

The Little Guide

to higher education

UCAS



2014

IMPORTANT DATES

For **2014** year of entry

Mid-September 2013

Applications can be sent to us.

1 October 2013

Deadline for receipt at CUKAS of applications for music courses (deadlines for non-music courses vary).

15 October 2013

Deadline for the receipt at UCAS of applications for all medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, veterinary science courses, and all courses at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

15 January 2014

Deadline for the receipt at UCAS of applications for all courses except those listed above with a 15 October deadline, and art & design courses with a 24 March deadline. Go to our UCAS search tool at www.ucas.com to check application deadlines.

Early 2014

Apply for student finance.

25 February 2014

Extra starts for eligible applicants.

24 March 2014

Deadline for the receipt at UCAS of applications for art & design courses except those listed with a 15 January deadline. Go to our UCAS search tool at www.ucas.com to check application deadlines.

30 June 2014

Applications received at UCAS by this date will be sent to the applicant's chosen universities and colleges. Applications received after this date will be entered into Clearing.

August 2014 – date to be confirmed

SQA results are published and Scottish Clearing vacancy lists available.

14 August 2014

GCE A level, AS and Advanced Diploma results published and full Clearing vacancy information service starts.

31 August 2014

Adjustment closes.

Late September 2014

Final date to submit 2014 applications.

It's never too early to start making preparations for higher education. Get on the case as soon as possible, and **good luck!**

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are a great way
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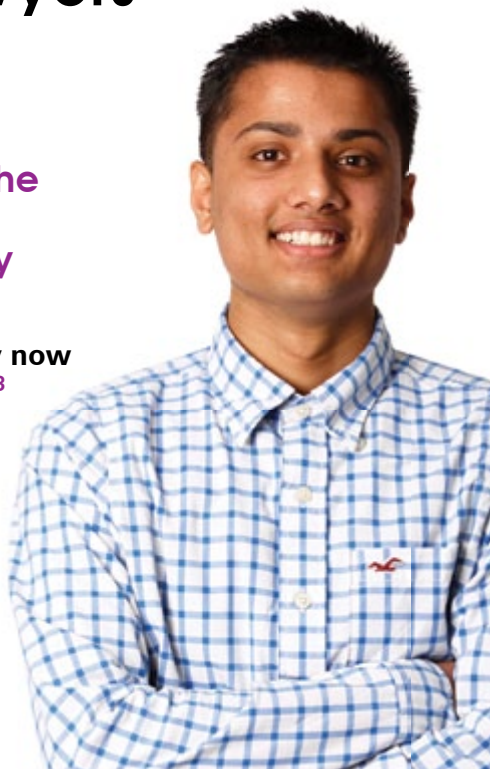
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Published by: UCAS Rosehill New Barn Lane Cheltenham GL52 3LZ

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UCAS, a company limited by guarantee, is registered in England and Wales number: 2839815

Registered charity number: 1024741 (England and Wales) and SC038598 (Scotland)

UCAS reference number: PU110014

Publication reference: 13_024

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For further information about the UCAS application process go to www.ucas.com
If you need to contact us, details can be found at www.ucas.com/about_us/contact_us/

Your career starts here



93% of our graduates secure employment or enter further study on graduation (DLHE 2011)

“There are so many great things about being a student in Cardiff...The Uni and course were a perfect fit for me and I wouldn't want to be anywhere else. I'd 100% recommend it.”

Jaron Lionel, BA (Hons) Illustration

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UCAS | card

If you're in Year 12, S5 or equivalent and thinking about higher education, then the UCAS Card is for you. It's a great information source to finding out about your next move in education.

It provides you with

- key information about the university application process, guiding you from start to finish
- a monthly newsletter looking at all your options from 18 years old
- relevant emails about courses that may be of interest to you
- discounts from a range of on and offline stores.

Register for the card at www.ucas.com/ucascard. You can update your profile at any time to ensure you receive information about the courses and universities you're interested in applying to, no matter how many times you change your mind!

