



The UCAS process
Information Evening
2025



Before we start

Don't panic!

[HOME](#) [ABOUT OUR SCHOOL](#) [CURRICULUM](#) [STUDENTS](#) [PARENTS](#) [TEACHING PARTNERSHIP](#) [NEWS AND EVENTS](#) [VACANCIES](#) [CONTACT US](#)

as 'good' in our most recent OFSTED inspection.

Our exam results are of a consistently high standard and each year around 80% of Year 13 students go onto Higher Education, some going to Oxford or Cambridge or highly sought after courses such as medicine or veterinary science.

Students in the Sixth Form have access to a dedicated Common Room, PC room and private study areas allowing them to effectively use study time to complete their work. Many faculty areas also have dedicated sixth form facilities.

There are a wide range of extracurricular and enrichment activities available, including sports teams and regular fund-raising events such as talent shows. Many subject areas run educational visits to support their students' learning and understanding of the course content.

[Entry Requirements](#)

[Applications](#)

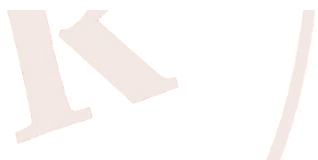
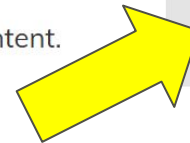
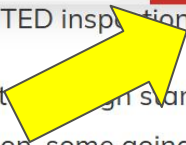
[Sixth Form Dress Code](#)

[16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#)

[Transport](#)

[Additional Information and Downloads](#)

[UCAS](#)



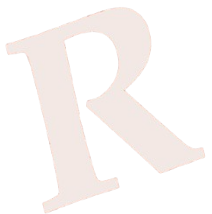
It's a personal journey



“We always have to believe in what is possible in life and not be hindered by history or expectations.”

More than an application process - about discovering / exploring / researching

IAG where it all starts



The UCAS journey



Choosing courses

- Explore your options
- Decide on a subject
- Search for courses
- Check for entry requirements

Applying

- Apply online
- Wait to hear back from providers
- Reply to any offers you get

Starting your course

- Make sure finance is sorted
- Course materials

Typical outcomes



- Application cycles are tough, sometimes with fewer offers and later decisions
- Health-related courses heavily oversubscribed (Adult nursing had 49% offer rate)
- After medicine, subjects such as computer science, sports science, economics and law are the most competitive (check offer rates)
- Clearing in 2024 was far more competitive.

The 2026 picture



- Will continue to be challenging for students
- Increased numbers applying - entry grades being adjusted
- There were 758,000 applications for full-time undergraduate places through UCAS in 2024, up on 2023
- The number of accepted applicants increased by 1.9% in 2024 to its second highest ever level (after 2020). The number of home 18 year olds accepted was up by 2.9% to a record total of 279,550

The 2026 picture



- Students will be reapplying with grades achieved or applying through clearing
- The funding system still somewhat influences university decisions with some reliance on international students
- Offers continue to be made **holistically** - not just based on grades



Research is essential



Research starts in Year 12 www.unifrog.org

Use of UCAS Application Platform www.ucas.com

Key priority is to identify the course first then link to universities and entry requirements (Historic entry grades - new feature)

Attending Open Days, virtual and in-person

UCAS HUB



Students exploring their options through UCAS can now access subject tasters thanks to a new collaboration with Springpod.

This allows students to explore, interact and sample university subjects and courses online before they apply.

By registering on the UCAS Hub, students will have access to interactive university course tasters which feature real-life lectures, seminars and academics, giving prospective students the opportunity to experience a variety of degree subjects that they may be considering studying.



**CAREER
POWERED
EDUCATION**

Introduction to Higher Education & UCAS 2026

The New Personal Statement
Format

Lee Bowling

Student Engagement &
Recruitment Manager

Who are UCAS?

UCAS Does:

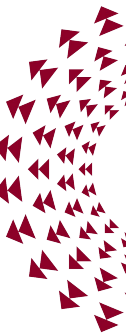
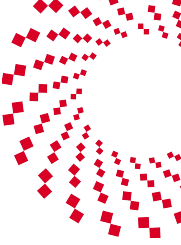
- Provide information, advice & support
- Process applications
- Complete fraud & verification checks

UCAS Does Not:

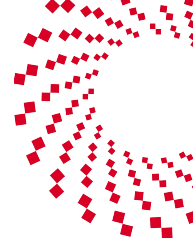
- Make decisions or offers
- Set entry requirements
- Advise on finance
- Advise on immigration or visas

UCAS can offer information & advice on:

- Higher Education
- Apprenticeships / traineeships
- Study abroad
- Gap year
- Getting a job



UCAS 2026 Calendar...



