

Applying for Higher Education and Funding Briefing notes

Applying for Higher Education in the UK

www.ucas.com for most courses.

Performance based courses may use UCAS conservatoires, or direct application to the institution.

School deadlines:

| | |
|--|---|
| Conservatoire applicants for music courses Oxbridge and Medical / Dentistry / Veterinary Applications | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Closing date 3 October, forms completed and handed in by 20th September 2023■ Closing date 15th October 2023■ Forms completed and handed in by 29th September 2023 |
| All other applications | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Closing Date 25th January 2023■ Forms completed and handed in to school by 13th October 2023■ Sent by 10th November 2023 |

Completing the UCAS form

Pupils have been given detailed instructions via google classroom. Please encourage them to give Nominated Access to a parent, to enable you to speak on their behalf to a university or to UCAS. Please encourage them to share their data with the school.

Course choices require significant research. Individual university websites are best for specific detail, but www.discoveruni.gov.uk allows you to compare courses very effectively.

<https://www.whatuni.com/> allows you to search for a course, and give hypothetical exam grades. It will then show courses which will accept those grades.

Personal Statement

Pupils have been given detailed instructions on personal statements via google classroom. The majority of the statement should be related to the courses chosen. Please encourage pupils to focus on skills and qualities they have developed or demonstrated when writing about extra-curricular activities and positions of responsibility.

School procedures

Pupils will be allocated to a Careers teacher for a UCAS Guidance Interview. For this interview they need:

- A printout of their UCAS form completed as far as possible
- A list of courses they plan to apply for, with the entrance requirements

After the guidance interview, pupils should finalise the form, then bring a printout of the form to Mrs Rea for checking, in the Careers office during registration.

Once the form is finalised, pupils will be told to click pay and send. UCAS will take payment of £27.50. This will send the form to Mrs Rea and can still be returned for editing if needed.

Once the form is finalised we will write the confidential reference and send it to UCAS.

University procedures

Some courses require admissions tests, such as LNAT, BMAT, UCAT. It is the pupil's responsibility to ensure they are entered in good time for these. Some tests may take place remotely this year.

Some courses require interviews either face to face or remote.

Pupils may receive an unconditional offer, but more commonly a conditional offer. This may be grades or UCAS Tariff points.

| Grade | Tariff points |
|-------|---------------|
| A* | 56 |
| A | 48 |
| B | 40 |
| C | 32 |
| D | 24 |
| E | 16 |

Only the highest qualification in each subject is counted. UCAS points are also available for other qualifications such as music exams, but universities may specify that the offer must be met using A-levels.

Responding to University decisions

Pupils need to decide between their offers. They need to accept:

- A Firm offer, which is their preferred option
- An Insurance offer which should have lower grades

These are binding but there may be some leeway. There is a 2 week cooling-off period after accepting in case a change is needed.

UCAS Extra is available online from the end of February to the end of June if a pupil has no offers, provided a pupil used all their options originally. This allows a pupil to apply for one additional course at a time.

Higher level Apprenticeships

These are a route into Higher Education which combines learning with working. Usually a company pays a salary as well as paying for a degree, often alongside professional qualifications. Some companies require you to put the relevant degree on your UCAS form, others do not.

Companies which regularly offer HLAs can be seen at the links below:

EY https://www.ey.com/en_uk/careers/students/programmes/schools

Deloitte https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/careers/articles/brightstart-business-apprenticeship-scheme.html?icid=top_brightstart-business-apprenticeship-scheme

Pwc <https://www.pwc.co.uk/careers/student-careers/school-careers.html>

KPMG <https://www.kpmgcareers.co.uk/apprenticeships>

Kainos <https://www.kainos.com/careers/earn-as-you-learn>

Almac <https://www.almacgroup.com/careers/higher-level-apprenticeships/>

Thales <https://www.thalesgroup.com/en/europe/united-kingdom/career/apprenticeships>

<https://www.workplus.app/> is a website bringing together many apprenticeship options; bear in mind some companies **do not** use this site.

Applying Abroad

Republic of Ireland

www.cao.ie, closing date 1 February. I will hold a pupil meeting in November to give more detail on this.

Europe

Studying in Europe can be cheaper than the UK – you should be charged the same fees as citizens of the host country, but you may not be eligible for maintenance grants or loans from the host country.

Advice can be found at <https://www.eunicas.ie/>

USA

The Fulbright Commission offers advice for international students applying for US universities at <http://www.fulbright.org.uk/>

Further Education

FE colleges such as Belfast Met and SERC offer Foundation Degrees, HNCs and HNDs, which can often lead directly to the second or third year of a university course. These may be good options if a pupil's

subjects at A-level do not meet the subject requirements for a university course, or if a pupil is concerned about not meeting the grade requirements. Some of these courses require direct application through the college in January. However, some require a space on the UCAS form.

Examples include a 2 year Engineering HND, which can lead to second year in QUB, and a foundation degree in Construction Engineering with Surveying, which can lead to second year of Ulster University's BSc Hons Construction Engineering and Management or BSc Hons in Building Surveying.

Details can be found at the websites below:

Belfast Metropolitan College <https://www.belfastmet.ac.uk/full-time/higher-education/university-level-foundation-degrees-and-degrees/>

South Eastern Regional College <https://www.serc.ac.uk/courses/higher-education/>

Finance

All details can be seen on the studentfinanceneni website at <https://www.studentfinanceneni.co.uk/>

You can find more detail at https://www.studentfinanceneni.co.uk/media/1656/sfni_hyap_guide_2324_o.pdf, including the amounts paid for the current year (page 12)

Applications for student finance go live in Spring of each year, with up to date information. Pupils will be informed via google classroom.

All universities offer bursaries, which can be found at the university websites. Further guidance is available at <https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/university-tuition-fees/other-financial-support/university-bursaries-and-scholarships/>