UCAS

UCAS.COM
DISPLAY

SPECIFICATIONS

ONLY CHANNELS THAT ARE BUILT BY THE DISPLAY TEAM

IF THE CHANNEL IS NOT IN HERE, THEN CONTACT YOUR
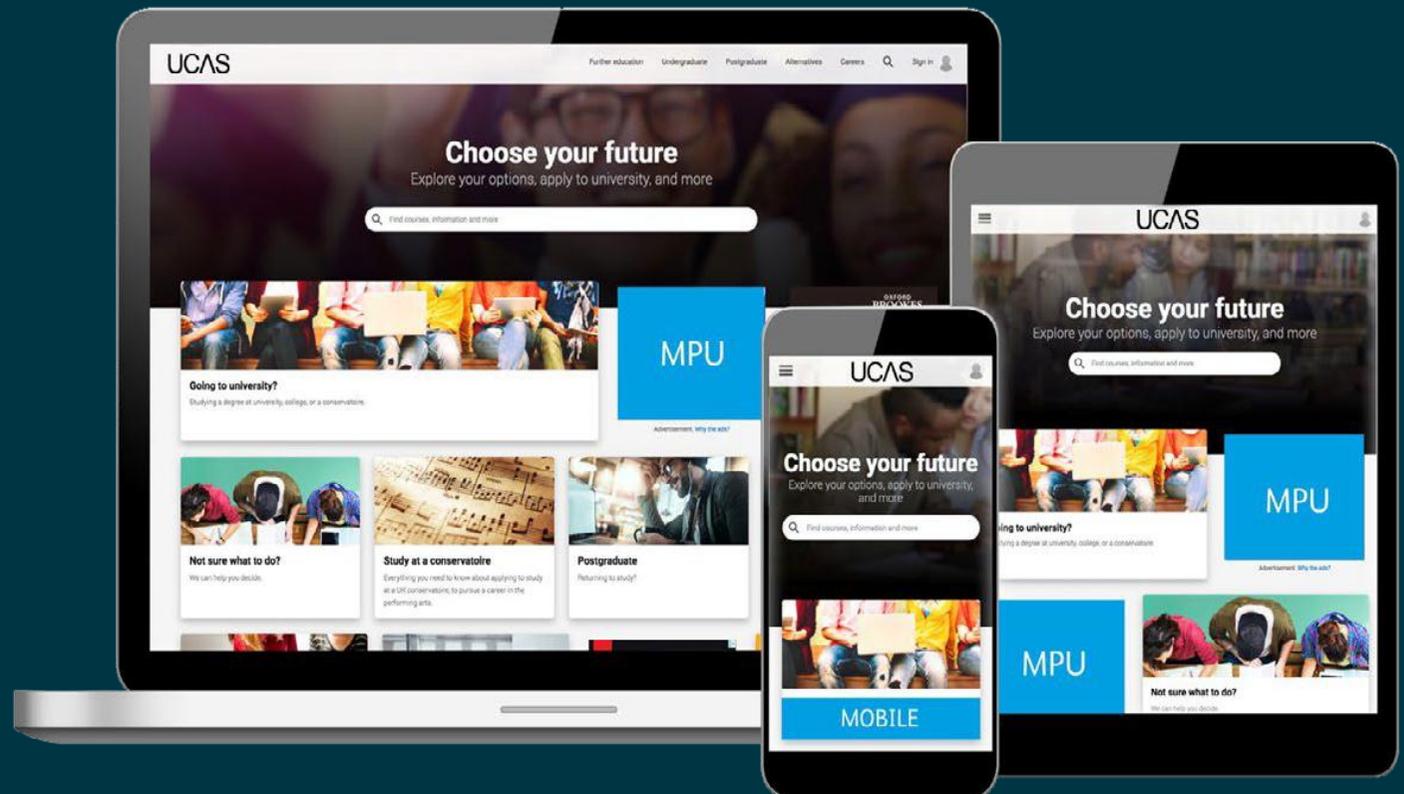ACCOUNT MANAGER (AM) / CLIENT SERVICES

THANK YOU

Before submitting your creative, please review the display specifications below. These guidelines will help you create content suitable for our website.

All adverts must comply with the UCAS Creative Acceptance Policy (CAP), which ensures high standards across all UCAS Media platforms. All content is subject to approval.

If you have any questions about the specifications or need examples of best practice, please contact your account manager.
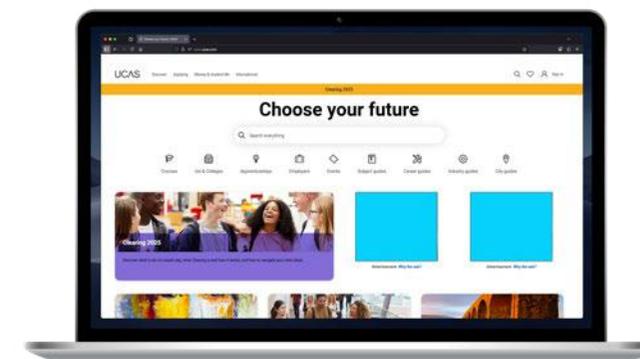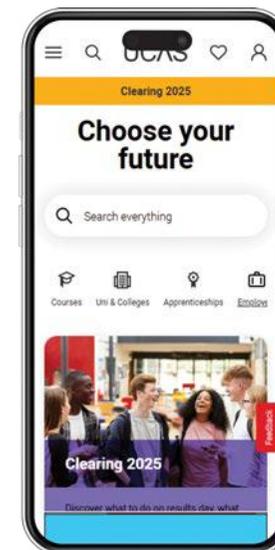
UCAS.COM HOMEPAGE

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Mobile: 320x50 | MPU: 300x250

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

‣ **Format / File Type:**
   PNG, JPG, GIF, HTML5, Third Party Tags

‣ **URL:** Working link that opens in a new window

‣ **Timing:** Become static at or before 30 seconds - not loop forever or be static and then animate at/ after 30 seconds

‣ **Max File Size:** 400kb

‣ **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time

‣ **Contain:**

   • Name / Logo of the organisation
   • Clear call to action - Button? Text?

‣ Be crisp and clear with no blurry images, logos or text

‣ Appropriate for the goal you are trying to achieve (e.g. time specific for open days)

‣ **If contain sound:** the sound must only be activated by the user clicking on it

‣ **If white background (full, partial or near edge):** Border needed - 1px solid black/non-white colour

‣ **If transparent background:** Background needed - any colour

‣ **Third Party Tracking** accepted - possibly different links for clicktag and impression tracking

‣ **Note that with 3rd Party Tracking** - there may be a discrepancy between our ad server stats and your data. IAB's discrepancy tolerance is +/-10%.

‣ **If Third Party Tags** - should be from Campaign Manager 360 and have a redirect URL

‣ **If HTML5:**

   • Be a zipped folder that includes all the files referenced within the HTML code
   • Conform to the **HTML5 guidelines**
   • Include the URL in the form of a clicktag element / exit event

Creatives **CANNOT** be modified by our internal teams if they do not meet the specification above.

If you have multiple creatives, we can optimise or support your campaign effectiveness with an A/B test.
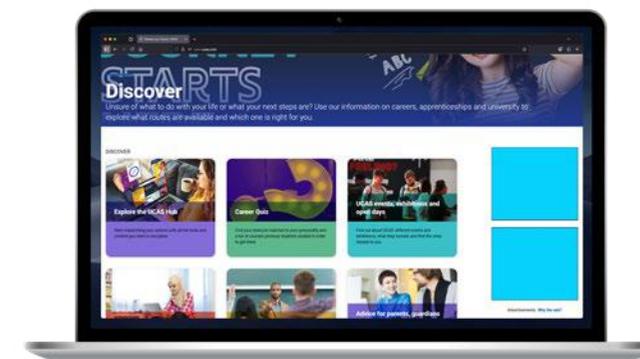
UCAS.COM CONTENT PAGES

Creatives need to be sent to the AM/ Client Services referencing the job number from any reminders you've been sent.

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Mobile: 320x50 | MPU: 300x250

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

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‣ **Timing:** Become static at or before 30 seconds - not loop forever or be static and then animate at/ after 30 seconds

