

UCAS applications 2026 Entry

A guide for parents

Carol Stewart

UCAS Coordinator



Support Programme

Activity	Date
Next Steps sessions in PSHE (1,2,3)	Next Steps/ Choices/ Degree Apprenticeships using UNIFROG
UCAS applications focus in PSHE (3+4)	Applying to university/ Writing a personal statement with support on UNIFROG
UCAS Registration- (5)	Creating a UCAS account/ completing application and continuing with personal statement
UCAS Discovery Day- University of Bedfordshire	Monday 16th June
PSHE (Next Steps 6)- Personal statement- Work Experience reflection	W/B 7th July
Year 13- Next Steps in PSHE (7,8,9)	Personal Statement focus
After-school personal statement support	From September- once a week after college
Appointments with Mrs. Stewart	From September

Benefits- it's an investment

- On average, graduates tend to earn substantially more than people with A Levels/ BTECs who did not:

In 2024, the median nominal salary for working age graduates was £42,000, compared to £30,000 for non- graduates- **Graduate labour market statistics 2024 Gov.uk**

- A higher education qualification can lead to increased earning potential, a wider range of opportunities and a more rewarding career.
- Many employers target graduates in their recruitment campaigns (if not a Masters qualification)
- (At university, many young people experience a rich cultural and social scene, meeting a variety of people while studying something they love.)



Things to consider.....

- Debt- most universities will charge £9,535 in tuition fees per year. **However, they will not start paying it back until you are earning £25,000 per year.**
- How 'sure' are they about this?
- A degree apprenticeship is an attractive alternative. Why not apply for both?
- Check the student 'drop out' rate for the university
- Career prospects afterwards. Finding a job afterwards- check the graduate employment figures



First thoughts and discussions

- Is there a particular career I have in mind?
- Subject?
- Research into subject/ universities providing that subject+ different courses available.
- **How far away from home do I want to be?**
- Do I want to live at home?
- Would I like a GAP Year? (some students 'defer' entry to university)
- Would I want to take a degree apprenticeship?

255 hits-
So how do I decide?

Aspirational (119)

Top of your range

Solid (93)

In the middle

Safe (43)

At the bottom

History of Art - 3FT BA (Hons)
University of Cambridge
RG A Level: A*,A,A

History - 3FT BA (Hons)
University of Cambridge
RG A Level: A*,A,A

History - 3FT BA (Hons)
Durham University
RG A Level: A*,A,A

Ancient, Medieval and Modern History - 3FT BA (Hons)
Durham University
RG A Level: A*,A,A

Ancient History - 3FT BA (Hons)
Durham University
RG A Level: A,A,A

History - 3FT BA (Hons)
King's College London, University of London
RG A Level: A,A,A

History - 3FT/4SW + Abroad BA (Hons)
Keele University
A Level: B,B,C

History - 3FT BA (Hons)
St Mary's University, Twickenham
A Level: B,B,C

History - 3FT BA (Hons)
City (City St George's, University of London)
TT A Level: B,B,C

Military and International History with Placement - 4SW BA (Hons)
Brunel University of London
A Level: B,B,C-A,B,B

Military and International History - 3FT BA (Hons)
Brunel University of London
A Level: B,B,C-A,B,B

Art History (Bristol School of Art) - 3FT BA (Hons)

History with Foundation - 4FT BA (Hons)
Durham University
RG Foundation year

History with Foundation Year - 4FT BA (Hons)
University of Sheffield
RG Foundation year

History (with integrated foundation year) - 4FT BA (Hons)
Aberystwyth University
Foundation year

History [with Foundation Year] - 4FT BA (Hons)
Anglia Ruskin University
Foundation year

History with Integrated Foundation Year - 4FT BA (Hons)
Royal Holloway, University of London
A Level: C,C,D-C,C,C
Foundation year

next ▶ or go back

unifrog





Researching courses and universities for parents- where do I start?

- UCAS website:
<https://www.ucas.com/discover/advice-for-parents-guardians-and-carers>
- University web sites
- Prospectuses
- Teachers/ friends/ relatives*
- www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk

Where to study?