28 April **UCAS search tool displays 2026 courses**

12 May **Undergraduate applications for 2026 Open**

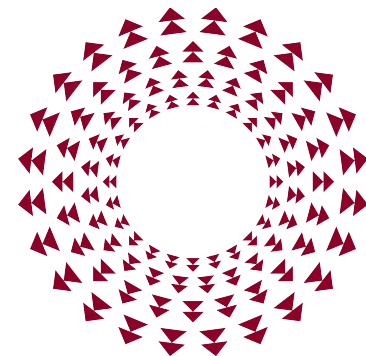
1 September **Completed applications can be submitted**

14 October **Deadline for applications to Oxford &
Cambridge, medicine, dentistry & veterinary medicine/science**

14 January 2026 **Equal consideration deadline**

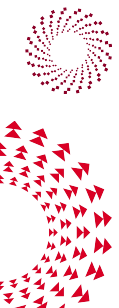
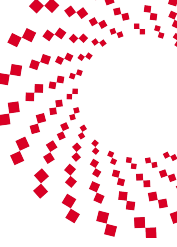
26 February **UCAS Extra opens**

4 July **Clearing opens**



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 your career aspirations?
- 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?



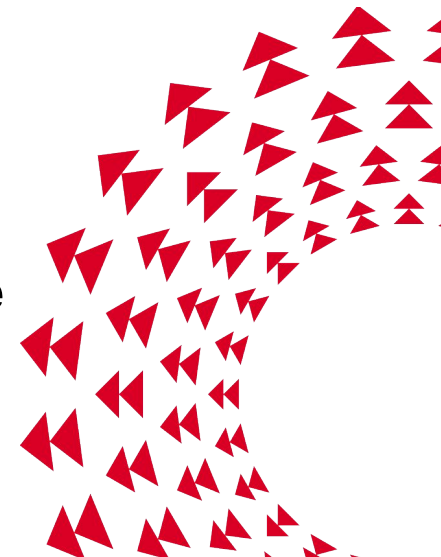
Location... location... location...

- **Style** – from traditional, with a focus on subject-based courses and research, to modern universities/colleges, with a greater focus on vocational courses.
- **Location** – some are in large cities, others in small towns, by the coast or in the countryside – it's all 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.
- **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 useful to find out what jobs or further study students go on to.
- **Tuition fees** – can vary between universities and colleges; check if there are scholarships or bursaries available.
- **Living costs** – accommodation, transport, and food can vary enormously.

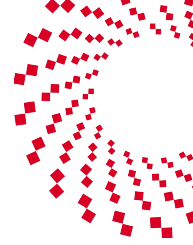


Things to remember...

- To start an application students need a **UCAS Hub account**.
- Register for UCAS Hub at any time.
- From **12th May 2025** able to **'Start'** application in UCAS Hub.
- Applicants have up to **five choices**, unless applying to study medicine, veterinary, medicine/science, dentistry – then it's **four choices**.
- You **can't apply to BOTH** Oxford and Cambridge.
- Applying **costs** £28.95 regardless of number of choices.
- **Follow schools internal deadline and apply before the equal consideration deadline**
- Universities and colleges **can't see** other choices.



The New Personal Statement Format...



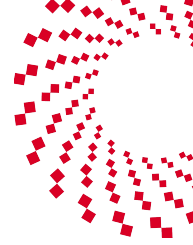
UCAS is replacing the traditional free form statement with three structured questions

The Three Questions

1. Why do you want to study this course or subject?
2. How have your qualifications and studies helped you prepare for this course or subject?
3. What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?



Decisions...



Universities & colleges will review:

- Personal Statement
- Qualifications / predicted grades
- Reference

They may also ask for:

- Admission Test
- Interview
- Audition / Showreel / Portfolio



Offers...

Conditional: Dependent on results

Unconditional: No strings attached!

Once students have had responses from ALL of the institutions they have applied to the need to choose:

- **Firm:** first choice
- **Insurance:** second choice

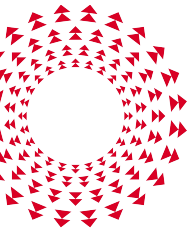
Inform UCAS which two offers you want to accept via Track

Keep to reply deadlines or choices can be 'declined by default'



Advice from a university...