‣ **Max File Size:** 400kb

‣ **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time

‣ **Contain:**

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IN-APPLICATION ADS/ TRACK

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**
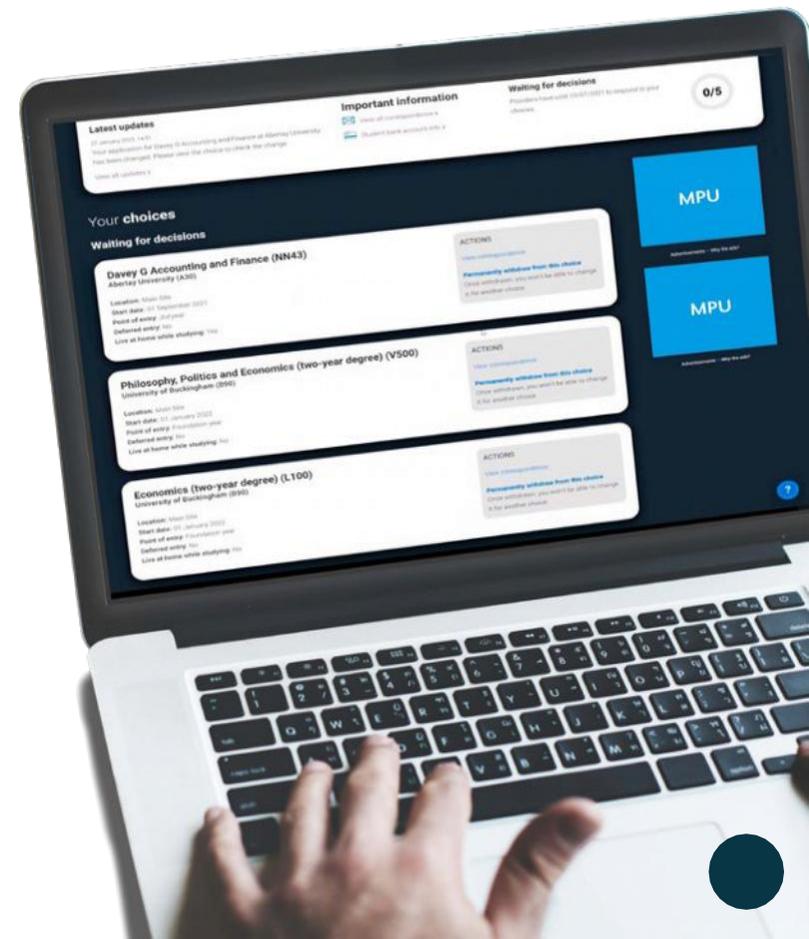
Mobile: 320x50 | MPU: 300x250

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

- **Format / File Type:**
  PNG, JPG, GIF, HTML5, Third Party Tags

- **URL:** Working link that opens in a new window

- **Timing:** Become static at or before 30 seconds - not loop forever or be static and then animate at/ after 30 seconds

- **Max File Size:** 400kb

- **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time

- **Contain:**

  - Name / Logo of the organisation
  - Clear call to action - Button? Text?

- Be crisp and clear with no blurry images, logos or text

- Appropriate for the goal you are trying to achieve (e.g. time specific for open days)

- **If contain sound:** the sound must only be activated by the user clicking on it

- **If white background (full, partial or near edge):**
  Border needed - 1px solid black/non-white colour

- **If transparent background:** Background needed - any colour

- **Third Party Tracking** accepted - possibly different links for clicktag and impression tracking

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- **If HTML5:**

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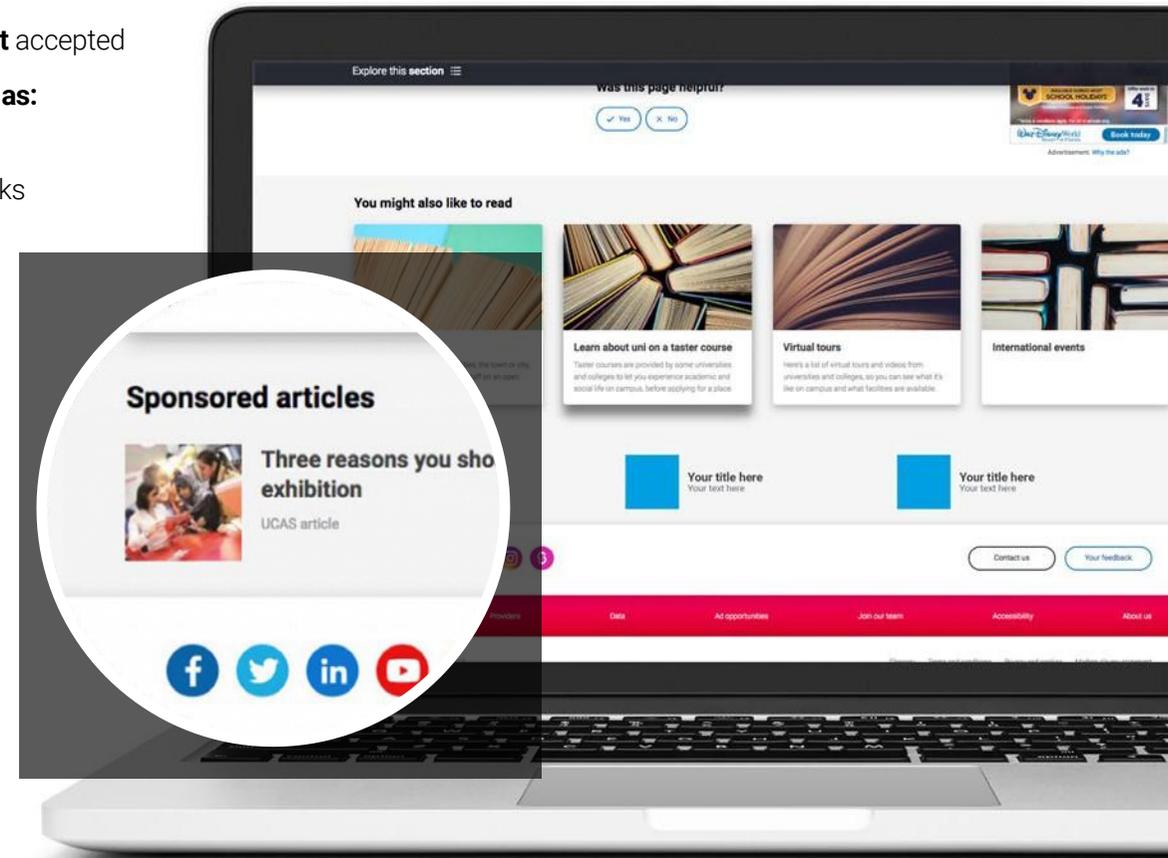
SPONSORED CONTENT

