

POST 18 CHOICES

Overview of Choices











UCAS

Why Higher Education

Essential for some career paths.



Increase your confidence and independence.

Broaden your experiences.

Show yourself what you can do.

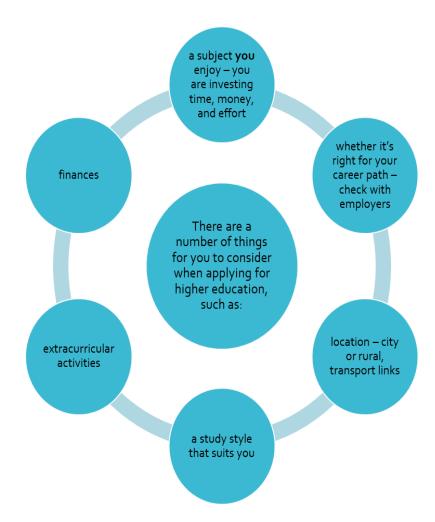
Invest in your future.

Types of Courses Available

Single: study one subject.
Joint honours degree: divide your time 50:50 between two subjects.
Major/minor: study two subjects, normally at a 75:25 ratio.
Combined honours programme: study between two to four subjects, specialising in just two subjects in years two and three.
Modular courses: build a personalised course by choosing modules you're interested in.
Placement Years: courses with one year in industry or a year abroad.
Foundation year: if you don't have the right qualifications, some universities and colleges offer this to help students prepare for and enter higher education

Types of degrees:-Bachelor of Arts (BA): Often associated with humanities and social sciences. Bachelor of Science (BSc): Typically focuses on science, technology, and related fields. Bachelor of Engineering (BEng): For courses in engineering disciplines. Bachelor of Education (BEd): For those seeking to become teachers. Other options: Includes degrees like Bachelor of Law (LLB), Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MB ChB).

What's Right for You?



Choosing the right University for you

Style – from the traditional, with a focus on subject-based courses and research, to modern universities, with a greater focus on vocational courses.

Living costs – accommodation, transport, and food can vary enormously.

Tuition fees – can vary between course providers. Check if there are any scholarships or bursaries available. small a m enviro

Location – some are based in large cities, others in smaller towns. This can have a major influence on the environment and lifestyle on offer.

Size – larger universities can have more than 20,000 students, whereas some of the smallest have only a few thousand.

What graduates do – all universities collect destination statistics. It can be interesting to find out the types of jobs or further study students go on

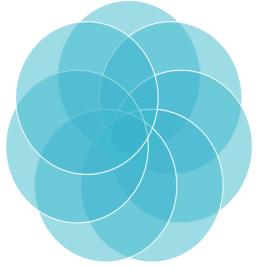
Culture and facilities – influenced by a range of factors, including the diversity of students who attend.

Choosing the right course for you

What does the course cover?

How is the course assessed?

How is the course taught – structured teaching, or more independent research? How many lectures are there, and how much group work will be done in seminars?



Courses with the same title may be very different.

Look carefully at the core course content, and the range of optional studies/modules available.

See if the course or university/college offers any internship, placement, or study abroad opportunities.

Which modules are the most interesting and relevant to your career aspirations?

Research - it's FREE!

Learning from others – <u>student videos</u> and <u>blogs</u>.

<u>Career options</u> – use the <u>job profiles</u> to explore different career roles and pathways, or take the <u>Buzz quiz</u> to find out more about individual strengths, and what roles may suit you.

The <u>Career Finder tool</u> is ideal for considering options after education, including searching for apprenticeships.

https://www.unifrog.org/

https://www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2024/sep/07/the-guardian-university-guide-2025-the-rankings

https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings

https://university.which.co.uk/

https://www.whatuni.com/

https://www.prospects.ac.uk/

Remember the 4 C's:-

COURSE

CAMPUS

CITY

CAREER

How to Apply

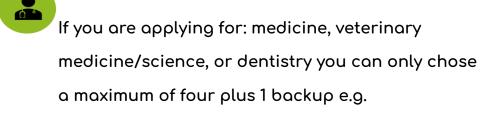
Go to www.ucas.co.uk and click on Create your UCAS Hub if you haven't created a UCAS HUB account already. This is where you will log in to access your application but also where you will be able to search for courses and create shortlists.



