

A young man in a tan jacket is looking at a smartphone held by another young man in a dark jacket. They are outdoors, possibly on a street or campus.

UCAS



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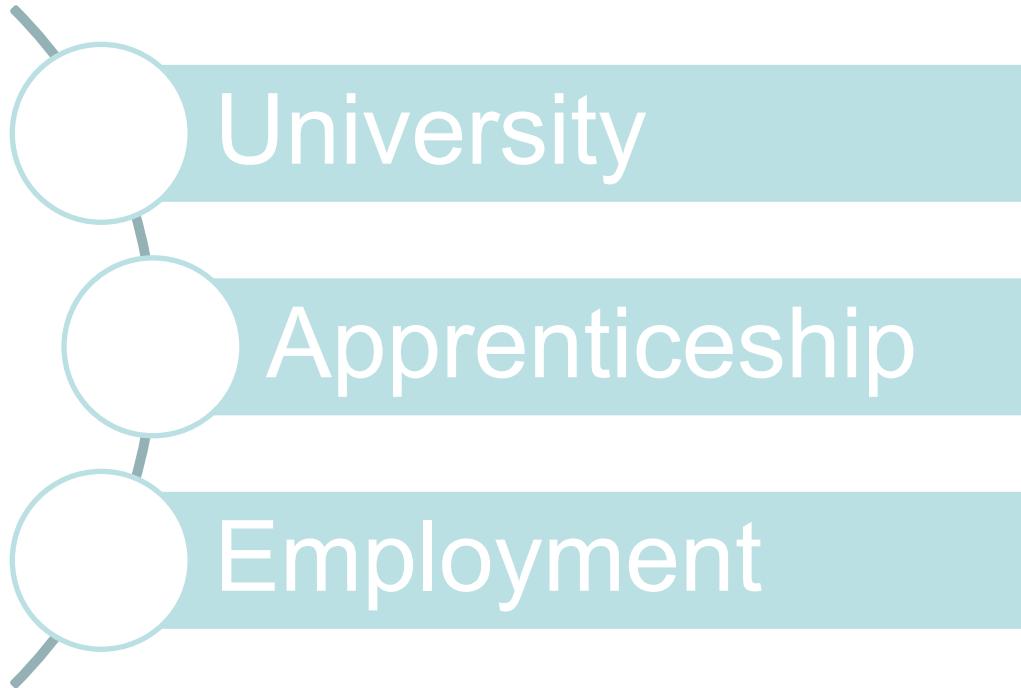
# Higher Education, Apprenticeships & The Future

Post-18 Parent Information Evening

2026 Entry



# Which route to take?



Students are also encouraged to explore:

- School leaver programmes which offer the chance to work towards a degree and/or professional qualification (e.g. Marks and Spencer)
- Higher and degree level apprenticeships
- Gap years
- Distance learning
- Studying abroad



# Post-18 Options (RCT Students)

In 2024:

- ✓ 78% of students chose to go to University
- ✓ 22% of students chose to enter the workplace or start an apprenticeship

Of those that applied to university:

- ✓ 74% accessed their first-choice university (Firm Choice)
- ✓ 13.5% took up their second-choice university (Insurance Choice)
- ✓ 12% took up their place through Clearing
- ✓ 0.5% decided to withdraw or defer their place

Students are advised to cast a wide net, where they consider all routes and options before selecting the most appropriate route for them. Support is available for all types of post-18 routes.

## Types of Apprenticeship

	Type	Entry Requirement	Leads to Equivalent of
Level 2	<b>Intermediate</b>	-	5 GCSEs
Level 3	<b>Advanced</b>	5 GCSEs	2 A-Levels
Level 4 & 5	<b>Higher</b>	A-Levels/NVQ Level 3	HNC/Foundation Degree/HND
Level 6	<b>Degree</b>	3+ A-Levels	Bachelor's Degree
Level 7	<b>Masters</b>	Bachelors Degree	Master's Degree

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# PART 1: Higher Education & University

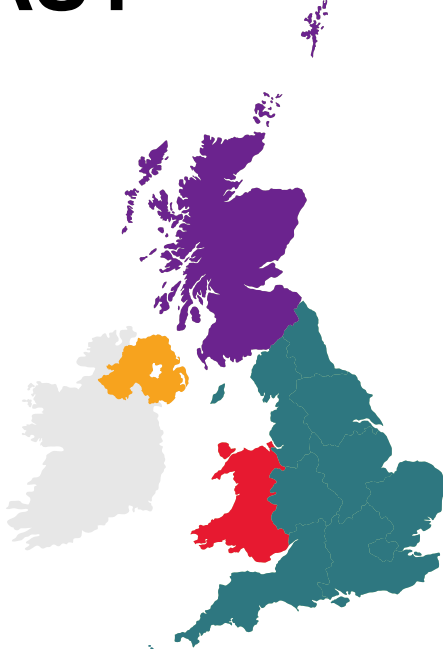




# What is UCAS?

**350+** universities and colleges:

- 4** in Northern Ireland
- 15** in Wales
- 19** in Scotland
- 324** in England



**35,000+** courses available



HIGHER EDUCATION



APPRENTICESHIPS / TRAINEESHIPS



STUDYING ABROAD



GAP YEAR



GETTING A JOB

Explore the possibilities at [ucas.com](https://ucas.com)



# Why higher education?

## Opportunities while studying:

- Chance to study a subject they are passionate about.
- Achieve a qualification that could lead to their chosen career.
- Grow in confidence, make lifelong friends, and gain independence and important life skills that will widen their prospects.

## With a degree, they'll have:

- the opportunity to follow their career path
- better job prospects, as many employers target graduates – the graduate premium
- higher earning potential



# 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.
- **Location** – some are based in large cities, others in smaller towns - a major influence on the environment and lifestyle.
- **Size** – larger universities can have more than 20,000 students, whereas some of the smallest have only a few thousand.
- **Culture and facilities** – influenced by a range of factors, including the diversity of students who attend.
- **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 to.
- **Tuition fees** – can vary between course providers. Check if there are any scholarships or bursaries available.
- **Living costs** – accommodation, transport, and food can vary enormously.



# Choosing the right course for you

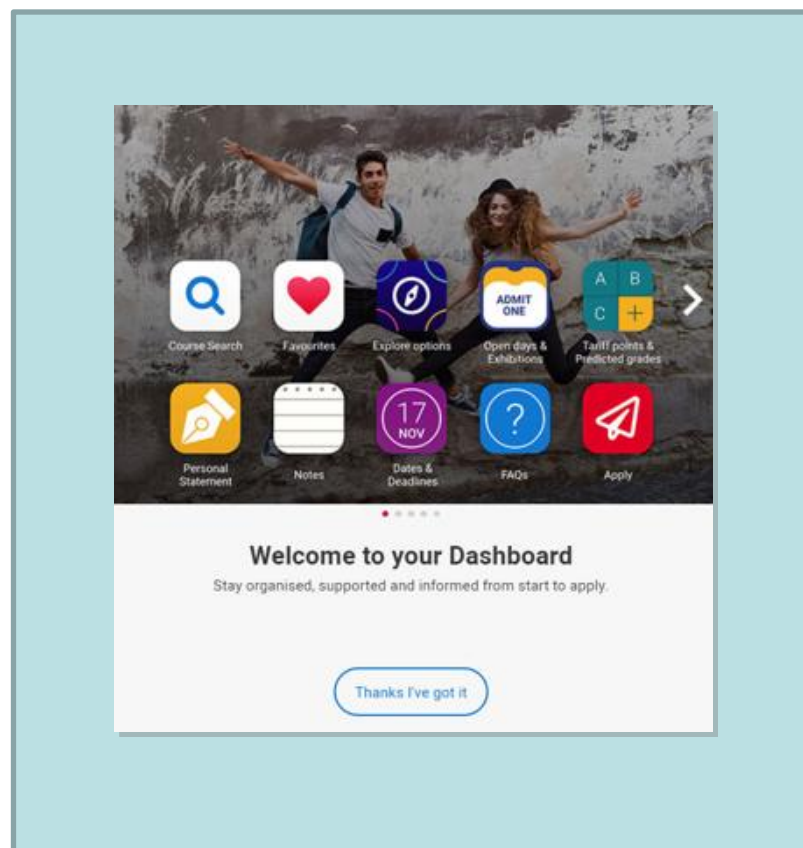
- What does the course cover?
- Courses with the same title may be very different.
- Look carefully at the core course content, and the range of optional studies/modules available.
- Which modules are the most interesting and relevant to your career aspirations?
- See if the course or university/college offers any internship, placement, or study abroad opportunities.
- 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?
- How is the course assessed?



# Before you apply...

Register in the UCAS Hub to explore your options, such as:

- explore careers, subjects, universities and apprenticeships
- find and favourite over 35,000 courses
- search for virtual tours and online events
- turn predicted grades into Tariff points
- speak to those in the know using [Unibuddy](#)





# The UCAS Tariff

Extended Project Qualification	AS level	A level	Tariff points	BTEC Extended Diploma  (Triple Award)	BTEC or CTEC Diploma  (Double Award)	BTEC Subsidiary Diploma or CTEC Extended Certificate or CTEC Introductory Diploma  (Single award)	BTEC Certificate  (1 year award)
			168	D*D*D*			
			160	D*D*D			
			152	D*DD			
			144	DDD			
			128	DDM			
			112	DMM	D*D*		
			104		D*D		
			96	MMM	DD		
			80	MMP	DM		
			64	MPP	MM		
		A*	56			D*	
		A	48	PPP	MP	D	
		B	40				
		C	32		PP	M	
A*			28				D*
A		D	24				D
B	A		20				
C	B	E	16			P	M
D	C		12				
	D		10				
E			8				P
	E		6				

*D\* = Distinction Star, D=Distinction, M=Merit, P=Pass*



# ‘I’m overwhelmed by all the choice...’

## Get organised:

Tools to search, favourite, shortlist, reflect, diary, and build application.