Early Entry

- Oxford
- Cambridge
- Medicine
- Veterinary Science
- Dentistry

Lists/ rankings

Russell Group

Geography

Where do I NOT want to go? How far away from home do I want to be?

UK University Rankings 2025: League table

What you need to know Search the league table

Q Search by university, postcode or town

Rank by factor

Rank by subject

Social inclusion

Clear filters

Overall institutional ranking

Rank	University	Teaching quality	Student experience	Research quality	Entry standards	Graduate prospects	First/2:1s	Continuation rate	Student-staff ratio	People & Planet	Total
2025		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	
1	London School of Economics and Political Science	81.6	79.6	68	182	92.5	93.9	98	12.8	63.4	1000
2	University of St Andrews	88.9	86.4	53.8	208	87.6	94.8	97.5	11.9	45.2	988
3	University of Oxford	85	71.1	67	200	90.4	94.1	98.5	10.3	59.4	985

The Russell Group represents 24 research-intensive universities located in every region and nation of the UK.

Our universities share the ambition to change the world for the better. Anchored in their communities, Russell Group universities are global institutions with a vital role to play in cities and towns in every corner of the UK. Partnership is at the heart of our universities' ethos. Working with schools, colleges, local authorities, the NHS, businesses and charities, our universities use their scale, research excellence and global links to provide solutions for real problems facing families, businesses and public services.

From achieving net zero, to reducing social inequalities and addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and from harnessing the power of AI safely to improving the NHS and finding new cures and treatments; Russell Group universities are working to deliver wide-ranging social, economic, cultural, health and environmental impacts.

RUSSELL

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University of Cambridge
Cardiff University
Durham University
University of Edinburgh
University of Exeter
University of Glasgow
Imperial College London
King's College London
University of Leeds
University of Liverpool
London School of Economics and Political Science
University of Manchester
Newcastle University
University of Nottingham
University of Oxford
Queen Mary University of London
Queen's University Belfast
University of Sheffield
University of Southampton
University College London
University of Warwick
University of York

GROUP

UCAS and UNIFROG- what's the difference?



Research, preparation, personal statement and reference



The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
Making an application, tracking decisions from university

Parents' UCAS page

← → ↻ 🏠 📄 ucas.com/discover/advice-for-parents-guardians-and-carers ☆ 📁 📧 ⋮



Advice for parents, guardians and carers

Everything you need to help your child decide on their next steps.

APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY



How to fill in a UCAS application

If your child has decided university is the right path for them, here's what they'll need to know about making a UCAS application.



Help your child write a great personal statement

Taking a positive approach, and leaving enough time to do a good job, really can make your child's application stand out from the



What happens once UCAS gets an application?

Find out what we do with your child's application and the different decisions a uni or college can make.

Feedback

Open Days

Attendance is essential!

← → ↻ 🏠 🔍 opendays.com ☆ 📁 👤 ⋮

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university and college open days

Join our **5 July Open Day**

Home Search for a university/college Browse open day calendar Advice My Open Days

 Edge Hill University
4-Jul Open Day

 University of Southampton
2-Jul Open Day

 Sheffield Hallam University
Knowledge Applied
5-Jul Open Day

 UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH
5-Jul Open Day

 pointblank
16-Aug Open Day

 University of Northampton
9-Jul Open Day

Opendays.com - the university and college open day directory



University of East Anglia (UEA)

📅 Next open day: [5 July 2025](#)

📍 Nearest city: Norwich

[More on University of East Anglia \(UEA\)](#)

 Sheffield Hallam University
Knowledge Applied
5-Jul Open Day

Visit our open day on Saturday 5 July 9.30-3.30pm to see everything Sheffield Hallam has to offer and discover our courses.

You'll be able to tour campuses and facilities, speak to course tutors and students already studying the course you're interested in.