It is an online application



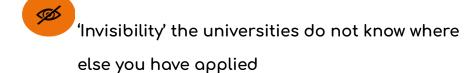
You have a maximum of five choices



biochemistry Oxford or Cambridge not both



Application cost: £28.95



Equal consideration to all applicants who apply before the deadlines

Key Dates

13 May 2025	UCAS Undergraduate Apply opens for 2026 entry. Conservatoire applications will open for 2026 entry on the 10 July 2025
2 September 2025	First day for receipt of completed applications.
2 October 2025	Deadline for most UCAS Conservatoires music courses. Check conservatoires websites for information.
15 October 2025*	Application deadline for courses in medicine, veterinary medicine/science, and dentistry, and courses at Oxford or Cambridge.
14 January 2026*	Equal consideration application deadline. Deadline for most conservatoire undergraduate dance, drama or musical theatre courses. You must check the specific course deadlines as these vary.
26 February 2026	Extra opens.
4 July 2026*	Last date for applications before Clearing.
5 July 2026	Clearing Opens

^{•*18:00} UK time

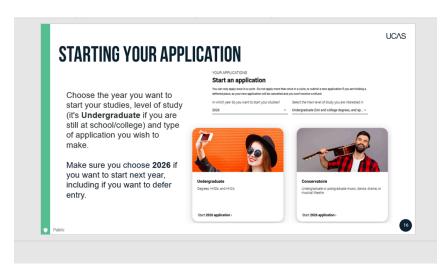
Register

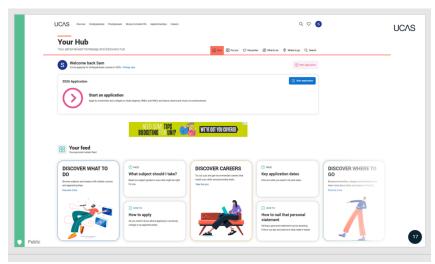
Head to <u>ucas.com</u> and select Sign In.

Follow the instructions to create an account. Use your personal email address - ensure it is professional.

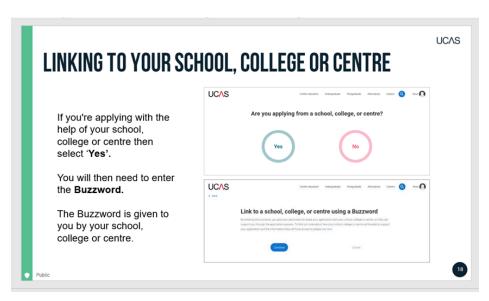
Make a note of your password and security questions so you remember them.

Once you have registered you will be asked some questions about where you live and level of study (undergraduate) and year of study choose 2026 even if you are thinking of deferring.





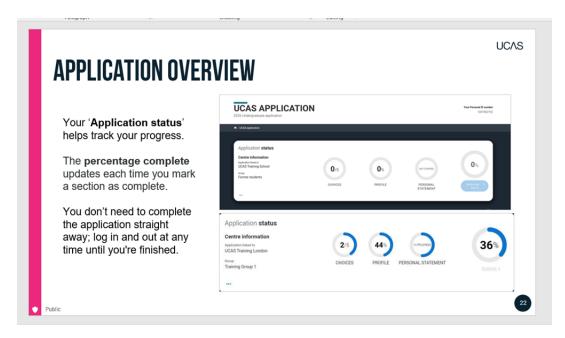
You will be asked about linking your application to the school. You need to do this so we can send off your application.

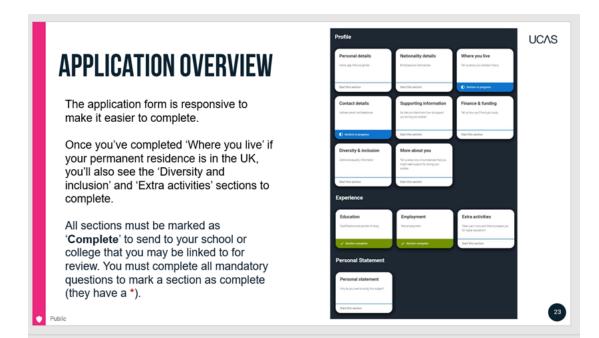


Buzzword: ClassOf2026

Once linked to the school you can link your application to your tutor group.

Your application will have multiple compulsory sections to complete.

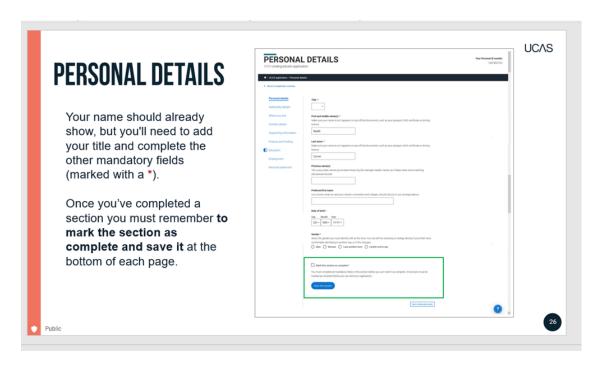




Personal Details Section

You need to complete each part that has a red asterisk *

Make sure you spell your name correctly and add the correct date of birth. You have an option to add your preferred first name.