## Define what’s important:

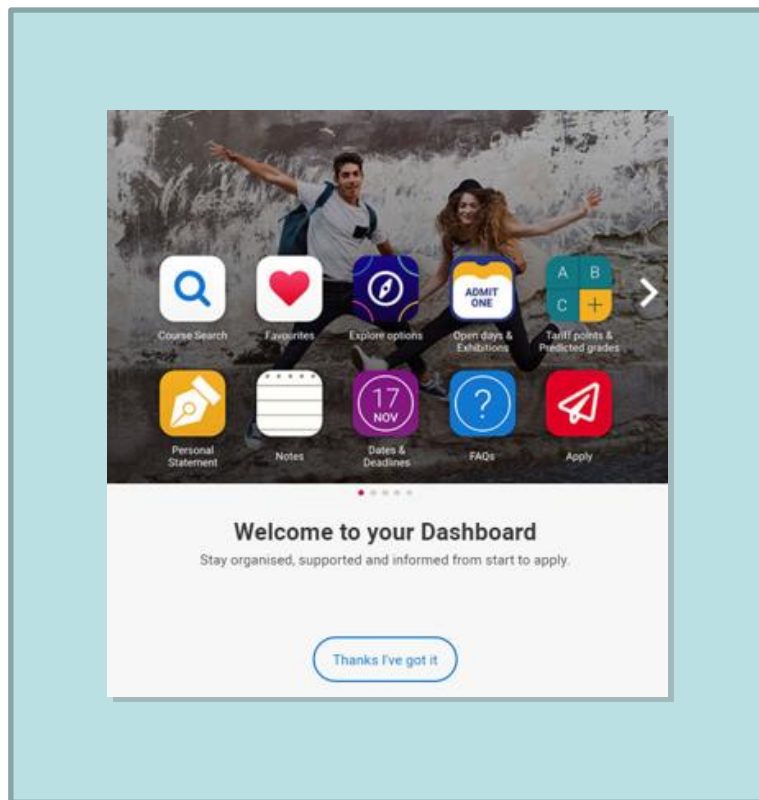
Distance from home, teaching satisfaction, work experience options, job outcomes...

## Make it yours:

Organise tools, remove the ones they don’t need, and tick off their to do list. It’s their space, and their future.

## You might not have thought of...

Expand horizons by pushing options they might not have considered.





# Research



## New - Accommodation Search-

accommodation is high on the list when considering where you want to study, but it's not always easy to compare what's on offer. Understand what options there are using our new Accommodation search.



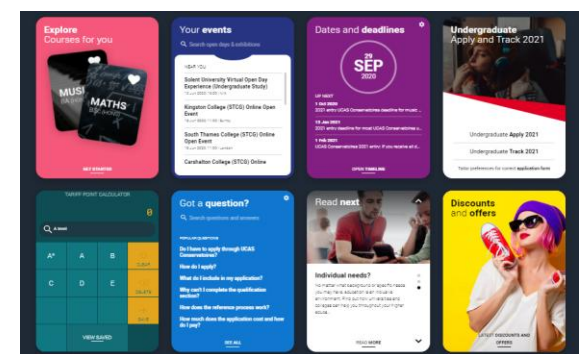
## Join our UCAS Hub lives and Facebook lives

-each live session is hosted by an expert panel to give you what you need to make an informed decision.



## UCAS Futures

- a chance to explore courses you're interested in and speak to universities and colleges from around the UK. You can talk to subject and admissions experts, discover apprenticeships, get advice on personal statements, applying through UCAS, and more.



### How to find the right student accommodation for you

This is it. Life is good. You're going to uni. Is it going to be the party paradise of on-campus halls, or a flat-share right in the middle of town? Maybe the cost of rent will decide, what supports on hand, or whether there's a bus stop...

[read more](#)



# Research



- Learning from others – [chat to](#) university students ([student videos](#) and [blogs](#)).
- [Career options](#) – use the [job profiles](#) to explore different career roles and pathways.
- Take the [Buzz quiz](#) to find out more about individual strengths, and what roles may suit you.
- The [Career Finder tool](#) is ideal for considering options after education, including searching for [apprenticeships](#).
- HEAP guide, Times Good University Guide.
- Unifrog



# Unifrog

- The unifrog tools:

## Exploring pathways

- Careers library
- Subjects library
- Know-how library
- MOOC

## Searching for opportunities

- UK universities
- US universities
- European universities
- Oxbridge
- Apprenticeships
- College/ Sixth Form
- Canadian universities
- Asian universities
- Special Opportunities

## Recording what you've done

- Activities
- Competencies
- Interactions

## Drafting application materials

- Personal Statement
- CV / Resumé
- Teacher References
- Common App Essay

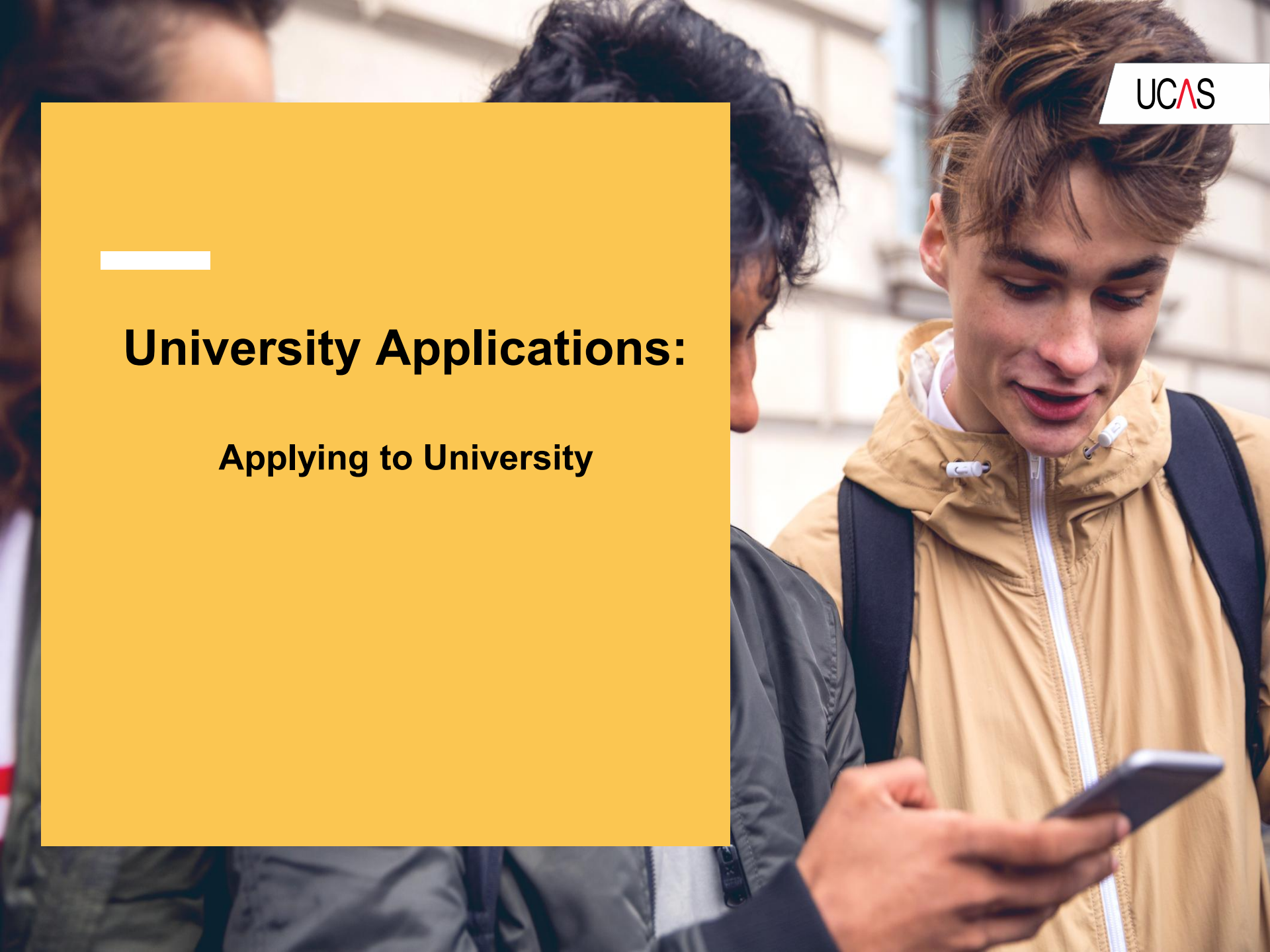
## Making applications

- Post 16/18 Intentions
- Locker
- Applications list

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# University Applications:

## Applying to University





# Apply key facts



It's an online application



Maximum of FIVE choices



Choice restrictions:

- medicine, veterinary medicine/science, dentistry (maximum of four)
- Oxford or Cambridge



Simple application cost:

- one to five choices – £28.95 (fee waiver for FSM students)  
(No single application fee will be applicable)



Equal consideration



'Invisibility'



# When to apply for 2026 entry

- **13 May** UCAS Undergraduate Apply opens for 2026 entry.
- **10 July** UCAS Conservatoires application opens.
- **3 September** First day for receipt of completed applications.
- **2 October** Deadline for practical music courses through UCAS conservatoires (18:00)
- **15 October\*** Application deadline for courses in medicine, veterinary medicine/science and dentistry, and courses at Oxford or Cambridge (18:00). **Early applicant deadline.**
- **15 December** School deadline to guarantee UCAS form is processed, thoroughly checked and submitted on time.
- **14 January\*** Equal consideration application deadline (18:00). **All other courses deadline.**
- **26 February-4 July** Extra available for applicants who have used all five choices and are not holding any offers can add another choice.



