

## Information for Pupils

### The UCAS Process

So you have decided to apply to University through UCAS.

- How do I choose a course?
- Which university or college is right for me?
- How do I apply?
- What should I include in my personal statement?
- How do I find out about finance and funding?
- What happens after I apply?

### Choosing courses

One of the most popular websites in the UK, [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) has an online, comprehensive database of over 38,000 Higher Education courses available at more than 300 universities and colleges which are members of UCAS.

Use the UCAS search tool - this provides information about each course, specific entry requirements and career possibilities and about the qualities or experience admissions staff are looking for in applicants.

You can search for courses in your chosen subject, institution or UK region. The information is up-to-date so you will not waste your time reading out of date material.

Visit UCAS TV at [www.ucas.com/tv](http://www.ucas.com/tv)

UCAS TV is where you will find a wealth of videos to help you as you apply for higher education. They are all arranged into helpful playlists, so the most relevant and useful guides are always quickly available to you at every stage of the application process.

### Books and Guides

Prospectuses – you should get hold of the prospectus for any institution or course you are interested in. However they are often printed in advance and more up-to-date information is usually available on-line.

### Podcasts

To save money and keep material fully up-to-date, an increasing number of universities and colleges are providing podcast material, free to download, through iTunes.

### UCAS Card

UCAS card is THE source of advice for students. Registering will give you a monthly email full of relevant information plus a free advice toolkit. It will give you tailored information about subjects and courses that interest you. It gives you on and off-line shopping discounts.

You can sign up at [www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/explore-your-options/ucas-card](http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/explore-your-options/ucas-card)

### Get out there! – Open Days

This is a great way to get a feel for the place. During your visit you should be shown around areas such as the student union, the library, accommodation areas and the departments in which you might end up studying. You might be able to meet tutors and chat with current students.

You can download the spreadsheet of open days from the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/explore-your-options/events-and-open-days](http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/explore-your-options/events-and-open-days)

### Get out there! – Taster courses

A number of universities and colleges from around the UK offer short, taster courses, giving students experience of academic and social life in an HE environment. Most of these courses are free and they last from one day to a full week. Demonstrating commitment in this way will look good in your personal statement.

### UCAS education conventions

UCAS conventions are usually held in September and October. Representatives from UCAS and over 3,000 exhibitors such as universities and colleges, charities, gap year companies, recruiters and other organisations are on hand to give information and advice in person. There are also seminars on a range of topics associated with students' applications and their future in HE.

You should use UCAS PREP ([www.ucas.com/prep](http://www.ucas.com/prep)) to get the most out of your convention visit.

### Ask family, friends and professionals

Don't be afraid to ask for advice and opinion. As well as talking to your PSD teacher and the careers advisor, you should talk things through with parents and friends who have progressed to HE to find out about what their experiences were like. Speak to former pupils as they progress through university. This can provide a further source of information and inspiration!

# THREE STEPS TO APPLYING



## Choosing a course – Explore your options

Higher education can last a long time and lead to a long career, so you'll want to decide what's right for you.