A variety of accommodation is open to

... day - all our halls include bills

<https://www.opendays.com/ads/adclick.aspx?adtype=featured&navigateto=https%3a%2f%2fwww.opendays.com%2f28ec&clickpage=https%3a%2f%2fwww.opendays.com%2fdefault.aspx&banner=2326>

 5 News for you
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01/07/2025

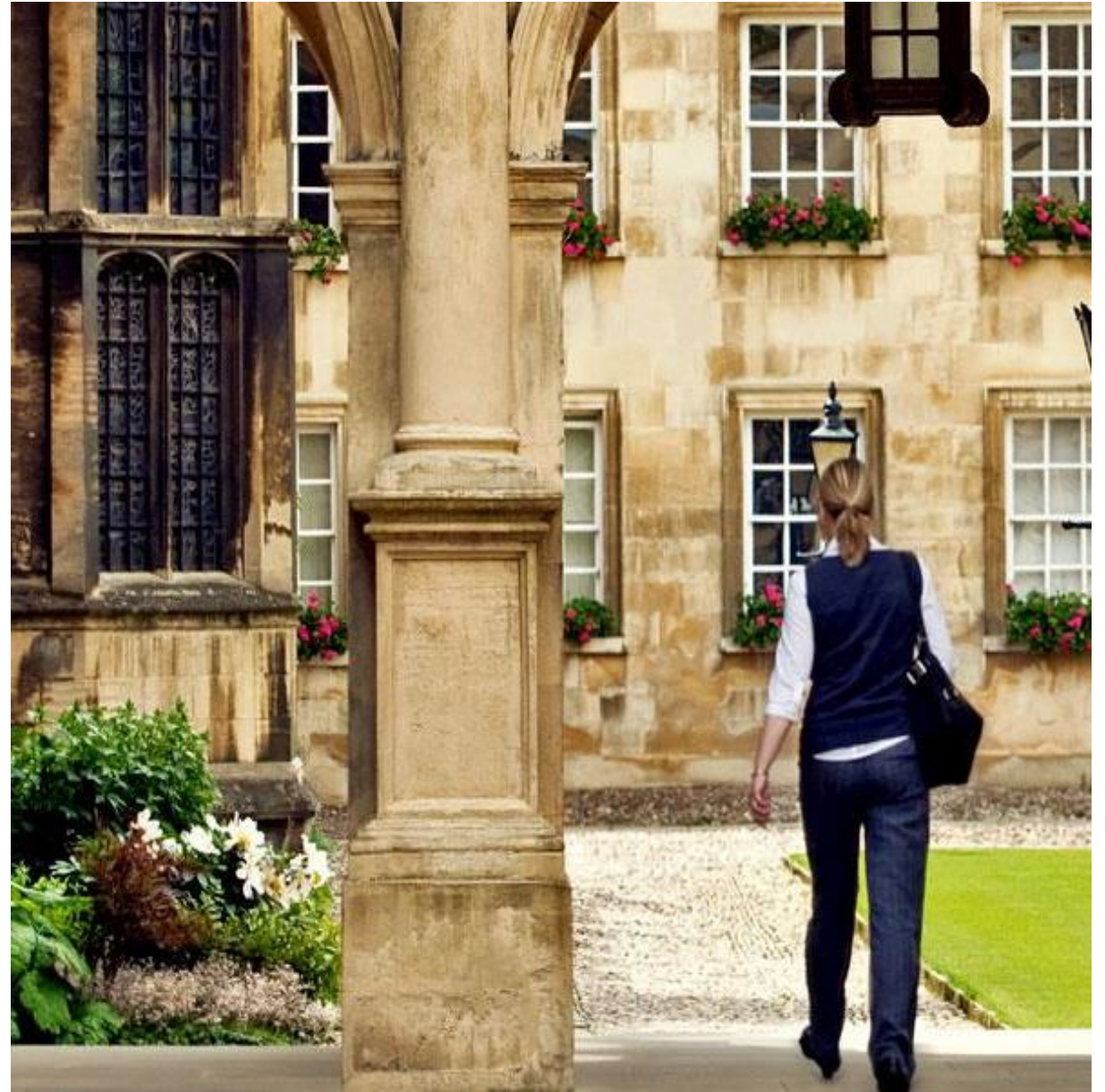
Key Aspects- checklist

- Course- Have they checked what is covered in years 1-3?
- Is it a **Joint honours** course?
- How is it assessed? Is there coursework as well as exams?
- Institution- City or Campus?
- Course/ Institution ratings
- Entry Requirements/ Entry Profile
- Accommodation? They tend to focus on en-suite facilities