# Making a UCAS application

Begin at [ucas.com/apply](https://ucas.com/apply).

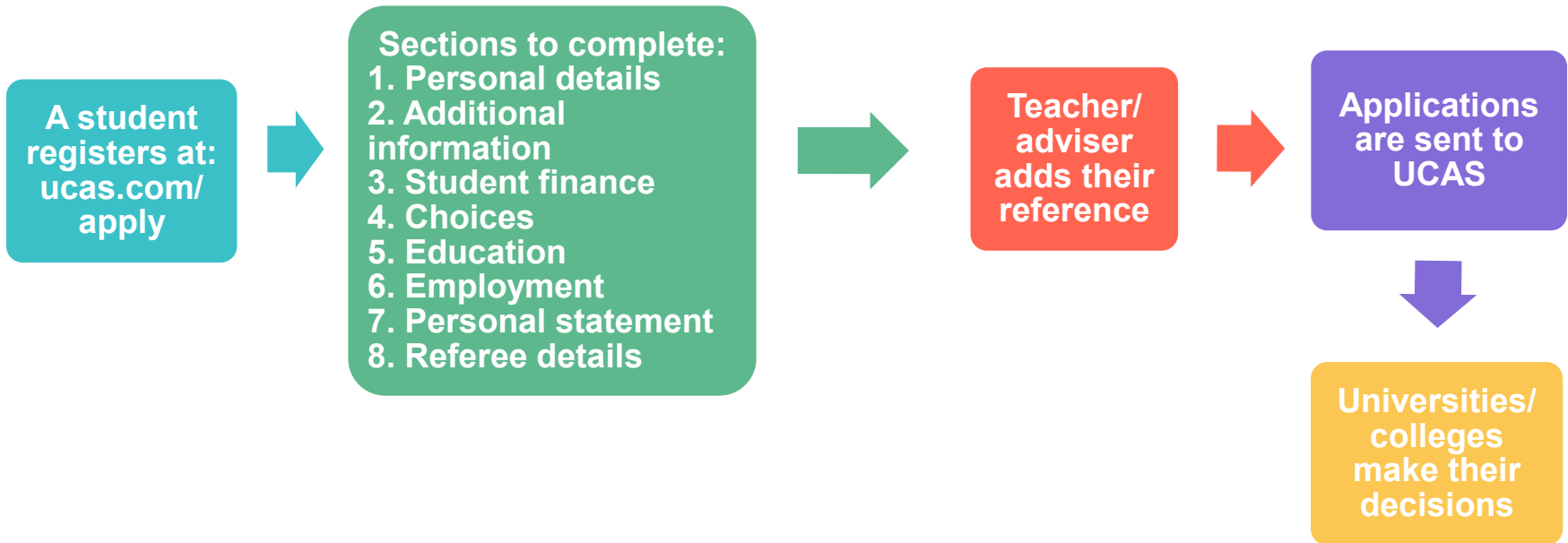
Sections to be completed:

- Personal details
- Choices – make up to five
- Education
- Employment
- Personal statement
- Reference





# Completing the UCAS application





# The Personal Statement



The only section you have full control over



Your only chance to market yourself individually



The same for all of your choices



A maximum of 4,000 characters, in 3 sections



A minimum of 1,050 characters



There isn't a spelling or grammar check



No formatting is allowed

UCAS' similarity detection service: every personal statement is run through software to check for plagiarism.



# Decisions

Universities and colleges will review the:



**personal statement**



**qualifications**



**reference**

They may also ask for  
decisions:



**Admissions test**



**Interview**



**Portfolio**



# Admissions Tests

See parent booklet for more detail, but as an overview:

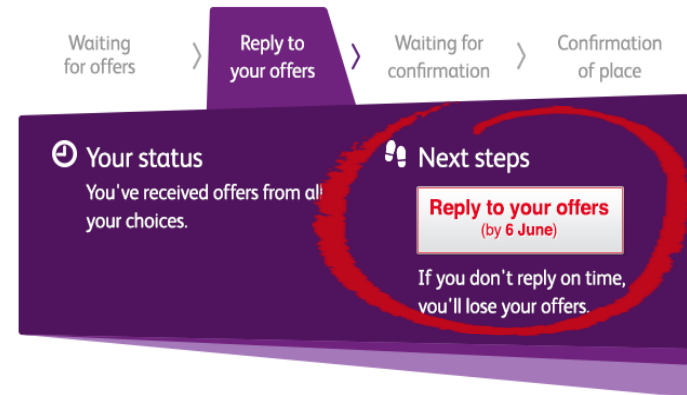
- **UCAT**: University Clinical Aptitude Test is needed for **most Medicine and Dentistry courses**
- **LNAT**: Law National Aptitude Test - **some Law courses**
- **TARA**: the Test of Academic Reasoning for Admissions – **some UCL courses**
- **TMUA**: Test of Mathematics for University Admission required for some courses at **Cambridge, Imperial, Warwick, Durham and LSE.**
- **ESAT**: Engineering and Science Admissions Test - for **Cambridge and Imperial.**
- **Oxford Admissions Tests** – several subjects have admissions tests across both Arts and Sciences.



# Tracking applications

Track allows applicants to:

- follow the progress of their application 24/7
- see their choices and personal information
- view their offers
- reply to offers online



In Track, a student can hold up to two offers:

- **firm** – if they meet the conditions of the offer, they will be placed here
- **insurance** –if they are not placed with their firm choice, they may be placed with their insurance choice.



# What should your child be doing now?

- research
- extracurricular activities
- work experience
- go beyond the syllabus
- focus on this year's studies
- **Start to complete their UCAS application form ('apply').**
- **Buzzword required (available in school)**
- **Start planning the Personal Statement (use Unifrog as a support tool)**





# How can you support them?

Research

Use the parents/guardians' section of the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com/parents](http://www.ucas.com/parents)

Sign up

Sign up for updates from UCAS and get everything you need to know about the application process direct to your inbox.

Open days

Attend virtual events and open days – you may have a different perspective.

Be proactive

Make sure they read everything carefully that is sent to them and don't book family holidays at key times!

UCAS provide a Parent Guide in the 'Parent Section' of their website.



# Meeting Our School Deadlines

The final UCAS deadline is **14 January** but the school need time to check and process the application form. Therefore, students should:

1. Registration: register with UCAS (**June**)
2. Personal details, education, employment, student finance & additional information sections (**June/July**)
3. Choices (**by September**)
4. Tutor reference requested (**September**)
5. Personal statement completed and checked (**October**)
6. Meeting with tutor to check for errors (**October/November**)
7. Pay and send (**November**)
8. Meet the Sixth Form Team to send form to UCAS (**November/December**)  
School deadline to ensure the UCAS form is thoroughly checked and processed is **15 December**.



# Early Applicant Deadlines

The final UCAS deadline is **15 October** but the school need time to check and process the application form. Therefore, students should:

1. Registration: register with UCAS (**June**)
2. Personal details, education, employment, student finance and additional information sections (**June**)
3. Confirm which tests you'll need to take (**August/September**)
4. Tutor reference requested (**July**)
5. Choices (**September**)
6. Personal statement (**September**)
7. Meeting with tutor to check for errors (**September/October**)
8. Pay and send (**October**)
9. Meet the Sixth Form Team to send form to UCAS (**October**)
10. Written work – check if required for your course (**October**)
11. Interviews (usually **December**)
12. Decisions made by universities (**January**)

'Early Applicants' include students choosing to apply to/for:

- Oxford
- Cambridge
- Medicine
- Veterinary science/medicine
- Dentistry



# University Finance

- In Part 3 of the evening

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## PART 2: Apprenticeships & Employment





# Apprenticeship advice

UCAS has [apprenticeship advice](#) to help students make informed decisions about their post-16 and post-18 opportunities.

Find out about:

- the different types of apprenticeships
- how to find and apply for apprenticeships
- preparing for the application and interview process

Go to [ucas.com/understanding-apprenticeships](https://ucas.com/understanding-apprenticeships)

**25%**

of applicants declining all offers in 2018 told UCAS they had chosen an **apprenticeship** instead.



# Why an apprenticeship?

## Opportunities while studying:

- Hands on training, putting skills into practice (receiving recognised qualifications)
- Gain independence , while benefitting from ongoing and personalised support
- Receive an annual salary (earn while you learn)
- Tuition fees will be paid in degree level apprenticeships – no debt
- Benefit from the same student discounts as university students

## What apprenticeships are available?

Each levels has different entry requirements, and each vacancy will specify what these are.

- Intermediate (Level 2 – GCSE level)
- Advanced (Level 3 – A-level)
- Higher (Level 4 and above)
- Degree (Levels 5-7)



# Choosing the right apprenticeship for you

- **Set Non-Negotiables** – draw up a list of the roles of interest, focusing on the work and career pathways available.
- **Research** – research apprenticeship advertisement platforms and set up alerts for apprenticeships that are of interest. A starting point:
  - [Apprenticeship jobs \(ucas.com\)](https://ucas.com)
  - [Find an apprenticeship \(findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk\)](https://findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk)
  - [Apps Frameworks-150319.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/Apps-Frameworks-150319.pdf)
- **Employer Expectations** – achieve highly academically and at work, managing time & adjusting to longer hours.

Please refer to the ‘Useful Links’ document for websites signposting you to further information.



# Before you apply...

Finding the right apprenticeship is not easy and takes considerable time, patience and perseverance. Students should:

- explore careers, subjects, universities and apprenticeships
- find out about the employer
- identify what qualifications and grades are needed
- find out about the training provider involved
- identify the essential/desirable skills and experience requested, and the qualities they're looking for
- find out whether there's a need to relocate
- investigate the salary, benefits and facilities available, and whether a degree is accessible (either now or in the future!)





# Seek advice & guidance

- Form tutor(s)
- Head of Careers - Mr Scholefield (CGS)/  
Miss Chant (KSHS)
  - Careers appointments can be organised on request
- Head of Sixth Form/Head of Year
- Subject Teachers

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# Apprenticeship Applications:

## Applying for an Apprenticeship



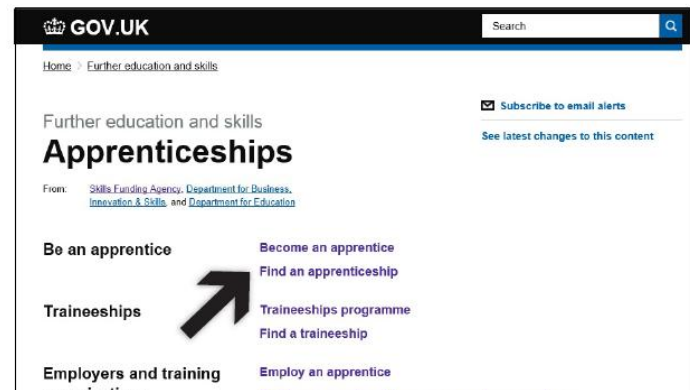
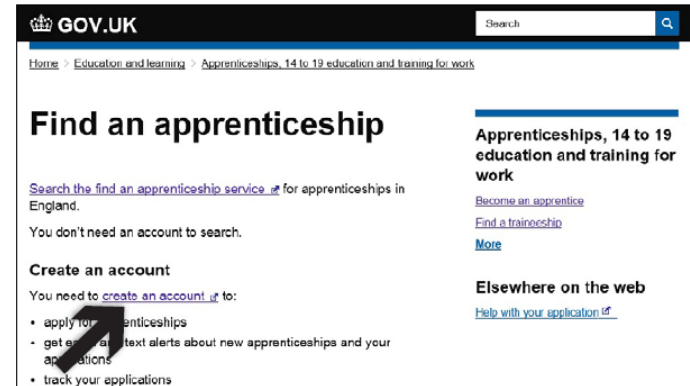


# Registering on 'Find an Apprenticeship'

- Registering on 'Find an Apprenticeship' is completely free of charge. To start your search you need to visit the website:

[www.gov.uk/further-education-skills/apprenticeships](http://www.gov.uk/further-education-skills/apprenticeships)

- From the home page, click on 'Find an Apprenticeship'.
- You'll be asked to make an account.





# Signing In & Searching

- Once an account has been validated and the process has been completed, students can now log in to their account and start searching!
- You will see a search box and account options at the top right of the screen.
- To start searching for vacancies, enter a key word and your location. Select the apprenticeship level and click search.

**Sign in**

Sign in or [create an account](#)

Email address

Password

[I can't access my account](#)

**Sign in**

Search and apply for an apprenticeship in England

Search [Browse](#) [Saved searches](#)

Keywords (optional)

Can include job title, employer or reference number

All

Your location

Enter postcode, town or city or [use current location](#)

SE12 8RB

Within  Apprenticeship level

5 miles  All levels



# Apply for an Apprenticeship

- It is important that you enter details thoroughly and accurately, as when you're ready to apply for a vacancy, you just click 'apply'.
- You will see 'your details' are entered, so check these are correct and update if they are not. Then you will add:
  - Your education details
  - Qualifications
  - Work experience details
  - Three questions about you
  - Two additional questions (where employers have asked for more information).