Looking
into higher
education?

LOOKING INTO HIGHER EDUCATION?

So you're thinking of applying to uni?

Making plans to get into higher education involves big decisions.

What's the right subject for you?

Where should you apply?

What's the best way to manage your finances?

How does higher education help you develop your career?

These choices can greatly influence your whole future.

We're here to make the move to higher education easier. We have lots of info about courses, unis, colleges and your application - plenty to help you research and apply. Come to www.ucas.com to find out more.

www.ucasconnect.com is the place to get involved online. It shows the latest advice we've posted on Twitter and Facebook – you can also follow us at [@ucas_online](https://twitter.com/ucas_online) and www.facebook.com/ucasonline and ask our advisers a question. We have bloggers too, or if you'd rather watch videos, we have how-to video guides as well.

LOOKING INTO HIGHER EDUCATION?

There's so much more to higher education than getting 'a good degree', leading to 'a good job'. You'll be studying for a number of years, so it makes sense to ask yourself some serious questions.

- Why are you interested in higher education?
- What subject areas interest you most?
- Do you want a course that leads to a specific career?
- What qualifications could you gain?
- Do you want to take a gap year before starting your course?
- Do you have preferences about where you want to study?
- What are your thoughts about location, distance from home, size of college or university, campus or multi-site, available accommodation?
- What financial help might you be eligible for, and how do you research your options?

What matters most at this early stage is your commitment to making sure your decisions are based on research. Some people have a clear idea of what they want to do, but most people aren't so sure. Don't feel under pressure to skip your research – try not to make any quick decisions.





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[www.nottingham.ac.uk/
studywhatyoulove](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studywhatyoulove)

Explore
your
options

EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

You'll need to find out what your options are before deciding what to study. On the next few pages are suggestions to help you get started.

ASK FAMILY, FRIENDS AND PROFESSIONALS

Don't be afraid to ask for advice. As well as speaking to your careers adviser, talk things through with your parents, brothers or sisters, friends, and with anyone else who has been to university or college – find out what their experiences were like.

GO ONLINE

There's lots of information at www.ucas.com. Our UCAS search tool lets you search by a wide range of features, like subject and location.

With entry requirements for each course and links to course provider websites, you can find everything you need to know.

Check out online advice from other students and applicants at www.ucasconnect.com, the place for instant answers through our interactive FAQ service. There you'll also find top tips on avoiding common mistakes and links to our Facebook and Twitter pages where you can ask a question and our advisers will answer online.



EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

DECIDE WHAT TO STUDY

Many potential applicants don't know what they want to study at university or college, or which subjects suit them best, so if you're not sure, you're not alone.

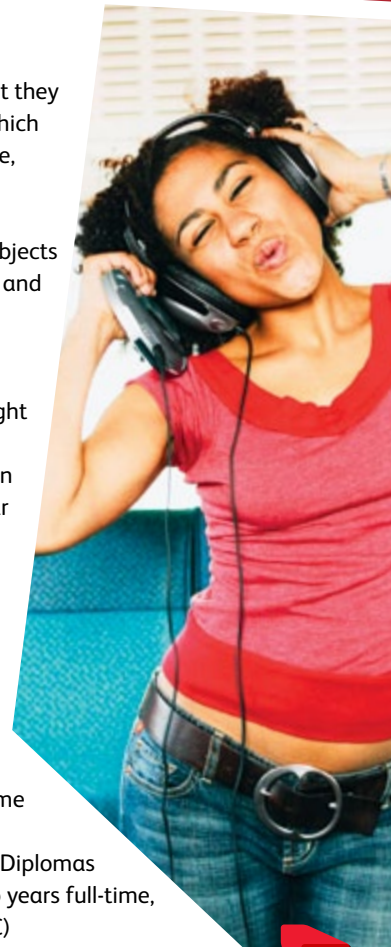
You don't have to restrict your choice to subjects that you have studied at school or college, and remember that many courses allow you to combine two or more different subjects.