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Pixel/Thumbnail: 100x100

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

- ‣ **Format / File Type:** PNG, JPG
- ‣ **URL:** Working link that opens in a new window
- ‣ **Description:** Maximum 40 characters long (including spaces & special characters)
- ‣ **Max File Size:** 400kb
- ‣ **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time
- ‣ **Provide ALT TEXT** for the thumbnail - description of image
- ‣ Be crisp and clear - no blurry text or image
- ‣ Be a static image
- ‣ **If white background (full, partial or near edge):** Border needed - 1px solid black/non-white colour
- ‣ **If transparent background:** Background needed - any colour

- ‣ **Third Party Tracking - not** accepted
- ‣ **These can be referred to as:**
  - • Content links
  - • Sponsored content links
  - • Sponsored links
  - • Sponsored content
  - • Sponsored articles
  - • Content article links.

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If you have multiple creatives, we can optimise or support your campaign effectiveness with an A/B test.
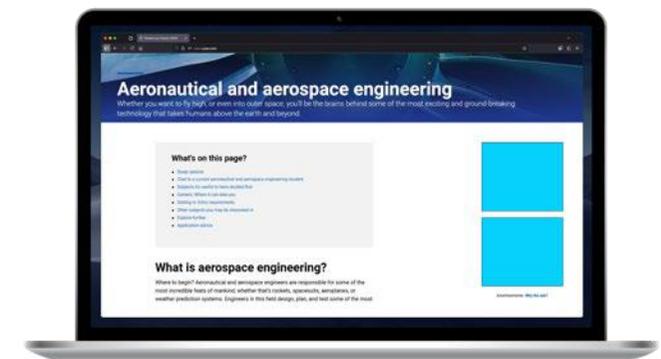
SUBJECT GUIDES

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Mobile: 320x50 | MPU: 300x250

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

- **Format / File Type:**
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- **URL:** Working link that opens in a new window

- **Timing:** Become static at or before 30 seconds - not loop forever or be static and then animate at/ after 30 seconds

- **Max File Size:** 400kb

- **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time

- **Contain:**
  - Name / Logo of the organisation
  - Clear call to action - Button? Text?

- Be crisp and clear with no blurry images, logos or text

- Appropriate for the goal you are trying to achieve (e.g. time specific for open days)

- **If contain sound:** the sound must only be activated by the user clicking on it

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- **If Third Party Tags** - should be from Campaign Manager 360 and have a redirect URL

- **If HTML5:**
  - Be a zipped folder that includes all the files referenced within the HTML code
  - Conform to the **HTML5 guidelines**
  - Include the URL in the form of a clicktag element / exit event

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If you have multiple creatives, we can optimise or support your campaign effectiveness with an A/B test.
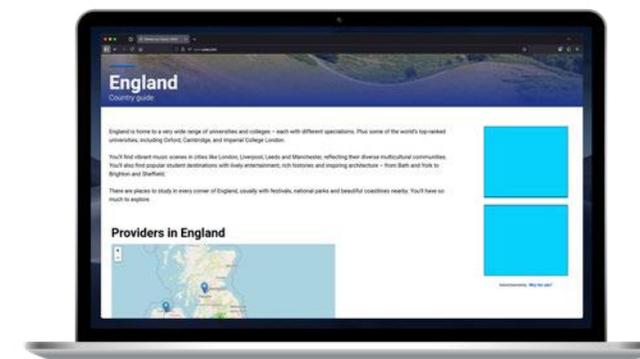
CITY GUIDES

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Mobile: 320x50 | MPU: 300x250

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

- ‣ **Format / File Type:**
  PNG, JPG, GIF, HTML5, Third Party Tags

- ‣ **URL:** Working link that opens in a new window

- ‣ **Timing:** Become static at or before 30 seconds - not loop forever or be static and then animate at/ after 30 seconds

- ‣ **Max File Size:** 400kb

- ‣ **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time

- ‣ **Contain:**
  - • Name / Logo of the organisation
  - • Clear call to action - Button? Text?