UCAS- Application

- Maximum of 5 courses
- Preferably a consistent choice of subject
- Choices need to be made on 'aspirational' grade prediction
- Eventually make **one firm and one insurance choice** once universities have made offers





Student progress

Personal details	✓	More about you	✓
Nationality	✓	Education	🕒
Where you live	✓	Employment	○
Contact details	✓	Extra activities	○
Supporting information	✓	Personal statement	○
Finance & funding	✓	Choices	○
Diversity & inclusion	🕒		

Adviser progress

Application complete	○
Qualifications checked	○
Predicted grades complete	○
Reference complete	○
Reference approved	○
Application approved	○
Sent to UCAS	○



Fee/ Fee Waiver

- Application fee is £28.95
- This will be paid by card when the student 'pays and sends'
- This WILL NOT send it to UCAS but will send it to me.
- IF the student has received free school meals at any point in the last 6 years, they will not pay the fee
- They need to tick this box on the application form and I will confirm before sending application

How are UCAS grades decided? Are they flexible?

- Grades are based on the year 12 end of year exam.
- This shows us the student's capabilities
- Typically, we predict one grade above their end of year exam grade
- Resit?
- Students requesting a review of their UCAS grade will have an opportunity to do this centrally during Y13 Autumn Term
- September for Early Entry students
- Main applicants after their Autumn assessment -students will have more on this during their assembly next week.

What are UCAS points?

A-LEVEL	
GRADE	POINTS
A*	56
A	48
B	40
C	32
D	24
E	16

PEARSON BTEC LEVEL 3 NATIONAL DIPLOMA	
GRADE	POINTS
D*D*	112
D*D	104
DD	96
DM	80
MM	64
MP	48
PP	32

Personal Statement- what is it?



Section 1

Why do you want to study this course or subject?

Characters: 0 (Min 350. Our recommendation is about 1200)

Start >



Section 2

How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

Characters: 0 (Min 350. Our recommendation is about 1400)

Start >



Section 3

What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

Characters: 0 (Min 350. Our recommendation is about 1400)

Start >

Section 1: Why do you want to study this course or subject?

We recommend this part make up around 30% of the total statement

[< Back](#)

Examples of what you may want to write about:

1. What sparked your interest in the subject area?

Be specific - write about something that got you interested in the subject area, but avoid 'lightbulb' moments.

Law example:

'My interest in studying law was originally sparked by the significant moments in legal history that I've lived through, for example the reversal of Roe v Wade in the US, and the passing of the The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act in the UK. After exploring these in my citizenship lessons, I began to read up on how laws come into effect in different countries, and how laws can be changed. Reading into laws around the world on crime, safety, and families allowed me to see the impact of the legal system in different countries and begin to question how we can make global, positive changes. Studying law will help me develop my research and analysis skills, and improve my ability to construct meaningful, well-thought-out arguments to support my ideas.'

Section 2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

[< Back](#)

We recommend this part make up around 35% of the total statement

Examples of what you may want to write about:

1. Anything academic you've done in or outside of school related to this subject

As always, specific examples are best! Even if you aren't yet studying the subject you're applying for, show how your current schoolwork is preparing you for it.

Criminology example:

'Through my studies in my law A level, I developed a keen interest in criminal law and criminology. I began listening to the 'Once Upon a Crime' podcast to explore the causes, effects, and impact of crime. This led me to explore the sociological theory of criminal law, specifically the theory that what is considered a crime can change over time and vary between cultures. I used my research into the decriminalisation of cannabis to achieve an A in my recent essay on criminal law.'