Bear in mind also how a subject choice might affect your career plan. Many employers welcome a higher education qualification in any area, but some might want a particular subject area or course.

CHOOSE YOUR LEVEL OF STUDY

Higher education doesn't just mean studying for a degree - there are three main levels you can choose from:

- degrees – three or four years full-time
- foundation degrees – two years full-time employment-related qualifications
- Higher National Diplomas (HND) and Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE) each two years full-time, and Higher National Certificates (HNC) one year full-time.



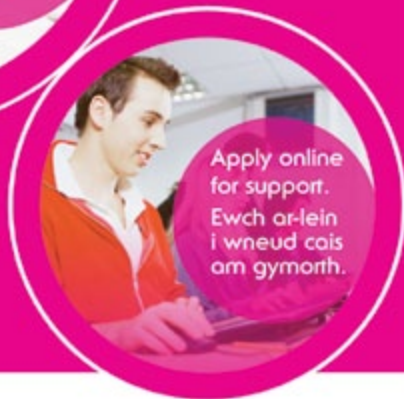


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EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

GO TO AN EVENT

UCAS holds education conventions across the UK throughout the year, where you can chat with staff from many course providers and pick up prospectuses. Find out more at www.ucas.com/events, or watch our video guide at www.ucasconnect.com.

Conventions are held between March and July in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in August and September in Scotland. They're usually free – ask your tutor for details of your nearest convention.

ATTEND OPEN DAYS

Attending a university or college open day is one of the best ways to get your own feel for the place and to see if it's right for you.

During an open day, you can talk to staff, look around various parts of the university or college, like the students' union, library, sports centre, accommodation areas and the department in which you might begin your studies.

"Most students agree that open days have helped them make an instinctive decision, as well as to make sure it's what they're expecting."



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TO PURSUE YOUR CAREER DREAMS
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Mechanical Engineering, BSc
Chemical Engineering, BSc
Electrical Engineering, BSc

**What are the
alternatives?**

For more information please contact: Sandor Bone

Tel.: +36 30 978 1199 **e-mail:** sandorbone@yahoo.co.uk **Visit website:** www.studyabroadhungary.com

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

UNI ISN'T RIGHT FOR EVERYONE, SO WHAT ARE YOUR OTHER OPTIONS?

APPRENTICESHIPS

Earn money and work alongside staff to learn on the job.
Visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Be-An-Apprentice.aspx.

VOLUNTEER

There are lots of volunteering organisations (www.wvv.org.uk) offering different types of volunteering, we've highlighted just one.

INTERNSHIPS

A great option if you know what you want to do.
For more information, visit www.ratemyplacement.co.uk.

STUDY LONG-DISTANCE

Distance learning means you can combine studying for a qualification and working.

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

START YOUR OWN BUSINESS

There's advice for budding entrepreneurs at www.princes-trust.org.uk and www.gov.uk/starting-up-a-business.

SHORT COURSE AT A COLLEGE

A good option to boost your experience before you apply for uni or a job.

GET A JOB

Sounds simple! Pull together a great CV, register with online jobsites such as www.gov.uk/jobsearch, keep an eye on local press and employers' websites for the best possible chance.

STUDY ABROAD

Often a search on the internet will find some options and we have some on our website.

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

TAKE A YEAR OUT

Some students decide to take a year out (a gap year). You can choose from voluntary projects, a structured work experience placement, educational courses or expeditions. The potential benefits of taking a gap year are widely recognised by universities and colleges.

- You can apply to universities and colleges for deferred entry (entry after your gap year) so you can be sure of your university place for when you get back.
- Those who take a year out from their learning can gain much in terms of personal development and formulating their career choices.
- And you can benefit from improved skills in languages and increased self-confidence.