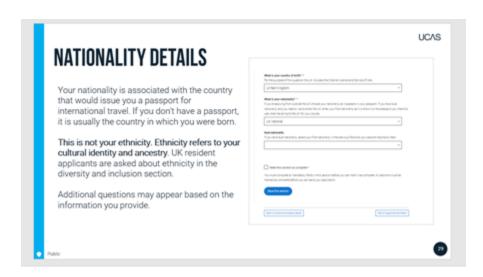
Nationality Section

Your nationality is associated with the country that would issue your passport for international travel.

If you don't have a passport, it is usually the country in which you were born.

This is not your ethnicity - this is in a different section.

Additional questions may appear based on the information you have provided.

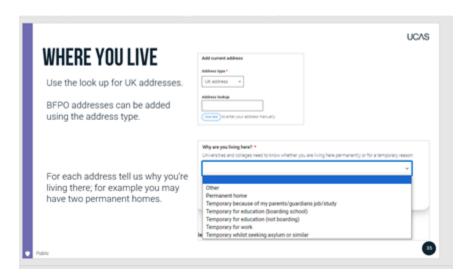


Where You Live

You must add three years of residency in this section for your year group this will be between 1st September 2023 and 1st September 2026.

Your current address should be added first.

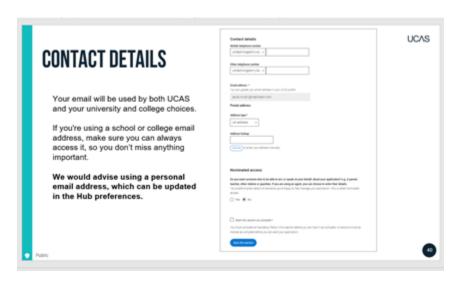
Then if necessary, add your previous addresses.



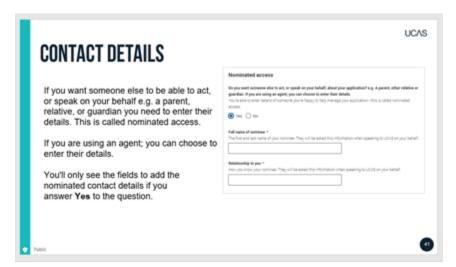
Contact Details

Your email address will be used by UCAS and the university and college choices.

Use a personal email address that is professional. Don't use your school email address as this will be deactivated when you leave.

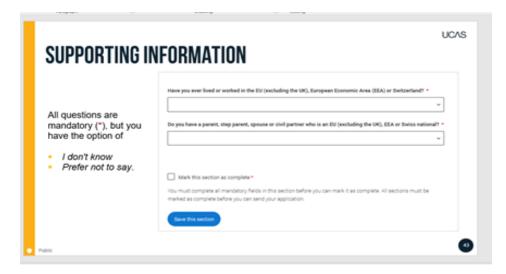


If you wish you can add someone else to act or speak to UCAS on your behalf.



Supporting Information

This section is used to ensure you are eligible for Home Fee status in relation to the financial elements of university study.



Finance and Funding

Student Finance is an important part of your decision. Make sure you research the financial implications of going to university.

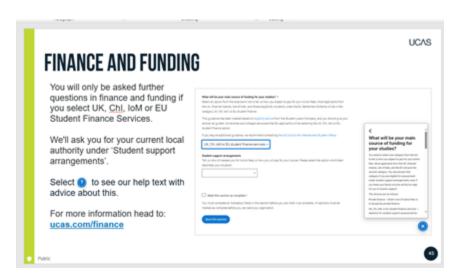
Check how much student finance you could get - GOV.UK

https://www.gov.uk/student-finance

You don't apply for Student Finance until February/March 2026.

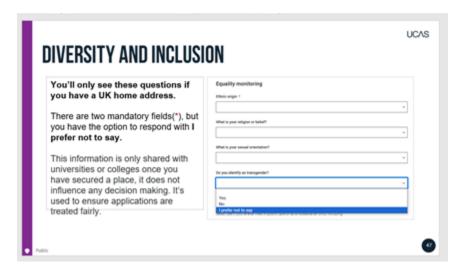
On your UCAS form you select UK, Chl, IoM or EU student finance services from the drop down.

For Student support arrangements you select Plymouth from the menu.