+ 2. Particular project work you've done in your studies

+ 3. Things you've learnt from your wider/deeper reading

+ 4. Course related activities

+ Personal statement dos

+ Personal statement don'ts

Section 3: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

[< Back](#)

We recommend this part make up around 35% of the total statement

Examples of what you may want to write about:

- + 1. Your hobbies, leisure activities
- + 2. Sports / music / drama you participate in
- + 3. Other sorts of extra-curricular activities
- + 4. Significant responsibilities you hold, at home, school, or in clubs or societies
- + 5. Special achievements
- + 6. Experiences in your year out (if you're having one)
- + 7. Any relevant work experience (especially for vocational courses)
- 8. Any voluntary work

Show that you've pursued your subject in a 'real world' setting.

Medicine example:

'I took part in a voluntary placement in a care home where I made a concerted effort to build an empathetic relationship with the residents. I had learnt that this was a key skill when working with an aging population and was amazed by how much of a difference simply talking to the residents made to them. I had also learnt about the complexities of managing pain – both physical and psychosomatic – and talked with the medical staff at the care home about their aims for patients and how they were going to achieve them, and the more complex procedures they were performing. These experiences exposed me to some of the difficult realities of medicine especially when there is little to be done to help a patient.'

- + 9. What you've learnt from your job (if you have one)
- + Personal statement dos

EPQ

- Extended Project Qualification
- Worth ½ an A Level
- Independent research on a topic of their choice
- Designed to enhance independent research, project management, and presentation skills
- Essay of 5000 words/ artefact
- Final presentation