Whichever option you choose, you'll gain independence - it might be the first time you've lived away from home, or managed your time and your money. These are two skills you'll definitely need during your higher education course.

**Student
finance
and living
away from
home**



The information in this section was up-to-date when this booklet was published.
You should visit the websites mentioned in the section for the very latest information.

THE COST OF STUDYING IN THE UK

As a student, you will usually have to pay for two things: tuition fees for your course, and living costs such as rent, food, books, transport and entertainment.

Visit www.ucas.com/students/studentfinance to find out everything you need to know about student finance, including likely costs and, importantly, the help available.

For more information, see www.moneysavingexpert.com/students.

APPLYING FOR STUDENT FINANCE

Arrangements for students from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales should be checked on these websites:

England: www.gov.uk/student-finance

Northern Ireland: www.studentfinancenir.co.uk

Scotland: www.saas.gov.uk

Wales: www.studentfinancewales.co.uk

There's extra support for disabled students and for students with child or adult dependants – see the above websites for more information.

BURSARIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Many universities and colleges offer non-repayable cash support. Bursaries are usually linked to your household income and are normally paid automatically to eligible students. Check with the universities and colleges where you are planning to apply.

NON-UK STUDENTS

If you're planning to study in the UK at a publicly-funded university or college, your fee status will be determined by the UK institution you plan to attend. See www.ucas.com/students/wheretostart/nonukstudents/money for more information.

WHAT OTHER THINGS DO YOU NEED TO CONSIDER MONEY-WISE?

- A student bank account – look carefully at the level of support each bank offers.
- Plan your budget – budgeting is about knowing your income and your outgoings.
- Do you need insurance or a TV licence? – being burgled or fined can have a serious effect on your finances, security and confidence.
- Transport – know how you are going to get to and from uni, and a student travel pass can save you a fortune.
- Look out for student discounts – show your student card to get discounts at the cinema, shops and restaurants.
- Get a part-time job – this can help to both finance your studies and improve your career development.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I CONSIDER?

ACCOMMODATION

Unless you'll be living at home, you have three accommodation options:

- university halls of residence, managed by the university
- private houses, managed by private landlords
- purpose-built student accommodation provided by private companies.

Look at the university's website for information on what they offer and talk to students at the university's open day to find out what it's like to live there.

LEAVING HOME

When you leave home, you'll need to take responsibility for looking after yourself:

- Learn to cook and collect basic equipment for self-catering.
- Be aware of fire and gas safety requirements.
- Look after your valuables – do you need insurance?
- Avoid the stress of leaving home – look for opportunities to make friends.
- How often will you travel home and how much will it cost?
- Plan your finances; use our budget calculator (www.ucas.com/students/startinguni/managing_money) and apply for student finance.

How do
I apply?

How do I apply?

YOUR APPLICATION

You make your application to universities and colleges through our secure online system at www.ucas.com.

Your application consists of the following.

- Personal details eg contact details. You can opt to share your information with the Student Loans Company or Student Awards Agency for Scotland which makes applying for student finance much quicker.
- Choices – which courses you want to apply to. You have a maximum of five choices but there are some restrictions so read www.ucas.com/students/applying/howtoapply/choices first.
- Your education and employment.
- A personal statement which tells your chosen universities and colleges exactly why you are applying and why they should want you as a student.
- Reference – details of your referee.

If you're applying for music, dance or drama courses you might need to use our performing arts application system, CUKAS, at www.cukas.ac.uk; the system is very like UCAS but has a few important differences.

Once you have a shortlist of the course providers you'd like to apply to, you can start thinking about your UCAS application. There are some important dates to remember, so keep this tear out date chart somewhere handy so you don't forget them.



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Sunday Times University Guide 2013

To see all of our undergraduate courses visit londonmet.ac.uk/ug

*See www.londonmet.ac.uk/nsp for conditions



The Little Guide to higher education provides lots of useful advice to help potential students decide what and where to study.

www.ucas.com