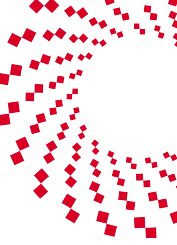
- The application is a two way process – chance for to get to know applicant & vice versa
- Universities are not looking for ready made Doctors / Nurses / Midwives / Teachers etc. – looking for potential, transferable skills, personal qualities & desire to succeed.
- If you are not sure about something – ask questions!
- Universities are supportive & open places of education – there to help & encourage.
- There is no such thing as a silly question



Student Next Steps...

- Research ALL career options / interests
- Think about interests, skills and what they enjoy.
- Seek advice...speak to Careers Advisors, Tutors, Family
- Consider how they can stand out...
 - Extra / Super Curricular activities
 - Work Experience / Volunteering
 - Responsibilities & other activities
- Focus on this year's studies
- Continue to develop study & research skills.
- Develop time management, organisation skills – key for all areas of career
- Make an informed choice about their future

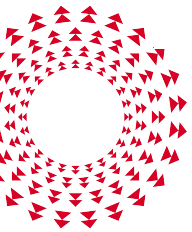
RESEARCH! RESEARCH! RESEARCH!





How you can help...

- Use the parent/guardian section of the UCAS site
- Sign up for parent updates from UCAS and get everything you need to know about the application process
- Attend Open Days & Virtual Events too...you will have a different perspective / questions / worries or concerns!
- Be there to help them read and understand everything they receive.
- Read their Personal Statement answers – offer a different perspective or simply proofread!
- Encourage them to speak to universities about anything you or they are not sure about - We are happy to speak & help applicants and their parents/guardians



Useful links...

UCAS – all about applying & a good place to start: www.ucas.com

Student Finance England – find out about funding your studies:
www.gov.uk/student-finance

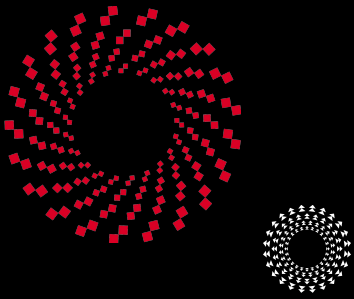
Open Days – all open events across the UK: www.opendays.com

The Student Room – independent advice: www.thestudentroom.co.uk

DiscoverUni – Government statistics & comparison site:
www.discoveruni.gov.uk

NotGoingToUni – Useful links to career opportunities other than university:
www.notgoingtouni.co.uk





University of Bedfordshire Enquiry
Form

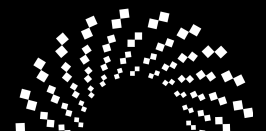


QUESTIONS?

Lee Bowling

Student & Engagement Recruitment Manager

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Predicted Grades



Predicted grades are derived by academic department staff, overseen by the Head of Department in support of a student's progression to higher education, as well as progression to a range of other destinations, e.g. apprenticeship, employment.

UCAS says: "a predicted grade is the grade of qualification an applicant's school or college believes they're likely to achieve in positive circumstances."

Predicted grades **should not be** affected by student, parental, guardian, or carer pressure – there are risks associated with inflating and suppressing predicted grades

Oxbridge / Early applicants



Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Vet Medicine

- All of these require the highest grades at GCSE and A level
- All will interview candidates
- There is huge competition for places

Our programme:

- Meet to discuss applications, processes and deadlines
- Talk from ex students who are at (or graduated from) Oxford or Cambridge about life there
- Regular, informal meetings to discuss open day visits, plans and personal statements
- Talk from an ex student who was also a fellow at Cambridge about applications and interviews
- Ongoing support on personal application
- Open session with a range of ex students and current staff to discuss questions
- Mock interviews with feedback
- Participation with the Connolly Foundation "Raising Aspirations" programme

The UCAS process



- Students can make up to five choices
- Applications received by the key deadlines are given equal consideration – earlier applications may help in some cases
- ‘Invisibility’ – universities cannot see where else students have applied to
- Students can select a firm and an insurance place once all responses are received from universities.

Clearing



Clearing is how unis and colleges fill any places they still have on their courses.

From July – October, you can apply for a course using Clearing if you're not already holding an offer from a university or college, and the course still has places.

You can use Clearing if:

- you're applying after the final application deadline
- you didn't receive any offers (or none you wanted to accept)
- you didn't meet the conditions of your offers
- you've declined your firm place

Clearing



In 2024 more than 74,000 students secured their place for university in Clearing (theuniguide.co.uk)

General pattern is roughly in thirds:

- find a place after declining their original firm choice.
- find a place after not meeting the terms of their offer.
- either apply directly into Clearing or hold no firm choice.

Clearing



Don't panic...

