Application Deadline: Wednesday, February 11, 2026 11:59 pm ET

Please compose your longer responses in a separate document to minimize the risk of data loss.

The application consists of five sections. First, you'll provide information about yourself. Then, you'll respond to a few questions about your experiences. Third, you'll respond to one fictitious PAFee who has emailed you in August prior to the fall term. Fourth, you'll respond to a scenario taking place in the fall around course registration for the spring term. Finally, you'll provide the names and contact information for people who will act as references. First-years will need to provide the names and contact information for one person in addition to their proctor; upperlevel students will submit the names of two people.

We encourage you to complete the PAF application in your own voice. The purpose of each question is to help us understand your experiences, perspective, and goals, and how you relate them to the role of a PAF.

While you may seek feedback from others or use AI tools to brainstorm ideas or proofread, your final responses should reflect your own thinking, judgment, and authentic voice. Heavy reliance on AI can make your answers sound generic, which may weaken your application.

SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

Name and Contact Information

Class Year

Residential Affiliation

- For upper-level students, House affiliation
- For first-years, Yard and Proctor affiliation

Have you applied for the PAF Position before?



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Concentration (or potential concentrations, for first-years)

Extracurricular Commitments

A) Please list up to four extracurricular activities most meaningful to you in which you have been involved at Harvard, as well as the duration of your participation. (E.g., "Activity A: Fall 2024 - Present" or "Activity B: Sophomore Fall.") Space provided to list up to four activities.

B) Being a Peer Advising Fellow requires a substantial commitment, which PAFs are expected to prioritize. In addition to serving as a PAF in 2026-27, in what other extracurricular activities do you anticipate being involved? Please include any activities which you are continuing, not just new activities. (Space provided to list up to six activities.)

C) Being a Peer Advising Fellow requires a substantial commitment, which PAFs are expected to prioritize. With your anticipated academic (e.g., thesis or research), extracurricular, leadership, or other commitments for 2026-27 in mind, please describe how the PAF position would fit in your weekly schedule. If your other commitments will have a pronounced peak intensity at some moment, elaborate on how you might handle such a moment.

SECTION TWO: YOUR EXPERIENCES

We expect your responses to the following three questions to be about 150-200 words, and there is a hard limit of 100 characters, or about 250 words.

- A) PAFs work with their co-PAF and Proctor team to foster community within first-year entryways and promote a sense of belonging within the broader Harvard community. Describe a contribution you've made to a community, and how that experience might influence your approach to building inclusive environments as a PAF.
- B) *[Displays only for candidates who indicate they have not applied for the PAF role before]* PAFs draw on their own academic experience to help first-years take ownership of their undergraduate journey and make informed, authentic choices about their academic path. What specific academic information do you wish you had known in your first year that you would like to impart to your advisees?



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B2) [*Displays only for candidates who indicate they **have** applied for the PAF role before*]

PAFs draw on their own academic experience to help first-years take ownership of their undergraduate journey and make informed, authentic choices about their academic path. In the intervening time since you last applied for the PAF role, what specific academic experiences have you had that would inform the advising you impart to your advisees?

C) PAFs help students connect with and utilize academic resources. Tell us about your experiences with Harvard's academic resources.

Thinking of academic resources on campus (e.g., the Writing Center, office hours, the MQC, Mignone Center for Career Success, Office of International Education, Academic Resource Center, peer tutoring, Departmental Writing Fellows, etc.), tell us about your experience with one or two of them.

How did you decide to use this resource? How might you bring to bear your experience with this resource on your PAF role? If you haven't engaged with any of these resources, why not?

SECTION THREE: RESPONDING TO ADVISEES

If you join the PAF program, over the summer you will email your advisees, introducing yourself. Imagine that you receive the following replies via email, a week or two before the start of the fall term.

You will respond to one advisee, choosing one from the pair of emails below. Respond to **one advisee**. You will respond to one of Katerina or Merlin. You should address all the important issues raised in these communications. While there are no hard-coded limits on length, a typical response will be about 350-400 words.

Four important notes:

1) The fictional advisees are writing to their PAFs by name. When you respond, feel free either to sign your name or the name of the fictional PAF. Either way is fine.



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2) If you include web links, please don't embed the links in your text. That is, if you want to link to the Dean of Students Office website, rather than linking [like this](#), spell out the link: <https://dso.college.harvard.edu/>.

3) Please compose your responses in a separate space so that you don't lose your hard work if something goes wrong.

4) Respond to one and only one advisee email, either Katerina or Merlin.

Choose One: Katerina or Merlin

PAFee Katerina

Dear Matthew,

It's nice to meet you! Thank you for your email. I'm really excited about coming to Harvard in just a few weeks. My mother went there too (class of 1999!) and has been helping me think about classes and everything, so I'm honestly not sure how helpful our meeting would be, though I appreciate the offer. My mother was a computer science concentrator and now works very successfully at a software company, and she's really excited about me doing CS as well. She and I looked at the SEAS website, and we decided that CS 61, Math 22a, Stat 110, and Expos would be a good first term to knock out some CS requirements and get a good foundation for the rest of my time at Harvard. My mother pushed me to do a lot of CS in high school as well, and I'm looking forward to following in her footsteps and sharing this special experience of being a woman in computer science at Harvard. She's really proud of me; I'm lucky to have her guidance.

I think extracurricular activities will also be super helpful in setting myself up for success during and after college. I am going to join HCCG, Harvard Computer Society, Harvard Undergraduate Robotics Club, and maybe the Advocate, too.

