

UCAS

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# UCAS Presentation

UCAS



# What is UCAS?

**350+** universities and colleges:

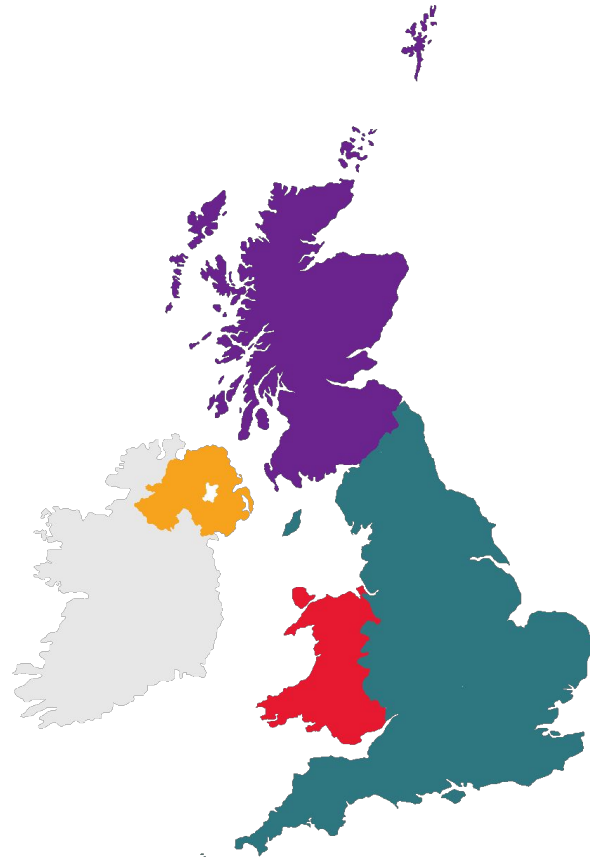
**4** in Northern Ireland

**15** in Wales

**18** in Scotland

**316** in England

**35,000+** courses available



# UCAS – an independent charity

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

## UCAS does:

- ✓ process applications
- ✓ provide information, advice, and training
- ✓ have a Fraud and Verification Team
- ✓ take part in education sector engagement

## UCAS doesn't:

- suggest courses or universities
- make decisions or offers
- advise on finance, immigration, or visas for individuals

# Choices available



Higher  
education



Apprenticeships/  
traineeships



Studying  
abroad



Gap year



Getting a job

Find out more: [ucas.com](https://ucas.com)

# 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

**Head to:**

[ucas.com/apprenticeships](https://ucas.com/apprenticeships)

and

[www.gov.uk/apprenticeships](https://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships)

[www.amazingapprenticeships.com](https://www.amazingapprenticeships.com)

# Why higher education?

## Opportunities while studying:

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

# Why higher education?

## With a degree, students will have:

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

# Choosing the right university

- **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

# Choosing the right university

- **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

- 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 career aspirations?

# Choosing the right course

- 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?

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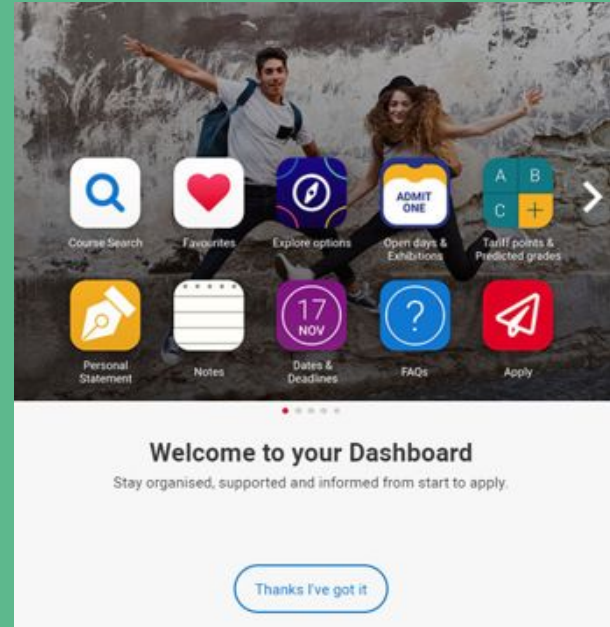
# Research resources