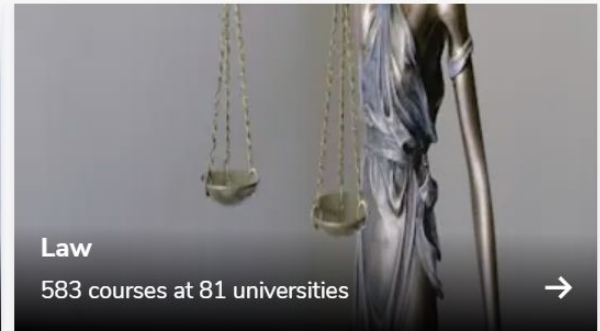
Popular Clearing courses 2024

A photograph showing several people's hands working together at a desk with a laptop and various documents, representing a business course.

Business
993 courses at 105 universities

A photograph of a person in blue medical scrubs with a stethoscope around their neck, with another person's hands clasped in front of them, representing a medicine course.

Medicine
124 courses at 44 universities

A photograph of a person in a blue robe holding a pair of golden scales of justice, representing a law course.

Law
583 courses at 81 universities

Source: Complete University Guide

Student responsibilities

A young woman with long, dark, wavy hair is smiling and making an 'OK' hand gesture with her right hand. She is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. The background is dark with white chalkboard-style drawings of a ruler, pencil, and geometric shapes like a triangle and circles. The text 'OUR JOURNEY STARTS' is written in large, bold, teal letters on the left side. The word 'DISCOVER' is written in large, bold, white letters in the center. At the bottom, there is a paragraph of text in white. A small red button with the text 'Feedback (' is located in the bottom right corner.

OUR JOURNEY STARTS

DISCOVER

Unsure of what to do with your life or what your next steps are? Use our information on careers, apprenticeships and university to explore what routes are available and which one is right for you.

Feedback (:

Student responsibilities



UCAS

Discover

Undergraduate

Postgraduate

Apprenticeships

Careers



Marie



What should I do?

Explore all your options and start planning your next steps.

Finding your passion

Discover

Ultimate Guides

UCAS Hub

Careers Quiz

UCAS events and exhibitions

Chat to students

What to do

Discover courses

Explore apprenticeships

Subject guides

Industry guides

Explore employers

Degree apprenticeships

Student finance

Where to go

Universities and colleges

Discover regions

City guides

Accommodation options

Cost of living support

Student responsibilities



UCAS Hub

Bin the sticky notes. Delete your screenshots. Now you can organise everything – including your application – in one place. Start by exploring your options, favouriting subjects, and using our handy tools.

What is it?

With your very own UCAS Hub, you can plan your next step. The best bit – you can save your progress and carry on whenever you want.

We've created lots of handy tools to help you make choices and prepare your application:

- 1 The explore tool – where you can search subjects and discover courses.
- 2 The notepad – so you can keep all your thoughts about your next step in one place.
- 3 Apprenticeship finder – for the latest vacancies, locally and nationally.
- 4 The personal statement builder – to help you structure your writing and introduce yourself to universities.
- 5 The Tariff calculator – for tallying up your UCAS points to see if you meet entry requirements.

Your Hub is your space. Organise the widgets, remove the ones you don't need, and tick off your to do list. However you use it, make it yours.

Advertisement. [Why the ads?](#)

Advertisement. [Why the ads?](#)

Feedback (:

Student responsibilities



What to do



Explore apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a great way to gain the skills and experience needed to get into many careers. Find out how an apprenticeship could be the perfect route into the career you want.



Research courses

Start your journey by exploring subjects you could study, be inspired to find the perfect subject for you.



Subject guides

Undergraduate courses you could study, what they involve, and how to get onto them.



Industry guides

From marketing to construction, business, and so much more, find out what industries might be a



Explore employers

Explore which employers are searching for students and what type of careers are available.



Find your perfect career

Helping you find your dream career.

Student responsibilities



- It is your own application, and you must be honest about if and what you want to study
- Aim for a range of likely offers
- **Meet the school deadlines**
- Ensure you are entered for any appropriate entrance examinations or university admissions tests
- Respond to university offers
- Apply for student finance
- Not planning on university? Still worth looking at the UCAS site.

Redborne responsibilities



- Organise and oversee the application process
- Offer advice on where to go and what to study
- Write the Academic Reference, support with the personal statement
- Check the application before it goes off
- Allow students to attend open days and interviews.
- Blue Guide

Key dates - Redborne



May - July - tutor times will include focus on futures and destinations

05 June 2025 - Taster Day @ University of Hertfordshire

17 June 2025 - UCAS Exhibition @ UoB

11 July 2025 - Personal statement drafted

31 October 2025 - Deadline for applications to be submitted to centre

What Redborne will not do



- Make decisions for students
- Pay for the application** – student/parent
- Organise the Student Finance.