- ‣ Be crisp and clear with no blurry images, logos or text

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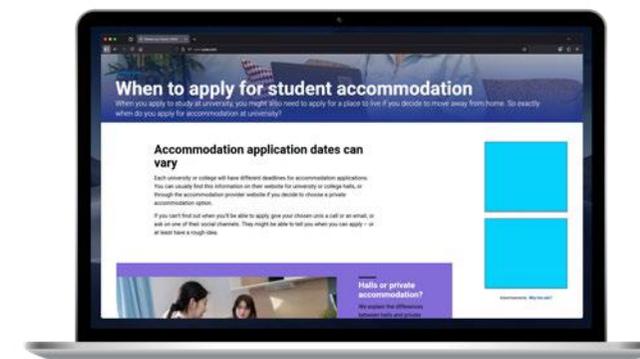
ACCOMMODATION PAGES / SEARCH

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Mobile: 320x50 | MPU: 300x250

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

- ‣ **Format / File Type:**
  PNG, JPG, GIF, HTML5, Third Party Tags

- ‣ **URL:** Working link that opens in a new window

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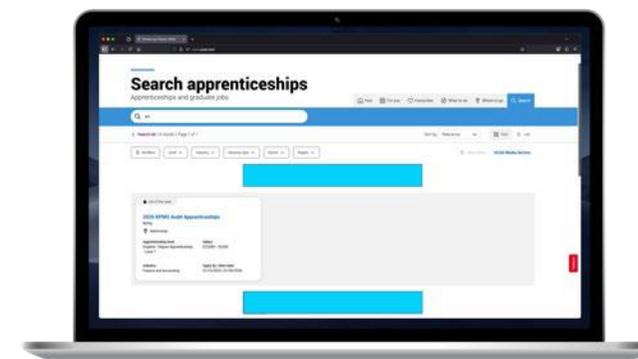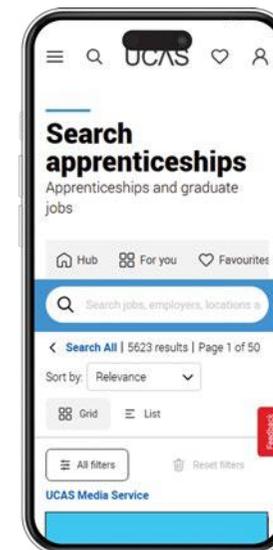
CAREER FINDER

Creatives need to be sent to the AM/ Client Services referencing the job number from any reminders you've been sent.

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Mobile: 320x50 | Leaderboard: 728x90

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

- **Format / File Type:**
  PNG, JPG, GIF, HTML5, Third Party Tags

- **URL:** Working link that opens in a new window

- **Timing:** Become static at or before 30 seconds - not loop forever or be static and then animate at/ after 30 seconds

- **Max File Size:** 400kb

- **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time

- **Contain:**

  - Name / Logo of the organisation
  - Clear call to action - Button? Text?

- Be crisp and clear with no blurry images, logos or text

- Appropriate for the goal you are trying to achieve (e.g. time specific for open days)

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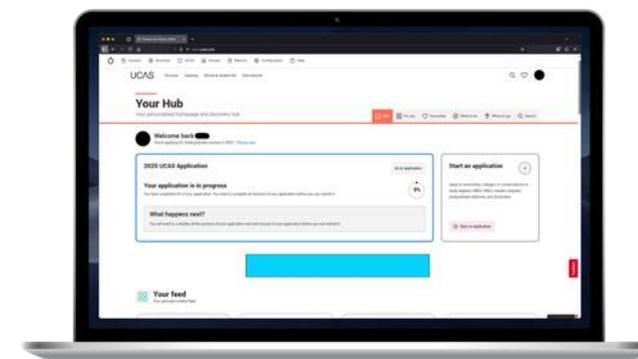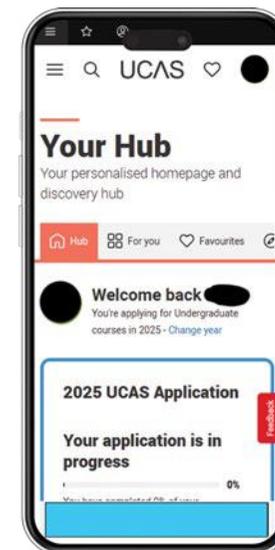
HUB PREMIUM

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Mobile: 320x50 | Leaderboard: 728x90

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

‣ **Format / File Type:**
PNG, JPG, GIF, HTML5, Third Party Tags

‣ **URL:** Working link that opens in a new window

‣ **Timing:** Become static at or before 30 seconds - not loop forever or be static and then animate at/ after 30 seconds

‣ **Max File Size:** 400kb

‣ **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time

‣ **Contain:**

  • Name / Logo of the organisation
  • Clear call to action - Button? Text?