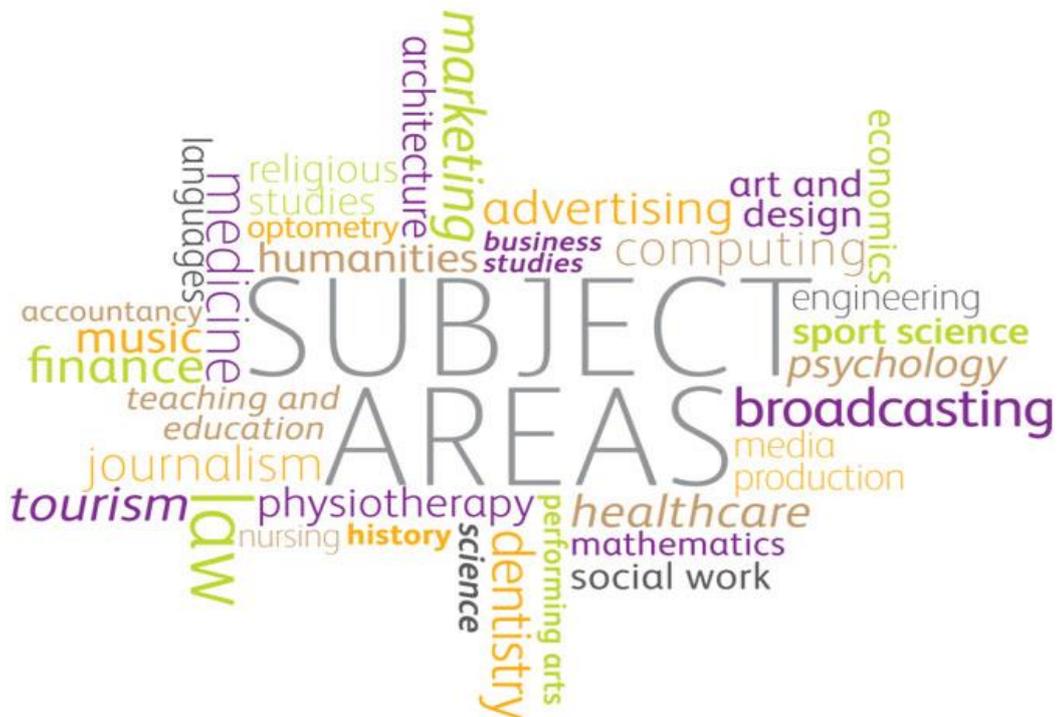
A subject you'll enjoy

Chances to use and improve your skills

A qualification that helps you move nearer to a career you want

### Undecided?

1. **Think about what you enjoy doing day to day** – maybe this could be part of a future job role.
2. **Explore jobsites and graduate careers** – you might find ideas to work or study towards.
3. **Consider the options below** – different subjects, activities and alternatives to uni



## How to Apply

Deadlines for most courses are in January, but some are in October or March – check in our [course search tool](#).

You can apply for up to five courses at the same time.

Applications are competitive, so applying on time gives you more chance of getting a place on a course you want.

- you can make a maximum of 5 choices on your application
- no more than 4 choices in any one of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or veterinary science
- no more than 1 course at either the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge.

If you originally apply to fewer than 5 choices, you can add more as long as you have not replied to your offers. You should be aware, however, of the deadlines for adding choices.

## When to apply

We recommend that you do your research and complete your application as early as you can. All applications need to be checked and approved before sending to UCAS.

Applications for 2016 entry should reach UCAS between mid-September 2014 and 15 January 2016 except for the following:

### Oxford and Cambridge

The deadline for this is 15<sup>th</sup> October. In addition to your UCAS application some applicants will need to complete an additional application / or sit an entrance exam.

### Medicine/Dentistry/Veterinary Medicine or Veterinary science

Deadline is 15<sup>th</sup> October and will require an additional cognitive test and possibly an interview by individual universities.

### Art & Design Courses

All art & design courses use one of 2 application deadlines: 15<sup>th</sup> January or 25<sup>th</sup> March. The deadline for each course is given in the UCAS search tool.

## Talking you through the UCAS on-line Application

Register with UCAS using the school's name and buzzword (given to you by PT PSD for S6)

### **1. First you register to use Apply**

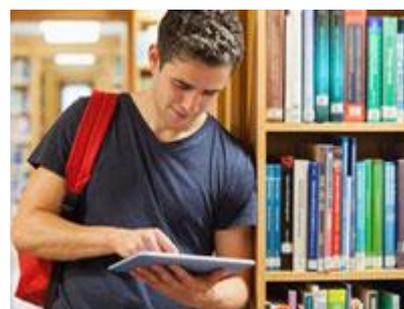
Add some **personal details**, get a **username**, create a **password** and set your **security questions**.

Include the **buzzword** your school gave you.

### **2. Then log in to fill in the rest of your personal details**

**Funding and sponsorship** options, **residential status**, any **special needs or disabilities** and any **criminal convictions** – plus you can give a parent, guardian or adviser **nominated access** if you'd like them to be able to speak on your behalf.

Add your **email address** – we'll show you how to verify it with us. Then we'll be able to let you know whenever your application is updated online, ready for you to log in and check.



### **3. Some additional info (UK applicants only)**

Your **ethnic origin**, **national identity**, any **summer schools/taster courses** you attended, **care** and **parental education** and **occupational background**.

This info isn't for selection purposes – it's helpful for producing statistics, but it's not compulsory if you'd rather not fill it in.

### **4. Your student finance arrangements (UK applicants only)**

**This isn't your actual student finance application**, but if you'll be looking for financial support we can speed up the process by sharing your info with the student loans or awards organisation you apply to (if you give us permission to).

Don't worry if you can't see the page – it only shows after certain questions are answered in the 'personal details' section.

### **5. Then you add your course choices**

You can **choose up to five courses** (all now or some later) – **there's no preference order** and your universities/colleges won't see where else you've applied until after you reply to any offers you get. One restriction on the combinations you can have is a maximum of four courses in any one of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or veterinary science.