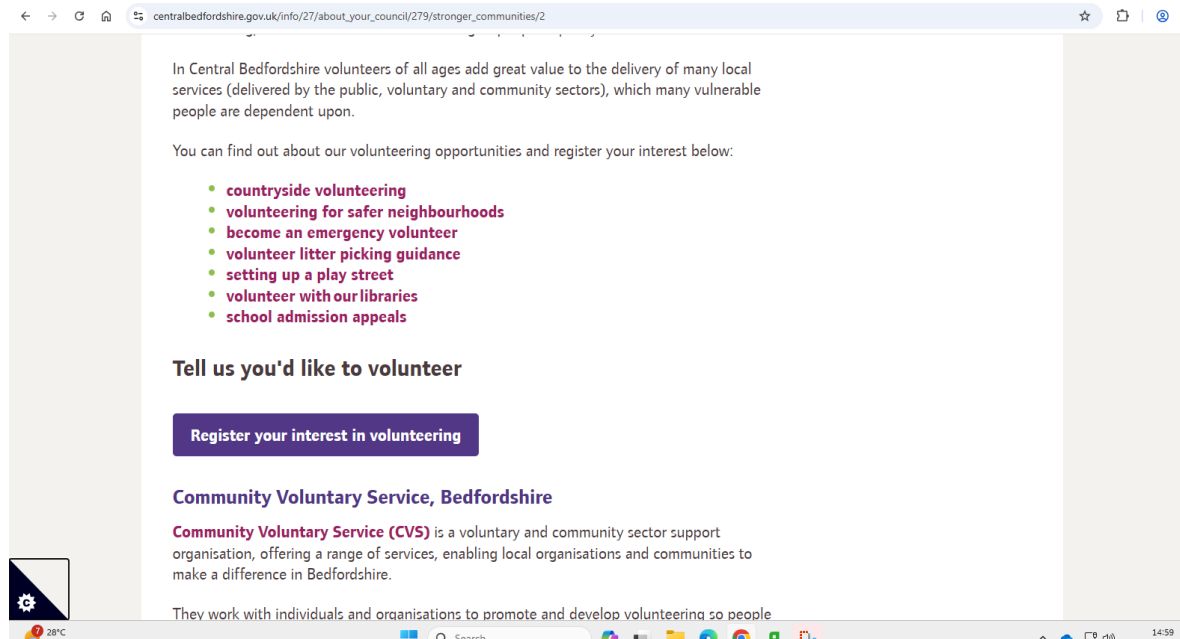
The EPQ process

- Students will be contacted after their work experience notifying them of the college's EPQ offer. The offer will be limited to students who require EPQ as part of their ongoing progression pathway.
- Students wishing to be considered for EPQ will be required to complete a project application proposal, this will be evaluated for clarity of project and commitment to completion.
- From scrutiny of these applications, students who are considered viable for enrolment in EPQ will then be interviewed to test further their commitment and suitability to the qualification.
- Those students who are successfully enrolled on our EPQ programme will meet before the summer break to commence the qualification.
- Please note all successful applicants must meet all deadlines at the first time of asking, including submission of a consideration for a place on this programme.
- Failure to do so will result in immediate removal of the student from the qualification.

Section 3 of the personal statement

Summer is on its way....

- They have a large amount of ‘free’ time ahead of them...
- Volunteering? Reading support for children
- Other holiday schemes
- Care homes
- Charity Shop
- Community events
- Sports coaching and mentoring



The UCAS Reference

How is it written?

- Subject 1- English Literature
- Subject 2- History
- Subject 3- Film
- Skills/ desire to improve/ excellence in a particular area of the course/ asking for guidance and acting upon it/ extra essays?/ watching lectures/ reading
- Staff have already completed a 'subject reference' for each student in year 12.
- This week, the 'overall' UCAS reference is being written by Kimberley staff and saved on UNIFROG

What happens once it has been sent?

- UCAS sends the application form to each university
- Offer OR unsuccessful (rejected) from each university- sent to students via UCAS TRACK
- Offers can be 'tracked' online
- Summary of offers sent from UCAS along with individual reply deadline
- Student accepts 2 offers (firm and insurance)



What is the difference between a conditional and an unconditional offer?

- Most students receive a **conditional offer**. This means that they will have a place at their choice **IF they achieve BBB/ ABB etc**
- Some students receive an **unconditional offer**. This means that they will have a place at their choice **regardless of their results**. This mostly applies, but is not limited to, Graphics students/ Arts students
- Watch out for ' **we will change your offer to unconditional if you make us your firm choice** '



What is a contextual offer?

Universities could consider the following criteria which may result in a slightly lower offer (typically a grade or two lower than advertised in the course entry requirements):

- **Where you live** – some universities may use postcode measures to see if you live in an area where there is a high level of deprivation, or a low number of people going to university.
- **Your school or college** – if your school's academic performance is lower than the national average, or a small number of pupils go on to higher education.
- If you have participated in certain **outreach programmes**.
- **Household income** – if your total household income is lower than average.
- **Parental education** – if your parents did not attend university.
- **If you have spent time in local authority care**, such as a foster home, residential children's home or kinship care.
- **If you are estranged from your parents** – if your relationship has broken down leading to no contact.
- **If you have caring responsibilities** – those who are unpaid carers for a family member or friend.
- **If you have a disability or mental health condition** – including learning differences and long-term health conditions. This is not a full list – some universities consider a range of circumstances, and others may not consider some of the above groups.

(Information from UCAS)

Early Entry- essentials

- Commitment and communication with Professor Hubbard
- Deadlines- meet the deadlines for personal statements- Further Maths students-first draft due this Friday.
- Medics- do they need to register for the **UCAT (Clinical Aptitude Test)**? They should have created an account (opened 13th May) and then registered for the test (opened 17th June) This is their responsibility to check this. There is a deadline!
- Are they applying for Cambridge or Oxford? Some subjects require an entrance test.
- **If they fail to register on time, they will not be accepted.**

▼ English

Colleges that ask you to take an assessment

All Colleges

Assessment date

Tuesday 18 November 2025

Assessment format

Essay/text response element (90 minutes)

Specimen and example papers

 [English Admissions Assessment sample paper](#)

Only **ONE** date offered for the examination- no alternatives. You either make that date...or you don't. SEND arrangements and medical arrangements are accommodated for.

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/guide/admissions-tests#:~:text=Tests%20form%20one%20part%20of,please%20follow%20our%20UCAT%20guidance.>

<https://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/apply/after/college-assessments>

Be aware of.....