‣ Be crisp and clear with no blurry images, logos or text

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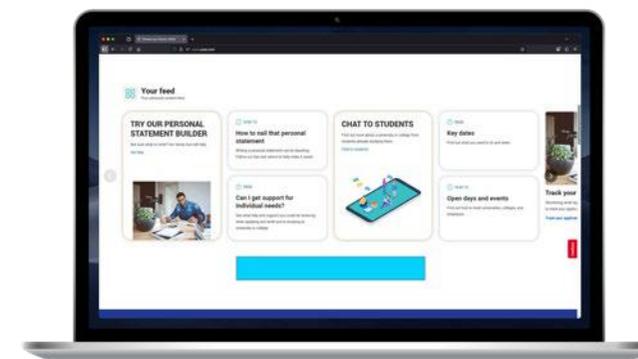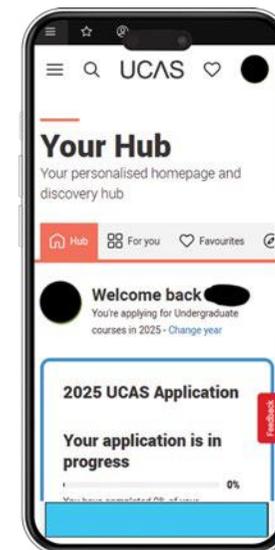
HUB STANDARD

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Mobile: 320x50 | Leaderboard: 728x90

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

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▸ **Timing:** Become static at or before 30 seconds - not loop forever or be static and then animate at/ after 30 seconds

▸ **Max File Size:** 400kb

▸ **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time

▸ **Contain:**

• Name / Logo of the organisation
• Clear call to action - Button? Text?

▸ Be crisp and clear with no blurry images, logos or text

▸ Appropriate for the goal you are trying to achieve (e.g. time specific for open days)

▸ **If contain sound:** the sound must only be activated by the user clicking on it

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▸ **Third Party Tracking** accepted - possibly different links for clicktag and impression tracking

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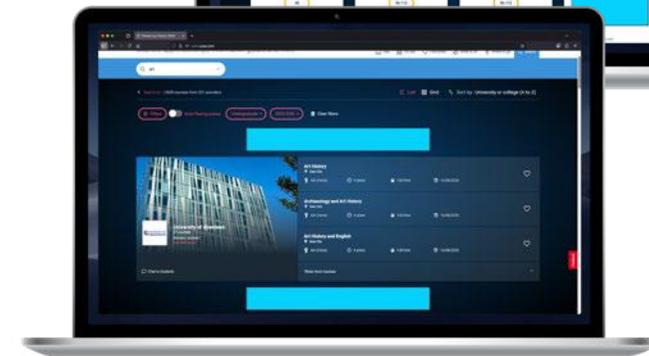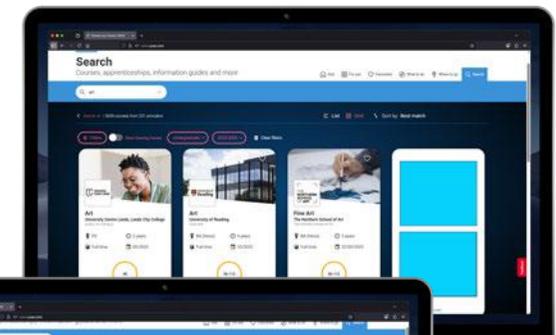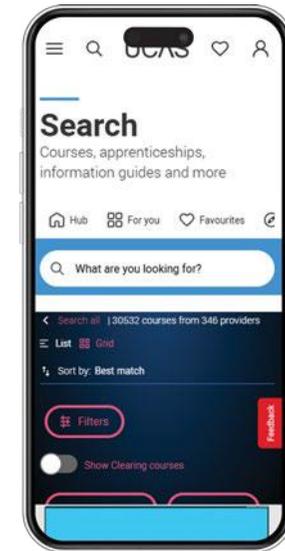
SEARCH TOOL KEYWORDS

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Mobile: 320x50 | MPU: 300x250 | Leaderboard: 728x90

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

‣ **Format / File Type:**
PNG, JPG, GIF, HTML5, Third Party Tags

‣ **URL:** Working link that opens in a new window

‣ **Timing:** Become static at or before 30 seconds - not loop forever or be static and then animate at/ after 30 seconds

‣ **Max File Size:** 400kb

‣ **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time

‣ **Contain:**

• Name / Logo of the organisation
• Clear call to action - Button? Text?

‣ Be crisp and clear with no blurry images, logos or text

‣ Appropriate for the goal you are trying to achieve (e.g. time specific for open days)

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‣ **If transparent background:** Background needed - any colour

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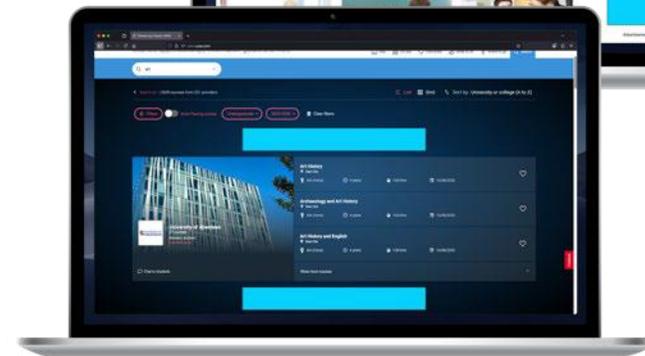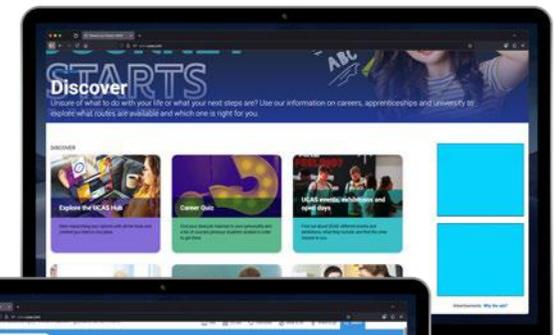
RUN OF SITE

We require at least **one** creative in **each** of the following **sizes:**

Mobile: 320x50 | MPU: 300x250 | Leaderboard: 728x90

Each creative **must** meet the following specification:

- **Format / File Type:**
  PNG, JPG, GIF, HTML5, Third Party Tags

- **URL:** Working link that opens in a new window

- **Timing:** Become static at or before 30 seconds - not loop forever or be static and then animate at/ after 30 seconds

- **Max File Size:** 400kb

- **Artwork Deadline:** 1 week before the Start Date - to go live on time

- **Contain:**

  - Name / Logo of the organisation
  - Clear call to action - Button? Text?

- Be crisp and clear with no blurry images, logos or text

- Appropriate for the goal you are trying to achieve (e.g. time specific for open days)

- **If contain sound:** the sound must only be activated by the user clicking on it

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- **If HTML5:**

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HTML5 GUIDELINES

All additional files must be hosted externally on client/agency servers and referenced fully. External files must be loaded via secure HTTPS. Click destination URLs go in the HTML index to enable click tracking and must open in a new browser window.

Load Requirements:

- **Initial load:** 50KB recommended, max 75KB.

- **Subsequent polite load:** up to 1MB (animations, autoplay, dynamic elements).

- **User-initiated load:** up to 1MB (animations/ interactions). Videos must be progressive load, not streaming, with progress controls recommended.

- **Flash CPU usage max:** 40%. High CPU usually caused by heavy/continuous animations.

- **Video/Animation:** Autoplay max 30 seconds; may include interaction buttons (play, sound, replay).

- **User-initiated videos:** no sound on start, controls required (mute, pause, duration).

- **Actions on user click:**

  - Pause/stop must halt video and sound immediately.
  - Animation stops within 30 seconds after interaction ends or on exit.

- **Attributes:**

  - Border/iFrame: creatives must stay within iFrame; contrasting border required for black/white backgrounds.
  - Mouseover: no audio/video or major functions triggered on mouseover unless user-initiated. Animations started this way must stop within 30 seconds after mouse leaves or interaction ends (except video). Clickable buttons may have quick (<1s) mouseover animations within button area only, no disruptive effects.

- **Backup Image:**

  - Required for all creatives.
  - Max 45KB recommended (up to 75KB accepted).
  - Must have contrasting border on black/white backgrounds (full, partial)
  - No close button; animated GIFs not supported.

Creatives **CANNOT** be modified by our internal teams if they do not meet the specification above.

