

UCAS





What is UCAS?

We're the organisation that manages your uni or college application. The next few pages will take you on a journey from researching your options, to completing your application – we're here to help you every step of the way.

www.ucas.com

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Top tips on what to do **before** you apply

Tip 1

Download the UCAS news app and sign up for our monthly newsletter.

This will help you stay up-to-date with any new information, hot off the press. Get advice on:

- what options are open to you
- how to choose the right course and uni for you
- booking exhibitions, where you can meet loads of unis
- writing your personal statement

Plus, get an insight into student life and hear about real students' experiences, including favourite recipes, city guides, and career profiles.

www.ucas.com/ucas-news

Tip 2

Start your search.

The UCAS search tool is the most comprehensive available. It's always up-to-date and reliable. Search by:

- subject
- uni or college
- location

or browse subjects for inspiration at search.ucas.com.

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Tip 3

Go to a free exhibition.

We organise over 50 higher education exhibitions up and down the UK every year – from Orkney to Cornwall, via West Wales, Northern Ireland, and East Anglia. Needless to say, there's bound to be one taking place near you.

They're your chance to find out more about unis and the courses they offer. Some have students there too, so you can hear about life on and off campus.

Some exhibitions have career finder areas, where you can meet employers and find out what they're looking for.

www.ucas.com/exhibitions

Tip 4

Make sure you know the important dates and UCAS terms.

Key dates

Check out the key dates at www.ucas.com/key-dates. Your school or college will also have its own deadlines, so make sure you check these too.

UCAS terms

Extra: available between February and July. If you've received decisions from all five universities or colleges and weren't accepted, or declined any offers you received, you might be able to add another choice.

Clearing: available from July to September. If you don't have a place, you can use the UCAS search tool to check which unis still have vacancies.

Adjustment: if you've met and exceeded the conditions of your firm choice, you can look for an alternative course while still holding your confirmed place. Adjustment is available from A level results day until the end of August.

You can find meanings of lots more UCAS terms at www.ucas.com/ucas-terms-explained.

Did you know?

You can register for UCAS' career finder tool at any time, to get personalised job alerts for the careers you're interested in. This is great to see what's coming up, and also useful for work placements and part-time jobs while you are studying.

careerfinder.ucas.com

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Step-by-step guide to filling in your application

- Start by registering for Apply at www.ucas.com/apply, add some personal details, get a username, create a password, and set your security questions.
- Add the buzzword your school, college, or centre gave you.
- If you're applying independently, you won't have a buzzword so we'll ask you some more questions.
- Please note, you can only apply once in a cycle.

Once you've registered, here are the sections you will need to complete in Apply.



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1. Sign in to fill in the rest of your details

- You'll need to add your student support details, residential category, any special needs or disabilities, and declare if you have any relevant criminal convictions.
- Add your email address – we'll show you how to verify it with us. Then we'll be able to let you know whenever your application is updated.
- You can give a parent, guardian, or adviser nominated access if you'd like them to be able to speak to us on your behalf.

2. Additional information (UK applicants only)

- Equality, ethnic origin, national identity, any summer schools or taster courses you attended, details if you've been in care, parental education, and occupational background all need to be added in this section.

3. Student finance (UK and EU applicants only)

- This page might appear if certain questions are answered in the **Personal details** section.
- We don't arrange student finance, but if you're looking for financial support, you can give us permission here to share your information with the student loan or awards organisation you apply to, which should speed up the process of getting your loan.
- For more information about this, visit www.ucas.com/finance.

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4. Course choices

- You can choose up to five courses. There's no preference order and your universities and colleges won't see where else you've applied.
- Applying to medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, or veterinary science? You can only apply for a maximum of four courses in any one of these subjects.
- Applying to the universities of Oxford or Cambridge? You can only apply to one course at either the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge.
- Applying for deferred entry? Make sure you've checked the university or college accepts deferred entry applications for the course you're interested in.

5. Full education history

- You must enter all your qualifications – whether you have the result or you're still awaiting exams and their results.
- If any of your pending qualifications aren't listed on ucas.com, you still need to add them to your application, but remember you'll need to send the results to your chosen universities and colleges when you get them.
- International students – qualifications are listed by name and country, but don't worry if yours isn't there – just add it to the 'Other' box. You may have to send proof of your results to the university or college yourself.
- Mature students – if you can't find your school exam certificates, contact the school and local authority.
- For more information on adding your qualifications to your application, visit www.ucas.com/fillinginyourapplication.

6. Your employment history

- If you've had any paid jobs – full-time or part-time – here's where you can enter details for up to five of them. Include company names, addresses, job descriptions, and start and finish dates.
- If you've done any unpaid or voluntary work, you don't need to include details about it in this section – you can talk about this in your personal statement.

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7. Write a personal statement

- This is your chance to show universities and colleges why you want to study the course and why you'd make a great student.
- Start early – it might take a while until you're happy with it and you've checked it through with teachers, advisers, or family.
- For detailed advice on how to write your personal statement, head to www.ucas.com/personalstatement.