Diversity and Inclusion

You only need to complete the questions with a red asterisk* all other questions are optional.



More About You

You can share any individual needs or circumstances such as a disability or health condition. If you don't have anything to report, select "No disability".

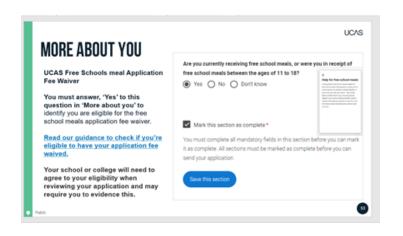
The information you share will always be treated sensitively and only used by those responsible for arranging support and helping you with your application. It is never used by the universities to decide whether to offer you a place, but it might be used to make you an offer that looks at your achievements in context.

https://www.ucas.com/applying/applying-university/individual-needs



UCAS Free School Meals Application Fee Waiver

If you are entitled to Free School Meals you must answer Yes to this question. By ticking yes the UCAS application fee will be waived.



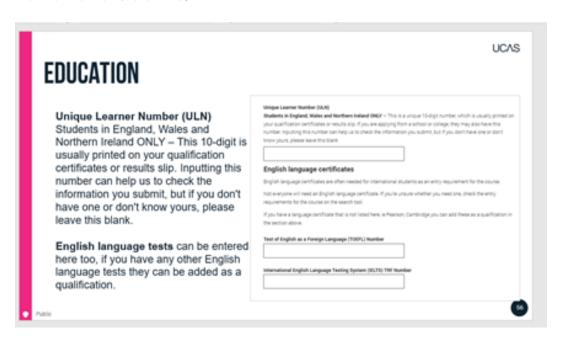
Education

You must enter all of your qualifications from GCSEs onwards (even if any are ungraded). You add your A levels and select Pending.

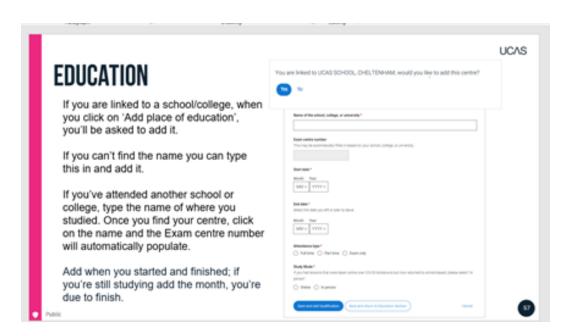
Click Add place of education and select Plymstock School. If you sat your GCSEs at another school you will need to add your previous school for your GCSE results and then add Plymstock School for your A levels.

You need to add your Unique Learner Number (this is on your GCSE Certificates or ask the Sixth Form Team we have this on record.

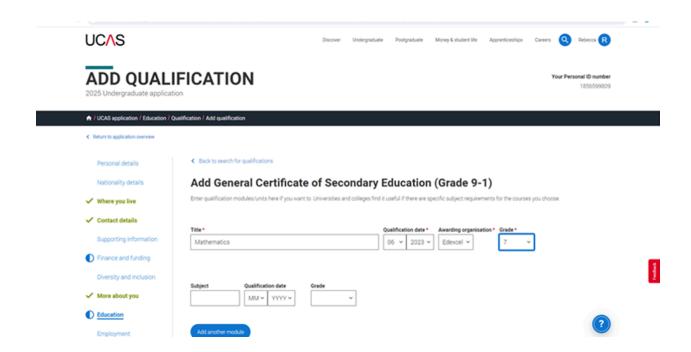
You can leave the English language tests blank - this is for international students.

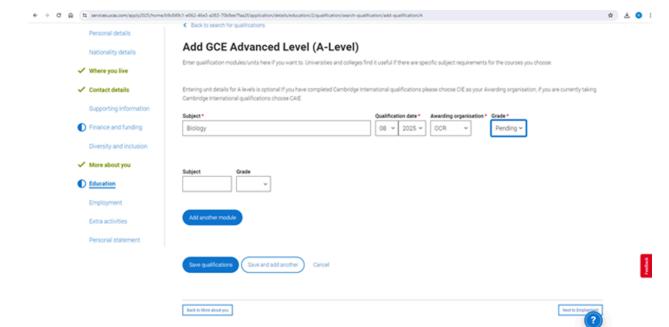


Once you have added Plymstock School it will pre-populate the Exam Centre Number. You need to add start (September 2019 - for most of you) and end dates (August 2026), attendance type and study mode.



