A Guide

to

UCAS Applications



Why go to university?

Choosing higher education has many benefits. These include:

* developing valuable skills to give you wider opportunities
* studying a subject you're passionate about
* gaining a qualification to help you follow your chosen career
* higher earning potential

With a huge range of courses available, it's important to do your research to decide what's right for you.

Getting Started

1. You need to know:

* Desired Course
* Predicted Grades

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| EPQ | AS level | A level | New Tariff points | BTEC Extended Diploma | BTEC Diploma | BTEC Subsidiary Diploma |
|  |  |  | 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 |  |  |  |
| A |  | D | 24 |  |  |  |
| B | A |  | 20 |  |  |  |
| C | B | E | 16 |  |  | P |
| D | C |  | 12 |  |  |  |
|  | D |  | 10 |  |  |  |
| E |  |  | 8 |  |  |  |
|  | E |  | 6 |  |  |  |

Process for Research

1. Research universities doing the course and make a list.

[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com/)

[www.whatuni.com](http://www.whatuni.com/)

1. Make eliminations.

* City/Campus University
* Distance from home
* Rankings for subject <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings>
* Grade requirements

1. Research details of short list.

Check the specific course content.

1. Decide whether to visit.

* Open Days
* Campus Tours

1. Decide whether to put on UCAS application form.

University Research Grid

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| University | Location | Course code | Course Title | Open Day/Campus Tour | Entry Requirements | Misc | Y/N |
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University Research Grid

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**Journey of Application**

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| --- |
| **Register on Apply**  **June 2018** |
|  |
| **Prepare Personal Statement**  **Deadline October Half term 2018** |
|  |
| **Complete the Application Form**  **Deadline 14th December 2018** |
|  |
| **Submit the application**  **(Button Day date agreed)** |
|  |
| **Post Submission**  **Universities will make offers**  **Extra available**  **Exam results sent to universities** |
|  |
| **Confirmation and Clearing** |

**MAKING YOUR APPLICATION**

**1. First you register to use Apply**

* Add some **personal details**, get a **username**, create a **password** and set your **security questions**.
* Include the **buzzword** your school, college or centre gave you, or if you're applying independently answer a few questions.

**2. Then log in to fill in the rest of your personal details**

**Funding and sponsorship** options, **residential status**, any **special needs or disabilities** and any **criminal convictions** – plus you can give a parent, guardian or adviser **nominated access** if you'd like them to be able to speak on your behalf.

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 online, ready for you to log in and check.

**3. Some additional info (UK applicants only)**

* Your **ethnic origin**, **national identity**, any **summer schools**/**taster courses** you attended, **care** and **parental education** and **occupational background**. This info isn't for selection purposes – it's helpful for producing statistics, but it's not compulsory if you'd rather not fill it in.

**4. Your student finance arrangements (UK applicants only)**

* **This isn**'**t your actual student finance application**, but if you'll be looking for financial support we can speed up the process by sharing your info with the student loans or awards organisation you apply to (if you give us permission to). Don't worry if you can't see the page – it only shows after certain questions are answered in the 'personal details' section.

**5. Then you add your course choices**

You can choose up to five courses. There’s no preference order and your universities/colleges won’t see where else you’ve applied.

One restriction on the combinations you can have is a maximum of four courses in any one of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or veterinary science.

Another restriction is that you can only apply to one course at either the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge.

Make sure you’ve checked the university or college accepts deferred entry applications for the course you’re interested in.

**6. Your education so far**

You must enter **all qualifications you have a result for, including any which were ungraded**.

You must also enter **any exams you’re waiting to take, and any qualifications for which you’re waiting results**.

[**If you need help adding your AS and A levels check our Advisers' blog**](http://www.ucasonline.blogspot.co.uk/2013/08/entering-levels-and-as-levels-on-your.html).

It’s important to include your **full education history**, including the most recent school or college you’ve attended, or are attending.

**For course results you**'**re still waiting for**,[**these are the exam results we're able to process and forward on to unis and colleges**](http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/undergraduate/results/how-your-exam-results-get-your-unis-and-colleges). If any of your pending qualifications aren't on here then just remember to send the results on to your choices when you get them. (But either way you still need to add all your qualifications into this section, even if they're not on the list.)

**7. 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/finish dates.

Mention any unpaid or voluntary work in your personal statement.

**8. Then you write a personal statement**

This is your chance to **show course providers why you want to study the course and why you**'**d make a great student**.

Take a look here if you'd like advice on[**how to write a personal statement.**](http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/undergraduate/filling-your-application/your-personal-statement)

**9. Double check the view all details page**

* See if you need to make any edits, then **mark it as complete**, **save it and agree to the declaration** (which allows us to process your info and send it to your universities/colleges).