8. Take a final look at your application

- See if you need to make any edits, then mark it as complete and save it.
- Once you've marked all previous sections as complete, you'll be able to read and agree to the declaration – this allows us to process your information and send it to your chosen universities and colleges.
- You'll then be able to move on to the final section...

9. Get a reference, pay your application fee, and send us your application

- A reference is a written recommendation from a teacher, adviser, or professional who knows you academically. Everyone needs a reference, unless you get permission from your chosen universities and colleges.
- The application fee is £13 if you're applying to just one course, or £24 for multiple courses and for late applications sent after 30 June.
- Applying through a school, college, or centre? They will let you know whether and when you should pay them so that they can pay us. Alternatively, they will tell you to pay us directly by credit or debit card – you'd do this before the reference is added to your application. They will send the application to us on your behalf.
- Applying independently? After the reference is added, pay by credit or debit card online, then send your application to us.

For more information on completing your application, go to www.ucas.com/fillinginyourapplication.

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DOs and DON'Ts when writing your personal statement

The personal statement is your chance to demonstrate to unis and colleges that you're committed to your chosen subject, and persuade them you'd be a great student. Here are some handy dos and don'ts to get you started.

Do:

- use correct spelling and grammar
- show you know your strengths
- be enthusiastic
- expect to produce several drafts
- ask people you trust for their feedback

Don't:

- exaggerate – if you do, you may get caught out
- rely on a spellchecker as it will not pick up everything
- leave it to the last minute

Get more help and advice in our personal statement tool:
www.ucas.com/planyourstatement.

REMEMBER you can write up to 4,000 characters of text to show why you'd make a great student.

For more information, visit
www.ucas.com/personalstatement.

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How the UCAS Tariff works

Some universities use the UCAS Tariff to illustrate your grades in a simple way. We've changed the Tariff for courses starting from September 2017, so that more qualifications can be included to make it fairer for everyone applying to university.

We have prepared some useful resources to help you understand how Tariff points work, including a video and a Tariff calculator. You can find them at www.ucas.com/new-tariff.

Don't worry if you can't find your qualifications on the calculator. This doesn't mean universities won't accept them, as many universities don't use Tariff points and instead will tell you what you need to apply by referring to qualifications and grades. If you are unsure how this will affect you, speak to your teacher or adviser about your qualifications and university entry requirements. They'll know what is right for you and how the system works.



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How to use the UCAS Tariff calculator

Add your qualifications

Qualification	Subject	Grade	Points
<input type="text" value="e.g. A level, BTEC, Scottish Higher"/>	<input type="text" value="Subject (optional)"/>	<input type="text" value=""/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>

All qualifications added?

Indicative total points: 0

Email my points to

1. Type your qualification into the box and select it from the list that appears.
2. Enter the subject you're studying (this is optional).
3. Select your grade from the drop-down list – the Tariff points for this qualification will automatically be displayed.
4. Click 'Add' to add another qualification.
5. Click 'Calculate my points total' to view an indicative Tariff points total.
6. Email them to yourself.

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Your application **checklist**

Use this checklist to keep up-to-date with where you are at with your UCAS application. Tick each section once it's complete.

- ☐ **Register:** Create your Apply account and set up security information.
- ☐ **Sign in:** Enter your personal details.
- ☐ **Additional information:** For UK students only. This section includes equality questions and details about any preparation you've done for higher education.
- ☐ **Finance:** Tell us if you're applying for student finance.
- ☐ **Choosing courses:** Choose up to five courses.
- ☐ **Education:** Say where and what you've studied.
- ☐ **Employment:** Outline any jobs you've had.
- ☐ **Personal statement:** Your opportunity to convince the university or college to offer you a place.
- ☐ **Review:** Take a final look at your application.
- ☐ **Submit:** Get a reference, pay, and submit your application.

For more information, visit www.ucas.com/fillinginyourapplication.

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Information for parents

Your parents or guardians can be really helpful in supporting you with your application. Tell them about our resources for parents and **you could both win an iPad**. Use this handy checklist to make sure they know what's available.

1. The monthly parent newsletter – it's free and gives you all the updates and information you need, along with timely explanations of the application process.
2. The UCAS app contains info on exhibitions and deadlines, plus student stories.
3. The website – www.ucas.com – has all the information you need.
4. The open days' page to see where you can visit – www.ucas.com/opendays.
5. The dates and deadlines page so you don't miss out – www.ucas.com/key-dates.
6. Our social media channels for up-to-date information.
7. Our blogs from parents and students give real insight.
8. The **video wall** has loads of useful videos, some made especially for parents.
9. We also produce a parent guide and an international guide that contain lots of handy tips.
10. The parent information tool has everything all in one place and is simple to use. Find it on our website.

Sign up for newsletters – www.ucas.com/parentform.

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