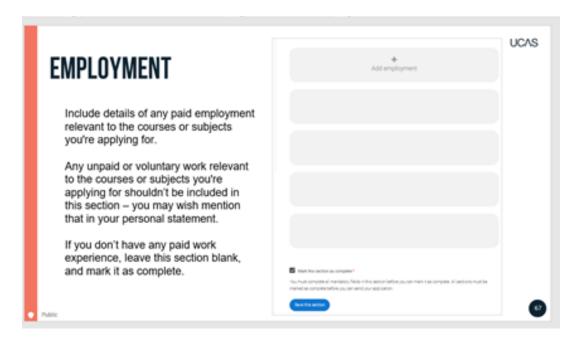
There is a short list of qualifications created for you to choose from. If you can't find a qualification ask for help (this will be checked prior to sending off your application).





Employment

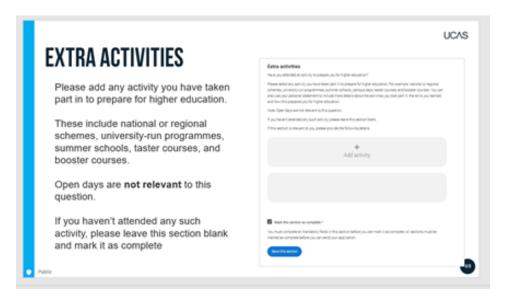
You can include paid employment in this section. You do not list voluntary or work experience.



Extra Activities

You can add up to two extra activities you have undertaken in preparation for Higher Education, these can be webinars, taster sessions at universities, Summer schools.

You can not put in an Open Day.



Personal Statement

- · This is the only section you have control over.
- · Your only chance to market yourselves individually.
- · One Personal Sttatement for <u>all</u> choices.
- Your Personal Statement is split into three questions.
- Show enthusiasm for the course and give supporting evidence to back this up.
- Supra-curricular, Extra-curricular activities and relevant work experience.
- Skills you can use on the course leadership,
 communication, team work for example.
- Allow plenty of time as you will have to draft, redraft and redraft again!

Question 1:

Motivation for the Course - Why do you want to study this course or subject?

This is your chance to showcase your passion, curiosity, interest, and knowledge of your chosen subject area and to demonstrate to universities and colleges why it is a good fit for you and your future ambitions.

Your motivation for this course: Have you been inspired by a role model or a moment in your life? Maybe it is a subject you love and want to pursue further. We are all driven by something and it is important for you to talk about how your path has led you to this course or subject area.

- Your knowledge of this subject area and interest:
 Perhaps there is a particular subject area you've researched and can't wait to learn more about, or a book or subject expert doing great things that have sparked your interest. Universities and colleges want to see that you have undertaken research so they can be confident that this is something you will enjoy and excel in. This is a great place to highlight supra-curricular activities as evidence of curiosity and interest in the subject outside of the classroom.
- Future plans and why this course/subject are a good fit: If you have a particular profession in mind you could talk about how you will use your studies to launch your career. If you don't know yet, think about how it could be important to you and your future and how the knowledge gained can be transferable to different professions.

Examples

- Personal life experience e.g. being a young carer, the environment you grew up in, an inspirational person in your life. A book read, taster lessons, news articles etc.
- Showing an understanding of your area of interest and the skills and qualities needed to succeed within it – research the course/subject area.

Question 2:

Preparedness for the course – How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject? What additional reading have you undertaken that you can talk about to show your interest in the subject (i.e. journal articles, additional books)?

This is the chance for you to show evidence of the relevant or transferable skills you've gained from your formal

education and highlight your understanding of how this will help you succeed in your subject area.

- How have your studies or training related to your chosen course or subject area: This could be current study, short online courses. The key is to focus on what is recent and relevant to the course.
- What relevant or transferable skills do you have that make you a great candidate: Maybe there are some subjects studied that have developed a core set of skills required for your chosen subject/course. Or a particular module that has helped you understand where your interests and strengths lie.
- Any relevant educational achievements: Universities or colleges will see your grades on your application form so don't focus on these, talk about other accomplishments i.e. music, drama, sport, subject competitions.

Examples

- · Specific modules or topics studied
- Essays or projects undertaken exploring a viewpoint or technique
- Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)
- · School, local or national competitions
- · Private qualifications (music, drama etc.)
- · Tutoring or mentoring
- Online courses
- MOOCs
- University essay competitions

Question 3:

Preparedness through other experiences - What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful? (i.e. work experience/volunteering)?

This is your chance to talk about any other activities you have undertaken outside of your formal education or personal experience which further demonstrate your suitability for the course. This section is likely to be highly personal to you and anything you do should reflect on why you are including it.