- Be careful of private companies offering 'preparation for interview' or coaching for the tests. These start 'from as little as' £60 an hour and 'guarantee' success
- Materials are on TEAMS
- UCAT practice tests and Cambridge and Oxford tests are available online
- Professor Hubbard will provide them with interview information and opportunities

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<https://www.oxbridgeapplications.com>

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Things to watch out for....



- Procrastination- 'That's for future me to worry about'
- UCAS grades **must** be considered when applying. If they are predicted 3 'C' grades, don't apply for a course which requires 3 'B' grades.
- Students will need to meet deadlines themselves- we will not complete the application for them.
- If they don't meet the college deadline, we cannot guarantee to meet the UCAS deadline.

Key Deadlines

- College EE Deadline: College Early Entry deadline- **Friday 26th September**
- UCAS EE Deadline: **Wednesday 15th October 2025 6PM**
- College deadline: **Friday 14th November- 3PM. If they send a correct and accurate application by this deadline, we will guarantee that their application will be sent to UCAS by the deadline in January.**
- UCAS 'Equal Consideration' Deadline: **Wednesday 14th January 2026- 6PM**
- We have just under 400 students in year 12. All applications need to be double checked, reference and UCAS grades added and then sent to UCAS.
- Applications will be processed on a first come, first served basis.
- **BEAT THE DEADLINE not meet the deadline.**

Results Day

- Students can check UCAS Track which will let them know if their FIRM or INSURANCE choice has accepted them.
- They will not know their exam results at this point
- If they have been unsuccessful, they will automatically go into CLEARING where they can contact universities who have places available
- At this point, they can also withdraw from the process
- They MAY decide to take a GAP year to reassess their position and/or reapply through UCAS



Full-time undergraduate students not eligible for benefits

The table gives maximum and minimum rates of loans for living costs, in the 2025 to 2026 academic year, for full-time undergraduate students who are not eligible for benefits.

Rate of loan for students	Maximum loan	Minimum loan
Living at home	£8,877	£3,907
Living away from home and studying in London	£13,762	£6,853
Living away from home and studying outside London	£10,544	£4,915
Studying overseas as part of a UK course	£12,076	£5,838

Finance

Use their calculator to give you an idea of what you are entitled to: <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance-register-login>

- All applications are made through Student Finance England (usually around April/ May of Year 13)
- All students are entitled to:
- Tuition fee loan (paid directly to the university)
- Maintenance Loan
- Each University has its own bursary system

Look at Accommodation - how does this compare with the likely maintenance loan?

Accommodation



Room type

Private bedroom in shared flat



Bathroom type

Shared bathroom



Catering type

Catering included, Self catering facilities available



Available contracts

42 weeks - Undergraduate



Price per week

£153 (total cost: £6,393.00)



Village

The Vale Village



Address

Aitken, Church Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 3SZ



Great to Accommodate

Accommodation



Room type

Private bedroom in shared flat



Bathroom type

Private bathroom



Catering type

Self catering facilities available



Available contracts

42 weeks - Undergraduate, 50 weeks - Postgraduate



Price per week

£223 - £229 (42 weeks total cost: £9,347.00 - £9,590.00) (50 weeks total cost: £11,201.00 - £11,645.00)



Village

Partner Accommodation



Address

Oak Brook Park, 17 Grange Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6BL



Sharing

Sharing with 3-5 flatmates

Options- there are several choices ahead

A: Apply in year 13 and go in 2026

B: Apply in year 13 and ask to defer. Go the year after

C: Apply to UCAS and apply for degree apprenticeships. See what happens and what you are happiest with

C: Apply in year 13 but decide on results day to 'defer'. Uni **may** agree

D: Apply in year 13 but decide to 'retake' exams (please contact exams to enter). Apply the year after

D: Don't apply in year 13 but decide to apply through clearing

E: Don't apply in year 13 but make the decision to apply the year after during 'GAP' year

E: Apply following a couple of years of work

We're always here:

cstewart@wootton.beds.sch.uk



Any Questions?