If you have multiple creatives, we can optimise or support your campaign effectiveness with an A/B test.
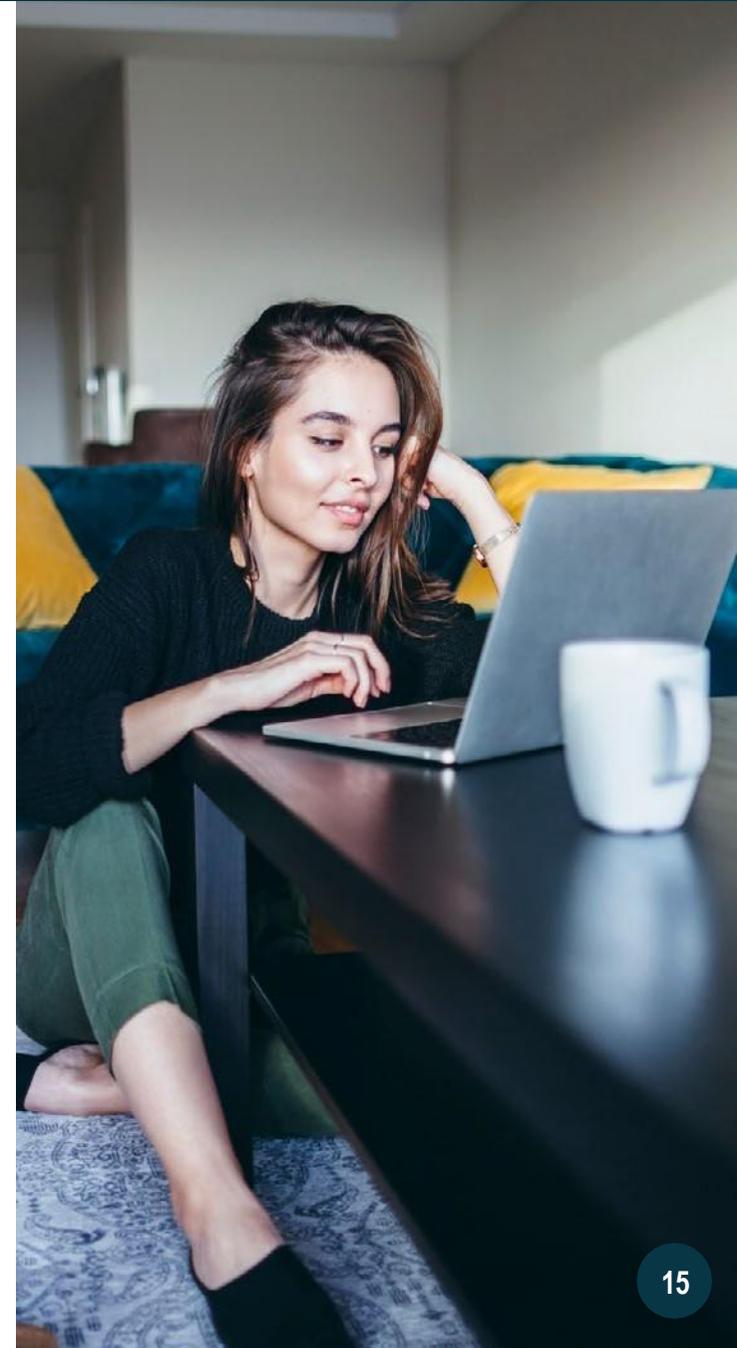
POLICY & CHECKLIST

Brand Safety Policy

UCAS is the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, holding the largest verified student database in the UK, and we take brand safety very seriously.

To help us achieve this, we have stringent internal procedures and polices that are implemented alongside relevant technologies and have been independently verified by various third parties that enable us to adhere to and execute these.

All advertising on our owned and operated sites is placed in brand safe, high-quality environments, delivered using market-leading technology.

UCAS supports the Coalition for Better Advertising's Better Ads Standards.

For more information, please visit the **Coalition's site**.

Checklist

Have you considered the following for each creative:

- Is it the correct size?

- Do you have a border if you have a white or transparent background?

- Does the creative become static at 30 seconds?

- Is the file size smaller than 400KB?

- Have you got a mobile creative?

- Is the creative appropriate (e.g. time-specific for open days)?

- Are you supplying tracking links?

- Do you have a clear call to action on your creative?

TIPS TO ENGAGE STUDENTS

3 ways to engage students with display ads

We asked students about client display ads on ucas.com:

1. Be clear

Students preferred simple ads which made crystal clear what they were all about:

"CLEAR AND BRIGHT"

"BOLD TEXT"

Ads with a **simple design and 1 call to action button** perform best. We've found that ads that **frame CTA text with an outline or colour box** achieve 0.43% higher CTRs than those that don't, in some cases.

2. Keep text short

Many students said ads didn't work as well on mobile e.g. if they used more than 1 text line per frame:

"A BIT HARD TO READ SEEING AS IT WOULD BE ON A PHONE SCREEN"

"TOO MUCH INFO FOR A SMALL BOX"

It's best **not to replicate desktop ad layouts for mobile.** To improve readability and boost performance, consider **cutting down text and spreading it across frames.**

3. Use imagery

Students said that ads that used imagery engaged them more than those with just text:

"IMAGERY HELPS TO CONNECT BETTER WITH THE AD"

"I REALLY LIKE THE IMAGERY OF STUDENTS -MORE PERSONALISED"

Imagery can help get your message across quickly and make your ads stand out. We've found that **students like ads featuring a diverse range of other students** as they find them more relatable.