- Work experience, employment or volunteering: Whether it is in-person work experience or a virtual work experience, volunteering in the community the key is to reflect on the experiences and skills gained.
- Personal life experiences or responsibilities: Is there a situation you have personally overcome that has influenced your decision? Are you responsible for caring that has developed essential qualities like resilience and empathy?
- Hobbies and any extra-curricular or outreach activities: This could be sports, reading, community work, university summer schools, any activities away from your studies that showcase why you would be a good student.
- Achievements outside of school: This could be a position of responsibility through your hobbies or part-time work. Achieving an award (DofE) or winning a competition.

Examples

- Extra and supra-curricular activities
- Volunteering
- Personal experience

- · Young enterprise
- · Work experience (in-person or virtual)
- · Work
- Work-based learning (Manual Handling, Health and Safety, First Aid)
- · MOOCs
- · Tutoring
- Trips and visits, museums, galleries, Magistrates
 Court etc.
- · Podcasts, TED talks, documentaries
- · Duke of Edinburgh Awards

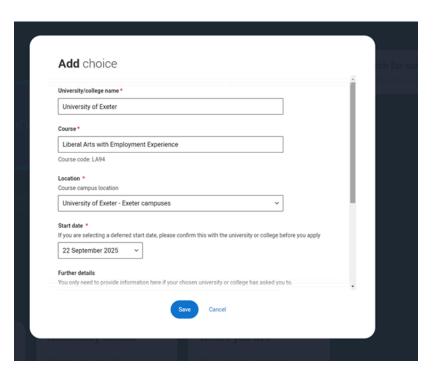
Adding Choices

Start by typing the name of the university or collect and select from the options displayed.

Do the same for the course you have selected.

Locations and start dates are displayed according to the course details. For those wishing to start university in September 2026 select the 2026 date. If you are wishing to defer you can select the 2027 date at this point.

Universities and colleges will display the points of entry available in the UCAS course search, check this if you are not sure.



Some courses will ask about Criminal Convictions (health, education etc.) DO NOT tick the box unless you have a criminal conviction.

You have a maximum of 5 choices. If applying for medicine, dentistry or veterinary medicine you can only apply for 4

courses of this nature. Your fifth choice could be linked such as biomedical sciences.

If you are applying for Oxbridge you can choose either University of Oxford or University of Cambridge but not both.

Your courses are not listed in preference order.

None of the universities can see where else you have applied.

If a course has an additional Admissions Test, Assessment or Interview it will show here however, you should have already done your research prior to selecting your choices and already be aware of any additional admissions requirements.

Checking and Sending Stages

The staged process below shows you how we manage Sixth Form applications.

GOLDEN RULE

- COMMUNICATION
- Make sure you pass me your personal statement for checking regularly (you will have multiple drafts).

STEP ONE

- When you feel ready, book a checking appointment with me.
- I will request your reference.

STEP TWO

- At your checking appointment, we will gauge what you have left to do.
- If your application & personal statement is ready we will book a sending appointment.

STEP THREE

• At your final appointment, we will double check everything and if it is all ready you will send off your application.

Paying

Once I have met with you and checked your application I will let you know if you are in a position to pay and book an appointment for sending off your application.

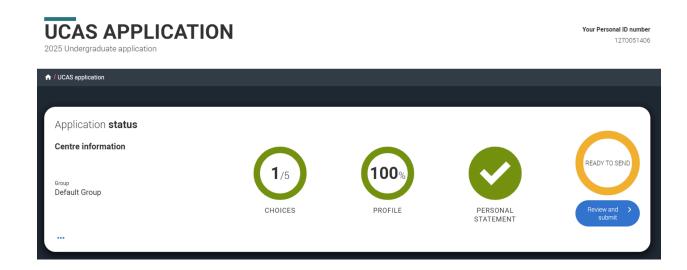
Paying for your application is not the same as sending your application.

When you pay your application fee you submit your application to the school for approval.

You will then meet with me to send off your application.

We only do this when you are 100% ready and everything has been checked carefully.

The application fee is £28.95. If you are entitled to Free School Meals you are eligible for the fee waiver.



What happens after you have submitted your application?

You will receive an email from UCAS welcoming you to UCAS TRACK – this is where you will be able to log on and track your application.