My mother and I have also been looking at my new dorm setup. She was in Pennypacker as well, and she has so many great stories of hosting fun parties and watching *Friends* on her TV. My family lives in Palo Alto, and my mother doesn't remember all of the nearby spots to buy things for the common room, so do you have any suggestions? My three roommates haven't been super responsive, so I don't exactly know what they want in the common room, but a TV split four ways shouldn't be too bad. I have a speaker and projector at home, but they're getting a little old, so it might just be easier to get those things new. Do you have thoughts on what else we can



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include?

I'm really excited to get involved socially at Harvard. Something really important to me is LGBTQ+ advocacy. I want to help empower the LGBTQ+ community with my voice, especially because I benefited so much from the support I received from my high school, and the queer community in California is incredibly empowering. I want to continue learning about my community in college, but I wasn't able to find many related courses. I tried searching "LGBT" or "BGLTQ," but was not very successful, except for some courses at Harvard Law School.

Overall, I am very confident about my first year at college and am really looking forward to the start of the semester! And, if anything goes wrong, I can always ask my mother for her advice. So, I guess you'll have more time to give to your other PAFees, haha! Anyway, nice to meet you!

Sincerely,
Katerina

PAFee Merlin

Hi Cathy,

Thanks so much for your email! It was really nice to hear from a friendly person. I'm in the throes of packing up my whole life, it's crazy! Alabama's climate is a lot different than Cambridge, so I don't think I'll be ready for the winter. Brr! Besides the weather, I'm pretty nervous about starting college at Harvard. Based on my small, rural school, I'm worried that my academic preparation won't be as strong as a lot of my classmates'. Do you think there's anything I should do this summer to get myself ready? I've been doing all of our summer modules but am not sure if that's enough.

I also have no idea what to concentrate in, and that scares me; I feel like I'm behind and should know by now. All of my friends seem certain about their futures. There are so many cool classes I want to take, but I'm worried that I'll be behind in my future concentration. I was planning to take HUM 10, GOV 10, a history seminar, and maybe a stem class to dip my toes in there, although I'm leaning toward the humanities. There are just so many options.

Outside of classes, I really want to keep playing soccer. I almost went to a different school to play, and it's a big part of my life. Do people walk onto the varsity teams a lot,



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or are there club or intramural teams to play on? I'm not super sure what the time commitments for each level are. I'd also love to join a Latinx group, but I read about the changes in their structure under the Foundation. How can I find that group to join it?

I'm also having a small problem with my suitemates. Our room has two doubles and one single. One of my suitemates, Helen, is moving in before everyone else and texted in our groupchat "it makes sense for me to get the single because I'll be there first, and my family is coming to help me set up." Do you have any suggestions on how I should navigate this?

Last thing! I need an on-campus job, and I'm curious if you have recommendations on where to work or even how to find a list of opportunities. I also believe that I'm eligible for work-study, but I'm unsure how to apply for it. Do you have any information or know if this is needed for a campus job?

Thanks again! I know I threw a lot at you, but I appreciate your help.

Merlin

SECTION FOUR: SCENARIO

In the following scenario, you'll respond to a situation presented by your PAFee Jack partway through the fall term, in November. You should address all the questions that follow. While there are no hard-coded limits on length, a typical response will be about 350-400 words.

PAFee Jack

Picture This: After two weeks of trying to find a time, you are finally meeting with your PAFee, Jack, for your November one-on-one. Jack rarely comes to study breaks, and you haven't seen him since the required entryway meetings during orientation. You've been proactively reaching out to him, but he takes a few days to respond each time, sometimes flaking at the last minute after scheduling a meeting.

You ask Jack what courses he's thinking of taking next semester.

"Honestly, I'm not sure. I enjoyed my first-year seminar on philosophy way more



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than I thought I would. The professor actually teaches a course in the spring that sounds really cool, but I heard there are 200-page readings every week and that he grades pretty harshly. I'm honestly not sure that I'll have enough time to do all the readings and produce good enough work to earn an A, especially because I'm in a consulting club. I want to make sure I keep my schedule light so I can dedicate enough time to my club because I'm going to start recruiting for a consulting job soon and I NEED this club. Besides, it's not like philosophy is going to help me in consulting anyways, so I may as well take something more useful like Ec 10b or personal finance, even though I kind of hate Ec 10a."

- What do you see as the priorities in this situation?
- How might you respond to Jack?
- What would your next steps be, and what resources would be helpful?

SECTION FIVE: REFERENCES

The section below asks for information about people we can contact as a reference for you. References do not need to submit a letter of recommendation. If needed, the APO will send them a short form to complete.

Current First-Year Students (Class of 2029):

As part of our routine reference check, we will contact your proctor. In addition, please list **one** person whom we could contact as a reference for you. They must be affiliated with Harvard and cannot be a current undergraduate. We recommend that you confirm with your reference ahead of time that you may list them. Your reference should be able to speak to some or all of the qualities we expect candidates to demonstrate through the process, including:

- Empathy and compassion
- Dedication and reliability
- Resourcefulness
- Commitment to fostering inclusive communities
- Capacity for self-reflection
- Enthusiasm and open-mindedness about engaging first-year students in all aspects of their Harvard experiences



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Upperlevel Students (Class of 2028, 2027, or other):

Please list below **two** people whom we could contact as references for you. Both people must be affiliated with Harvard. Taken together, references should provide a balanced and multifaceted perspective on your candidacy for the PAF role. References should be able to speak to some or all of the qualities we expect candidates will demonstrate through the process, including:

- Empathy and compassion
- Dedication and reliability
- Resourcefulness
- Commitment to fostering inclusive communities
- Capacity for self-reflection
- Enthusiasm and open-mindedness about engaging first-year students in all aspects of their Harvard experiences

Current undergraduates may not serve as references. We recommend that you confirm with your references ahead of time that you may list them.

For each reference, please list:

Name, Phone Number, Email Address, and Relationship to You