Apply for apprenticeship



# Finding and using 'buzzwords'

- The job advert needs to be the starting point for your 'strengths' section. By reading it carefully, you can start to identify the skills and attributes that the employer is looking for.
- The first place to look for 'buzz words' is in the apprenticeship summary within the job advert. This information will contain information about the kinds of tasks that you would be expected to complete.
- TIP: print the job advert off and circle the buzz words so that you can work them into your application.
- **Ask your form tutor to check your application!**

## Apprenticeship summary

<b>Weekly wage</b> £150.00	At MTR you will work as the office administrator dealing with all customer queries either via telephone or face to face as well as writing reports and attending client meetings. This is a fun office based environment where no two days will ever be the same with your wide varied job role. If you are <u>eager, organised and confident</u> then apply now for this role and kick start your career with MTRI!
<b>Working week</b> 9:15am to 5:45pm (37.5 hours over 5 days)	Below are some of the roles you will carry out:
<b>Apprenticeship duration</b> 24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working on the reception area of the office</li></ul>
<b>Possible start date</b> 25 May 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meeting and greeting visitors who enter the office</li><li>• Writing up reports</li><li>• Attending client meetings if and when required</li></ul>
<b>Date posted</b> 5 days ago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Answering internal and external telephone calls</li><li>• <u>Processing and dealing with all queries from clients</u></li><li>• <u>Researching on the internet</u></li></ul>
<b>Apprenticeship level</b> Intermediate Level Apprenticeship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using the internal diary and computer system</li><li>• Sending and receiving emails and letters to clients</li></ul>
<b>Reference number</b> VAC000622114	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scanning, printing and photocopying documents</li><li>• Storing and retrieving of information</li><li>• Organising, inputting and reporting data on to the company system</li></ul>

## Requirements and prospects

<b>Desired skills</b> We are looking for applications from individuals who have the following skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You need to be <u>confident</u> and have the ability to <u>work independently</u> without the need for close supervision.</li><li>• Communication skills are vital in this role: successful applicants will be <u>well spoken</u> with a clear and professional telephone manner.</li><li>• You must have <u>good time management skills</u>: you must be a punctual person and be on time for work and any meetings.</li></ul>	<b>Future prospects</b> Full time position for the right apprentice.
<b>Qualifications required</b> No formal qualifications required.	<b>Things to consider</b> Can you travel there? Please check links below <a href="http://www.traveline.info/">http://www.traveline.info/</a> Or <a href="http://www.transportdirect.info">www.transportdirect.info</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This role involves liaising with both internal and external customers, you must be confident when dealing with people at all levels.</li><li>• This role may involve unsociable hours – you must have a flexible approach to your work.</li><li>• Travel costs will be incurred to get to work, and to access the training.</li><li>• You must have a customer focused approach whilst handling a large volume of queries.</li></ul>



# Visit Company Websites Regularly

- Jaguar Land Rover for example only advertise their vacancies on their website, with little advertisement that they are being released. They want their apprentices to be proactive by regularly checking when they are available.
- Companies often offer a range of vacancies for apprentices. At Jaguar Land Rover for instance, they offer:
  - Advanced and higher apprenticeships in manufacturing
  - Digital and technology solutions
  - Applied professional engineering
  - Finance
- Social media is a great resource to receive alerts to apprenticeships!

CAREERS AT JLR

WORKING AT JLR WHAT WE OFFER EARLY CAREERS WHERE WE ARE INSIDE JLR FIN

### APPRENTICESHIP

Use between education and an apprenticeship in our Advanced Manufacturing. We'll open up opportunities for you to actively contribute to the company while enjoying working and learning procedures.

Duration: 4 years

Applications: TBA

Salary: c. £20,000

Entry requirements: GCSEs: Five Level 4 (C) or above. A-Levels: Two grade C (B for Data pathways) or above.

### DIGITAL AND TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

Ready to shape how the world moves? Let's go. You'll work on groundbreaking projects, alongside expert minds. And whether you opt for Software Engineering, Software Engineering with Data, Network Engineering or Data Analytics, your course at University of Warwick will teach the programming skills you need, plus the theory you learn here means you'll make an ever-greater contribution and have in-demand skills.

Duration: 4 years

Applications: TBA

Salary: c. £20,000

Entry requirements: GCSEs: Five Level 5 (C) or above. A-Levels: Two grade C (B for Data pathways) or above.

### APPLIED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

Work and learn and grow as an engineering expert. Develop to-the-minute specialist knowledge and, thanks to your studies at Warwick, back it up with theory. Choose from four specialist areas: Product Development and and prepare yourself to make a contribution to our business.

Duration: 4 years

Applications: TBA

Salary: c. £20,000

Entry requirements: GCSEs: Five Level 4 (C) or above. A-Levels: Maths grade C and another A level grade C or above.



# When to apply for an apprenticeship

Apprenticeships differ from university applications as UCAS have definitive deadlines to meet, whereas apprenticeship applications are determined by when companies choose to advertise their vacancies. Our suggested timescale would be:

1. Register with apprenticeship alert platforms (by **June**)
2. Completion of CV and covering letter and sent to tutor to check (by **October**)
3. Tutor reference requested (**November**)
4. Searching for apprenticeships (**ongoing**)
  - Remember to search via national search engines, local agencies and on company websites.
5. (**When ready to apply for a vacancy**) ask form tutor(s) to check application form and support application process (interview preparation, ensuring covering letter has hit essential skills from advertisement etc)

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Thank you for  
listening!