Within 24/48 hours you should receive a generic email from your universities of choice acknowledging receipt of your application

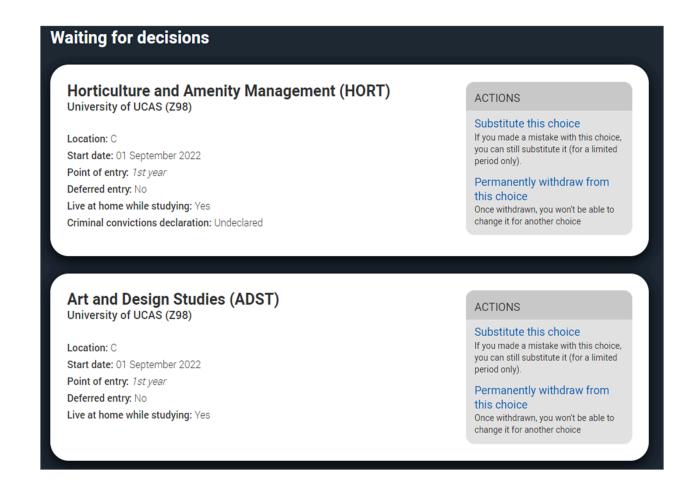
Universities reply at different rates. Some will reply quickly. Some will require an interview before making a decision. Others will use the maximum time before they reply (13th May).

When a University replies to you, you will receive an email from UCAS advising you something has changed on UCAS so you can log onto Track and check.

TOP TIP: YOU NEED TO CHECK YOUR INBOX AND JUNK MAIL ON A REGULAR BASIS SO YOU DON'T MISS ANY IMPORTANT EMAILS!

You may have second thoughts about one of your choices and decide to substitute a choice. You can do this within 14 days of submitting your application.

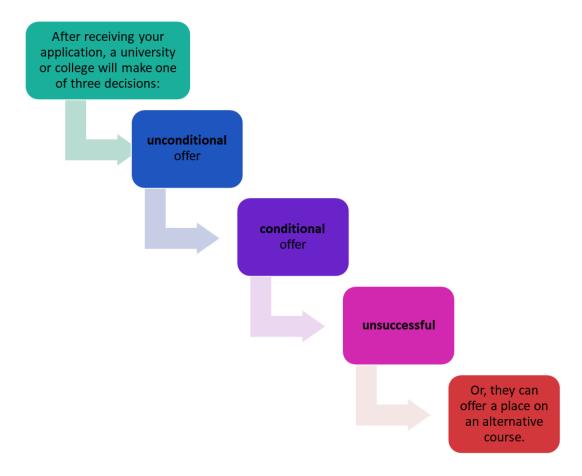
You simply choose the choice you wish to change on UCAS track and click 'substitute this choice'

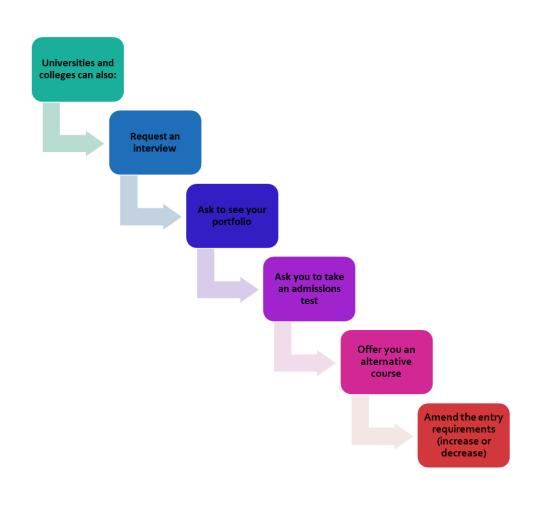


Types of Offers/Responses

You will hear back from universities with responses at various points, all universities have their own systems so you have to be patient. Students who apply in the Autumn term do tend to hear a bit quicker but that is not always the case.

The responses from universities will depend on the courses you apply for.





What if I don't get any offers?

Hopefully this won't be the case but sometimes when applying for highly competitive courses this can happen.

If you receive no offers speak to the Sixth Form Team for advice and guidance as you have options to go through UCAS Extra (from late February) whereby you can apply for another university. Or you can go through Clearing from July.

Sometimes with highly competitive courses you have to prepare yourself that you may need to apply again.

Replying to offers

Once you are ready to make your Firm and Insurance Choice you do this through UCAS.

You will be able to reply to your offers once you have received offers from **all** your universities, there is no rush to make decisions as soon as you have received all offers. You will have until 6 May 2026 if you received all your offers by 31st March. If you receive decisions after March you will have until 2nd June to make your decision.

Once you have received responses from all your choices you will have a date by which you have to respond. This date will be shown on Track and is specific to your application.

You make a Firm choice (1st choice) and an Insurance choice (2nd choice) and Decline all other offers.

Firm Acceptance – Make sure you meet the entry requirements? Can you afford to go to this University? Have you visited there on an open day or an applicant day – do you like it there? This is a big decision make sure you are 100% happy with your first choice.