# Starting research

Students should register in UCAS Hub to:

- explore careers, subjects, universities and apprenticeships
- find and 'favourite' from a choice of over 35,000 courses
- search for virtual tours and online events
- turn predicted grades into UCAS Tariff points

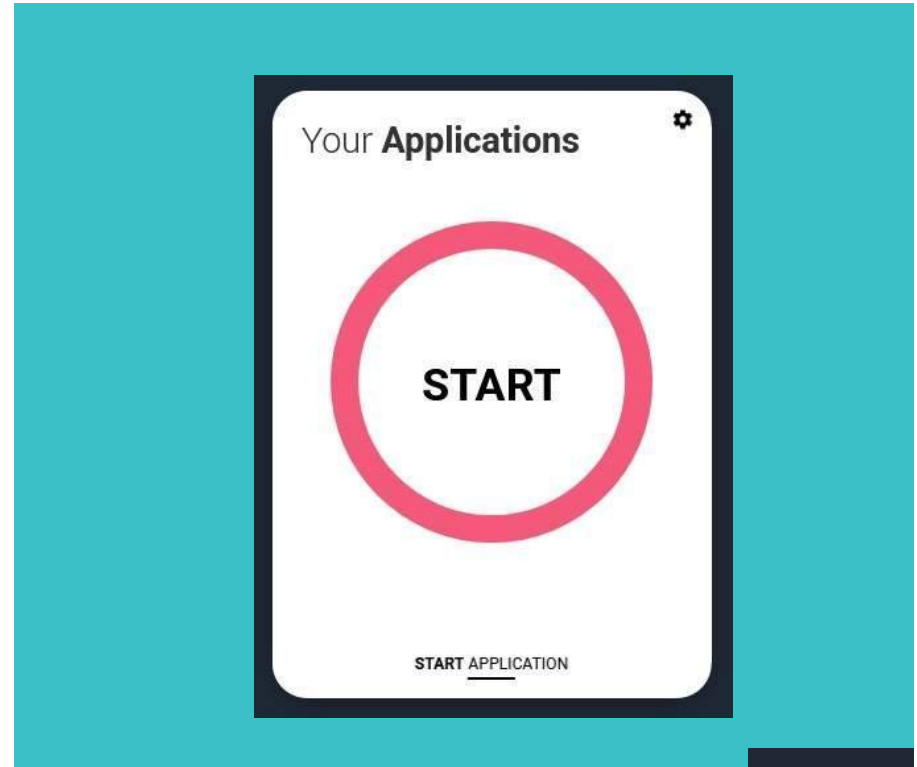


# Applying - key facts

- **Register with UCAS** via the Hub - we will do this in school.
- Students can add up to **5 choices**.
- Students **can't apply to BOTH** Oxford and Cambridge
- Applying **costs** £34.50 for 5 choices. If you are or have been free school meals this is FREE. (There is a tick box to select this).
- Apply by the **equal consideration date**
- Providers **can't see** other choices when you apply

# Registering

- To start an application students need a UCAS Hub account.
- We will set this up.



# What's the purpose of a personal statement?

## It's your chance to:

- **show** your curiosity, knowledge and passion.
- **evidence** relevant skills and your potential.
- **communicate** your genuine interest and a desire to learn more.

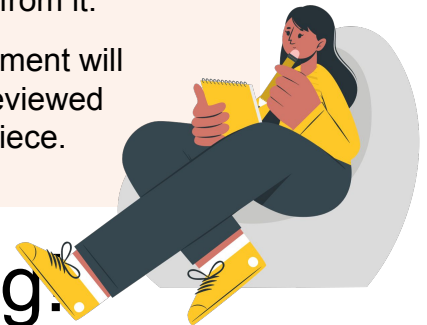
## Question prompts are there to help you but remember to:

- **link** your academic, extra-curricular and other experiences to your chosen area(s) of study.
- use relevant **examples** throughout your personal statement.

## Don't panic about the sections:

- the important thing is to **explain** why you're including the example.
- reflect on what you've **learned** from it.
- the statement will still be reviewed as one piece.