How you can help your child



UCAS

Discover

Undergraduate

Postgraduate

Apprenticeships

Careers



Marie



[Home](#) / [Undergraduate](#) / [Applying to university](#)

UCAS UNDERGRADUATE: ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Feedback ()

How you can help your child



1



2

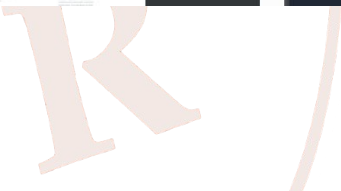


3



PARENT, GUARDIAN AND CARER GUIDE 2025

Everything you need to support your child with their higher education choices



Personal Statements



- Start early
- 4-5 drafts
- How do I make myself different from other applicants
- What has sparked your interest / what have you done outside of school?
- Use your natural language / Use of AI
- Use your tutor

The reference



Enter a general statement about your school/college/centre.



If applicable, enter any information about extenuating circumstances which may have impacted the applicant's education and achievement.

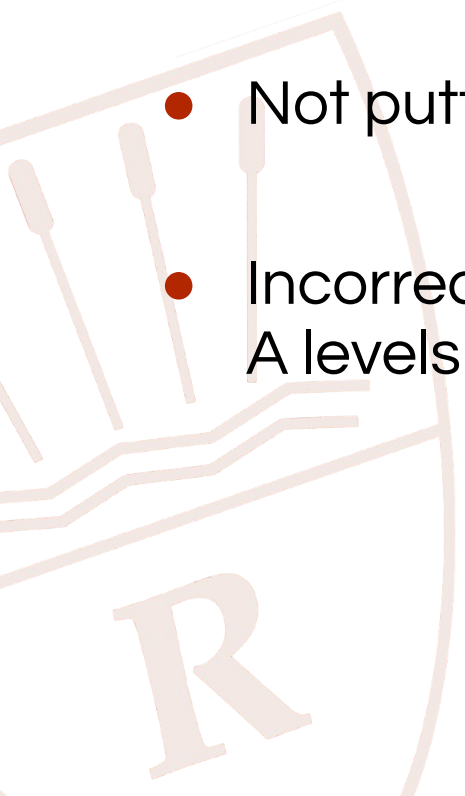


Outline any other supportive information specific to the applicant and relevant to the course(s) applied for that you think universities/colleges should be aware of.

Common mistakes



- Fee code (02 UK, ChI, IoM student. Student Support: Bedfordshire)
- Not putting in A level subjects
- Incorrect exam boards and qualification - GCSE and A levels



Getting started



- HE fairs / Open Days
- Stay open minded
- UCAS Hub - Quiz
 - What to study next
 - Apprenticeships
 - 90 subject guides
 - Use favourite tool
- UCAS on Instagram

The UCAS logo, with 'UCAS' in black and the 'A' in red.

UCAS

Financial support



To help students who may otherwise be put off from visiting universities because costs may be prohibitive.

Transport / accommodation

Typically students in receipt of 16-19 bursary but not exclusively

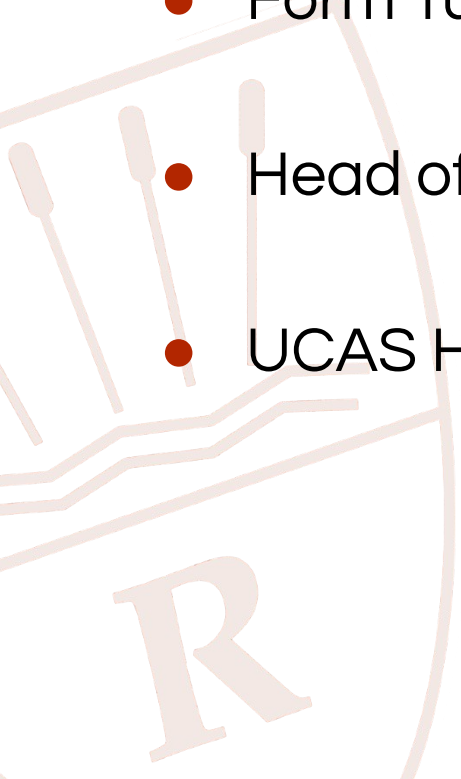
Short application form

Case-by-case basis. Please come and talk to us.

Getting help



- Subject Teacher/Department – academic concerns
- Form Tutor - personal statement
- Head of Sixth Form – urgent or unresolved matters
- UCAS Hub



Any questions?