Another restriction is that you can only apply to one course at either the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge. There are exceptions though – if you'll be a graduate at the start of the course, and you're applying for graduate medicine (course code A101) at the University of Cambridge, you could then also apply to medicine (course code A100) at Cambridge, as well as graduate medicine (course code A101) at the University of Oxford. (Some applicants will need to complete an additional application form to apply – visit the [University of Oxford](#) and the [University of Cambridge](#) websites for more information.)

## 6. Your education so far



All your **qualifications** that have been certified by an awarding organisation, as well as any you're currently studying or waiting for results. [If you need help adding your AS and A levels check our Advisers' blog.](#)

For course results you're still waiting for, [these are the exam results we're able to process and forward on to unis and colleges.](#) If any of your pending qualifications aren't on here then just remember to send the results on to your choices when you get them. (But either way you still need to add all your qualifications into this section, even if they're not on the list.)

## 7. Your employment history

If you've had **any paid jobs** – full-time or part-time – here's where you can enter details for up to five of them. Include company names, addresses, job descriptions and start/finish dates. Mention any unpaid or voluntary work in your personal statement.

## 8. Then you write a personal statement

This is your chance to **show course providers why you want to study the course and why you'd make a great student.**

Take a look here if you'd like advice on [how to write a personal statement.](#)

## 9. Double check the view all details page

See if you need to make any edits, then **mark it as complete, save it and agree to the declaration** (which allows us to process your info and send it to your universities/colleges).

## 10. Then get a reference, pay your fee and send your application to us



Then the **reference** and **pay and send** sections go one of two ways, depending on whether you're applying individually or through a school, college or centre registered with UCAS.

You'll be getting a reference from **a teacher, adviser or professional that knows you.**

Pay either **£12 if you're applying to just one course, or £23 for multiple courses and for applications sent after 30 June.**

[Find out how references, payment and sending works](#), including advice on who should write your reference.

## **A few things to note**

**You can only apply once in a cycle**, and if you've applied in previous cycles you'll still have to start again this time. Please don't apply more than once in a cycle, as you can't receive a refund for further applications.

**You can't apply in an alternative language** (except Welsh if you're applying for only courses taught in Welsh).

**You can use some European characters** in your personal details, personal statement, employment and referee details (see related documents for accepted characters).

**You'll need to mark every section as complete** before you can get to the declaration/payment/reference stage.

**Everyone needs a reference**, unless you get permission from all your universities or colleges.

**If you're applying from prison** you need a statement from the prison authorities too – saying you're suitable and available for the start date.

**Remember to check the full help text within Apply** if you get stuck, plus you can [talk to us if you need advice!](#)

## Pay and Send

Once you and your tutor are happy with your application you need to PAY and SEND. This does NOT send it to UCAS at this stage. This allows your tutor to add in their reference for you and mark your full application as complete. Then it's all ready to be sent to UCAS

## Offers

When the universities and colleges have received and considered a student's application, they will start sending out their responses to UCAS and they are then forwarded to the applicant.

An offer may be conditional or unconditional and will tell the applicant the year and month that their course starts, and the point of entry (e.g. the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the course rather than the 1<sup>st</sup>)

## Unconditional Offer (U)

This means that the applicant has met all the academic entrance requirements. They might still have to meet other requirements such as financial or medical.

## Conditional Offer (C)

This means that the offer has certain conditions, e.g. the applicant has to achieve certain exam results. The condition must be met by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015.

When ALL decisions are in, applicants should reply through Track. Applicants can accept one offer "firmly" and if this is a conditional offer, you can also accept a second offer as an insurance choice in case you do not meet the conditions of the "firmly accepted" offer.

If you “firmly accept” an unconditional offer, you are committing to taking up that place and cannot make an insurance acceptance.

You need to make your decision normally by 7<sup>th</sup> May or 5<sup>th</sup> June or 26<sup>th</sup> June or 24<sup>th</sup> July depending on the date of your last decision sent by the university or college – see [ucas website](#) for exact information.

### Extra

All is not lost if you have been unsuccessful or declined offers from all 5 choices. You can apply, through Extra, to further universities and colleges that still have vacancies. You do not need to wait until Clearing to apply to more courses. You can apply to several courses in Extra but only one at a time.

You can make amendments to your personal statement through Extra if this would better support your application.

The Extra process operates from 25<sup>th</sup> February to the beginning of July. Use the [ucas search tool](#) at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) to find out which courses are advertising vacancies in Extra. You then need to confirm with the university or college whether they can consider you before making your application in Track.

Applicants or parents can contact the Customer Contact Centre on 08714680468

Twitter – [twitter.com/ucas\\_centres](https://twitter.com/ucas_centres)

[Youtube.com/ucasonline](https://www.youtube.com/ucasonline)

[Facebook.com/ucasonline](https://www.facebook.com/ucasonline)