**Remember** there's no right or wrong.



# Format and structure



Three sections with question prompts



4,000-total character count split across sections



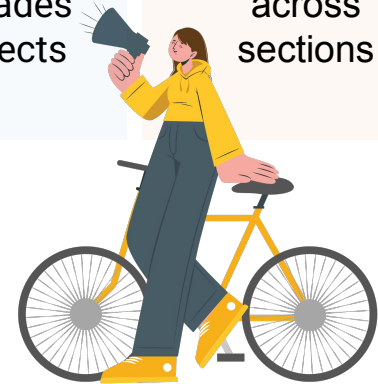
Minimum character count 350 characters per section



Don't waste characters listing grades and subjects



Don't repeat information across sections



# What are the questions?



“ Why do you want to study this course or subject? ”



“ How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject? ”



“ *What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?* ”



# How would you answer each question?

<b>1. Why do you want to study this course or subject?</b>	<b>2. How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?</b>	<b>3. What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?</b>
Subject-specific skills you enjoy with examples of use.	Analysed topic of interest with reflection.	Course-related activities with analysis.  Non-course-related activities without analysis.

# Focus, select and reflect

Strong topic of interest paragraphs have these characteristics:

- 1. FOCUS:** focus on a small/specific topic
- 2. SELECT:** select 2-3 key points to summarise/critique
- 3. REFLECT:** individual reflection on what they learned from the research



# Universities & colleges will consider

- Have you chosen the course for the right reasons?
- Do you have a depth of interest in the subject?
- Do you appear motivated and committed?
- Can you study independently?
- Are you genuinely engaged and knowledgeable about the area you're applying to?



# Where can I start?

There are lots of places you can start to research the details of the course(s) / subject you're looking to apply to.

- Start by looking at the course description; this'll help you with what to include and give you a good idea of what they are looking for.
- If you visit a UCAS Discovery event, ask the university or college representatives.
- Attend an open day and ask faculty staff what they like to see in the personal statement.
- Use Unibuddy to speak to a student ambassador on a course you're interested in.

**Remember** requirements may differ for each university or college, as well as depending heavily on the course. So, this research on your chosen area of study is vital before you start writing your personal statement.



# Completing the UCAS application



Students register for a UCAS Hub account



Students complete their application – working their way through all sections and send it to their school / college



Teachers/advisers review the application and add reference and predicted grades



Applications are sent to UCAS by the school on behalf of the student



Universities/ colleges make their decisions

# Tracking applications

Students should head to [ucas.com](https://ucas.com) to track their application.

Click your application to:

- follow the progress of your application 24/7
- see your choices and personal information
- view your 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.



# Decisions

Universities and colleges will review the:



**personal statement**



**qualifications**



**reference**

They may also ask for:



**admissions test**



**interview**



**portfolio/audition**

# Replies to offers

Once students have decisions from all their choices, they can hold a maximum of two offers:

- one as a 'firm' acceptance – their first choice
- the other as an 'insurance' acceptance. This acts as a back-up if they don't get into their 'firm' choice

They must then decline any remaining offers.

Once all decisions and replies have been made, if students aren't holding an offer, they may be able to use Extra or Clearing to find available places.





# Other options



## Extra (Feb – Jul)

- Used all five choices and had no offers.
- Add Extra choices for consideration one at a time in Track.

## Clearing (Jul – Oct)

- Apply after 30 June, receive no offers, decline all offers, not met conditions.
- Find vacancies from early July, and add a Clearing choice to their application.

# Gap year?

## Not right for everyone

You know the students best and if it is right for them.

Advantage - can save for University, real life experience.

Disadvantage - lose the passion for studying. Like having an income.



# What should students be doing now?

- research
- extracurricular activities
- work experience
- go beyond the syllabus
- focus on this year's studies
- **Visiting open days**



# 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 parent 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 holidays at key times!



## KEY DATES TIMELINE



# University Admission Tests

Cambridge and Oxford have their own admissions tests for certain courses  
(new TARA test for UCL-Test of Academic Reasoning for Admissions)