Insurance Acceptance – This should ideally be lower entry requirements than your Firm choice as this is your back-up. If you end up with your Insurance choice will you be happy to go here? Have you visited there on an open day? Again you need to make sure that your second choice is one that you are happy with.

APPRENTICESHIPS

Why An Apprenticeship?



Earn while you learn – Get paid a salary while gaining hands-on experience and training.



Practical experience - Develop real-world skills that are directly relevant to your chosen industry.



Strong career prospects –Many apprentices are offered full-time jobs with their employer after completing the program.



Nationally recognized qualifications – Gain certifications that are respected and valued across the country.



Build a professional network – Connect with experienced colleagues and industry professionals early in your career.



Invest in your future.

There are over 600 possible apprenticeship programmes which exist. It would be easier to name an industry that does not have them.

www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/#

- Accounting and Taxation
- Architect
- •Boot Builder
- Building Surveyors
- •Civil Engineer
- •Cyber Security Technician
- Data Analyst
- Doctor (from 2023)
- •Early Years
- Ecologist
- •Farrier
- •Food Technologist
- •Game Programmer
- •Geospatial Mapping
- •Harbour Master
- Historic Environment Adviser
- •Internal Audit Professional
- •Intelligence Analyst
- Journalist
- Junior 2D Artist (visual effects)
- •Knitted Product Manufacturing
- Laboratory Scientist
- Licensed Conveyor
- Midwife
- •Marketing Manager
- •Nuclear Scientist and Engineer
- Nursing
- •Operational Firefighter
- •Orthodontic Therapist
- Paralegal

Choose the right level for you

Level 2

Intermediate Apprenticeship Level 3

Advanced Apprenticeship Level 4-7

Higher Apprenticeship

Research - it's FREE!

With the following websites students can easily explore apprenticeships; learn more information and see a live selection of apprenticeship vacancies.

Top Tip: Set up alerts to stay up to date.

Find an apprenticeship - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Home (notgoingtouni.co.uk)

https://www.ucas.com/explore/search/apprenticeships?query=

https://www.amazingapprenticeships.com/meet-the-employer/

<u>Apprenticeships | Prospects.ac.uk</u>

https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/influencers/support-for-parents-and-guardians#

How to Apply

With apprenticeships the application processes are varied so you need to be organised for applying. Take your time to create a list of companies you wish to apply for and as much detail as you can find about the application process. Most companies will have an Early Careers/Apprenticeships section to help you research.

- Multiple deadlines;
- Advertised throughout the year;
- Large organisations with multiple application processes may recruit earlier than smaller local organisations;
- Higher and Degree level apprenticeships with a Sept/Oct start date tend to recruit in the Autumn term of Year 13;
- Applications are made directly through the company, the government website or the education provider;
- There is no limit on the number of applications you can make;
- The application process might vary across vacancies, you could be asked for:
 - > CV and Covering Letter
 - > Application Form
 - > In App/Site application
- You can apply for universities and apprenticeships at the same time!

GAP YEAR & EMPLOYMENT

A gap year offers you a break to gain life experience, explore interests, and grow personally. Benefits include increased maturity, improved self-confidence, and greater clarity about academic and career goals. It can also provide opportunities for travel, volunteering, internships, or earning money, which can enrich CVs and future university or job applications.

Research your options and make a plan looking at the logistics of travelling and how much it will cost.

Internships

- •https://studentladder.co.uk/year-13/gap-year-placements/
- •https://www.etrust.org.uk/the-year-in-industry

Travel

- •https://www.skifamille.co.uk/ski-jobs/
- •https://coolskijobs.com/jobs/
- •https://www.workaseason.com/
- •https://www.interrail.eu/en/interrail-passes/choose-right-interrail-pass
- •https://www.oysterworldwide.com/project/canada-whistler-blackcomb-ski-instructor-jobs/
- •https://yearoutgroup.org/
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- •https://www.realgap.co.uk/volunteering?#search_page_area_1
- •https://www.iwill.org.uk/young-people-are-still-waiting-to-be-heard/
- •https://www.yipiyap.co.uk/become-ayipiyap?utm_source=ucas.com&utm_medium=webpage&utm_campaign=re cruitment_summer_2023&utm_term=lifechanging_professionaldevelopment &utm_content=gapyear_ideas&utm_position=list

Employment

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https://www.reed.co.uk/jobs/jobs-in-plymouth

https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/jobs-careers-and-training

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https://www.monster.co.uk/jobs/l-plymouth-south-west-england?page=1

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