**10. Pay your fee and send your application to Mrs James**

* You'll be getting a reference from **a teacher**, **adviser or professional that knows you**.
* Pay either **£13 if you**'**re applying to just one course**, **or £24 for multiple courses and for applications sent after 30 June**.

**A few things to note**

* **You can only apply once in a cycle.** Please don't apply more than once in a cycle, as you can't receive a refund for further applications.
* **If you've applied in previous cycles and want to apply again**, you'll still have to submit a new application.
* **You can use some** **European characters** in your personal details, personal statement, employment and referee details (see related documents for accepted characters).
* **You'll need to mark every section as complete** before you can get to the declaration/payment/reference stage.

Personal Statement Planning Sheet

**Writing about the course**









**Skills and achievements**





**Hobbies and interests**



**Work Experience**



**Future plans**



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Dos when writing your personal statement**  • Do use your best English and don’t let spelling and grammatical errors spoil your statement.  • Do show that you know your strengths and can outline your ideas clearly. Use words you know will be understood by the person reading your statement.  • Do be enthusiastic – if you show your interest in the course, it may help you get a place.  • Do expect to produce several drafts of your personal statement before being totally happy with it.  • Do ask people you trust for their feedback | **Don’ts when writing your personal statement**  • Don’t exaggerate – if you do you may get caught out  at interview when asked to elaborate on an interesting achievement.  • Don’t rely on a spellchecker as it will not pick up everything –  Proof-read as many times as possible.  • Don’t leave it to the last minute – your statement will seem rushed and important information could be left out. |

**How to write it**

**There**'**s no right answer for how to write it**, **or any definite formula you should follow** – just take your time and don't worry if it doesn't sound right on your first attempt. Even the best writers in the world redraft their work!

**1**. **Structure**

* In the course listings see which skills and qualities the universities or colleges value most.
* Then structure your info into an order that's most relevant to them.

**2**. **Style**

* Write in English and avoid italics, bold or underlining.
* Use an enthusiastic and concise tone of voice – nothing too complex – just what comes naturally.
* Be careful with humour, quotes or anything unusual – you do want to be individual, but if the admissions tutor doesn't have the same sense of humour as you, it might not work.
* Get the grammar, spelling and punctuation right, and redraft your statement until you're happy with it.
* Proofread and read it aloud to hear what it sounds like. Ask advisers/family members to check it too.

**3**. **Format**

* You can use up to 4,000 characters or 47 lines of text (including spaces and blank lines).
* We recommend you write your statement first and then copy and paste into your online application (but watch out for the character and line count – the processor might get different values because it doesn't count tabs or paragraphs).
* When you add to your online application click 'save' regularly because it will time out after 35 minutes of inactivity.

If you want to send any more information you can ask unis and colleges if they'll accept further details – if they say yes you should send it direct to them (not us) once we've sent you your Welcome letter (so you can include your Personal ID).

**4**. **Don**'**t copy!**

* Don’t copy anyone else's personal statement or from personal statements posted on the internet. Make sure your personal statement is all your own work.
* We screen all personal statements across our Copycatch similarity detection system. If you are found to have similarity in your personal statement, your application will be flagged, you, together with your choices will receive an email alert and this could have serious consequences for your application.Mr Wood’s Personal Statement Checklist

(Please read this before you give me your statement to read!)

1. Intro:

* Why do you want to study this subject? – show your enthusiasm (passion, excitement, fascination, intrigue etc.)
* Sound like you are genuinely keen and interested

1. Unique selling point (leave this bit out if you can’t think of anything):

* Do you have a USP that makes you particularly stand out for this course? – some particular relevant work experience? - a visit? - a qualification? – something that no/few other people can say?
* E.g. you are applying for Business and you have already set up your own business, met Lord Sugar, worked for Richard Branson etc.

1. Your academic enthusiasm/record:

* Start with the A level that is most relevant to your course (e.g. for English, start with English)
* Mention the parts of your A Level that you have most enjoyed
* Mention ‘extras’ – wider reading; lectures; visits; talks; conferences etc.
* Say something about each of the A Levels/BTECs you study (either they have given you knowledge or skills that will help you in this course)
* If you have done especially well in a unit (e.g. got full marks) then say so

1. Other ‘academic’ stuff:

* Extended Project
* Critical thinking
* Other qualifications

1. Work experience/hobbies/voluntary work/responsibilities:

* Ideally show a link between your w/exp and your course
* Show that you are enthusiastic – a ‘rounded’ person
* Give examples of things that you have done
* What else can you offer to university life?

1. Conclusion:

* Why would you make a good student? – commitment, hard work, enthusiasm, dedication etc.

Mrs James - Final Checklist before you Pay and Send

* Check personal details are correct
* Fee code should be 02 unless you are applying for nursing
* You have entered all your GCSEs with the correct grades
* You have entered your A levels and/or BTECs as pending
* YOU HAVE PROOFREAD YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT