



HIGHER  
EDUCATION  
APPLICATIONS  
A GUIDE  
FOR PARENTS  
2019

# Key Dates

## UCAS Deadlines

<b>Application deadline for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
<b>Recommended Deadline</b> (guaranteed to be sent before Christmas)	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
<b>Internal deadline for applications</b> (It can take up to three weeks for the application to be sent to UCAS once the student has submitted the application internally. Students often make errors which have to be corrected and forms can be sent back to the students several times before being ready.)	16 <sup>th</sup> December 2019
<b>UCAS Deadline</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2020
<b>Art and Design (some courses)</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> March 2020
<b>Reply to offers by</b>	4 <sup>h</sup> May 2020
<b>Student Finance Applications</b>	April 2020 (details yet to be released for 2020)

## Admissions Tests

<b>UKCAT</b> (UK Clinical Aptitude Test) for students wanting to study Medicine, Dentistry, Vet Science	Registration: Testing Dates:	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2019 before 2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2019
<b>LNAT</b> (National Admissions Test for Law)	Registration: Testing Dates:	1 <sup>st</sup> August 2019 5 <sup>th</sup> October 2019 – 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2020 tbc
<b>BMAT</b> (BioMedical Admissions Test) September	Registration: Testing Dates:	24 <sup>th</sup> June 2019 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2019
<b>BMAT</b> October	Registration: Testing Date:	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
<b>Oxford and Cambridge pre-interview tests</b>	Registration: Testing Dates:	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2019

Students can find out in the University course information whether an admissions test is required. For information about all of the above except UKCAT please go to [www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk](http://www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk)

## PHGS Key Dates

HE and Alternatives Information Evening	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2019
Timanyane Day – Personal Statement Writing and HE Preparation	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2019
Summer Schools – various Universities	July 2019
Application Process Begins	Summer 2019
UCAS Information Evening – help for parents	September 2019 tbc
Practice Interviews as required	November 2019– March 2020
Results Day 2020	13 <sup>th</sup> August 2020
Y13 Parents’ Evening	tbc

## Useful Websites

UCAS	<a href="http://www.ucas.com">www.ucas.com</a>
Student Finance	<a href="http://www.studentfinance.direct.gov.uk">www.studentfinance.direct.gov.uk</a>
Quality Assurance Agency	<a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk">www.qaa.ac.uk</a>
Unistats	<a href="http://www.unistats.direct.gov.uk">www.unistats.direct.gov.uk</a>
Times Online	<a href="http://www.thetimes.co.uk">www.thetimes.co.uk</a>
The Complete University Guide	<a href="http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk">www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk</a>
NHS Careers	<a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a>
The Guardian	<a href="http://www.guardian.co.uk">www.guardian.co.uk</a>
Unifrog – search tool – students have logins	<a href="http://www.unifrog.co.uk">www.unifrog.co.uk</a>

# General Information

## UCAS

UCAS is the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, an administrative body which organises the distribution of applications and supports the allocation of places.

## Course Choices

While we can help students to start the application process, much of the research has to be done by the individual. We list on the previous page some of the websites which will be of use but the most invaluable research is visiting the Universities themselves. Many of the Open Days start in June/July and continue through to October. We allow each student 2 days out of school for Open Days which take place mid-week but as most Universities offer a Saturday option, it is clearly better if students attend these. Dates for these can be found on University websites. Interviews will be given special consideration. Many Universities hold Summer Schools which are open to students who fall within certain categories; this includes Oxford who hold UNIQ every year – please see their website for more details.

## Finance

Students do not need to pay any tuition fees up-front, as most are eligible for a Tuition Fee Loan. There are also loans to help with living costs, such as rent, food, books, transport and entertainment. Further information can be found at [www.direct.gov/studentfinance](http://www.direct.gov/studentfinance).

For an independent view of what it costs and what the new student finance arrangements mean for you, visit [www.moneysavingexpert.com](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com)

## Applying through UCAS

All students will be given a booklet which gives step by step instructions on how to complete the on-line form. This also gives guidelines on how to write a personal statement, the supporting statement which students must submit. We recommend that students show this to as many people as possible to get feedback and that includes parents. The five key elements they should include are:

1. Why am I interested in this course
2. What have I done in my studies which link into this course and why?
3. What other experiences have I had that make me a suitable candidate?
4. Why should university/college take me rather than anyone else...?

Students are warned every year about the dangers of plagiarism. UCAS use sophisticated software that detects personal statements which have been downloaded from the internet or have been copied from a previous submission.

## References and Predicted Grades

References are written by individual subject teachers and are then compiled by personal tutors. Predicted grades are also given in this statement. Teacher's base predicted grades on past performance and current effort and are intended to be optimistic but realistic. Students should be mindful of these predictions when researching their courses to ensure they are appropriate.

## Interviews

Some students are asked to attend an interview (early applicants, teaching courses, art based courses) and students are allowed time off to attend these.

We offer interview practice for these students with a wide range of experienced practitioners from parents, subject teachers, the local school cluster and the Rotary Club. Students should approach the Sixth form team if they would like to take advantage of this offer.

## The Next Steps

Once UCAS have received a completed application, what happens?

1. Once the application has been received, UCAS will send the student a welcome message containing their application number, personal ID number, username for Track and a list of their choices. Please check the information carefully and let UCAS know immediately if it is not correct by contacting Customer Service Unit. If the student hasn't received their message within 14 days from sending your application to UCAS, please contact the Customer Service Unit.

2. Once the application is processed, universities and colleges can access it online. They will be able to view the whole application, but they will not see where else the student has applied. They will only see any other choices after they have replied to your offers.

Universities and colleges may contact the student to tell them that they are considering their application. Not all of them do this, so don't worry if they don't hear from some of their choices.

The universities and colleges will consider applications against their own admissions criteria. Each has their own criteria and their own ways of working, so students should expect to hear from them at different times. They will decide on an individual basis whether they wish to make an offer or not and will send their decision to UCAS. Decisions will be displayed on Track as soon as universities receive them.

3. Should a student not receive any offers or wishes to decline them they will automatically be eligible for EXTRA. Students with no offers and no offers outstanding can choose from a range of

courses which still have places left. This option is available from the end of February. The student does not have to complete a further application form, the original will be sent. If the student is eligible for Extra, a button will appear on their Track screen which can be used to apply for a course in Extra. Course Search will tell them which courses have vacancies - an 'x' will be displayed next to any available courses. Before they apply, try to contact the university or college to make sure that they will be considered.

### Replying to offers

Offers must be replied to in the following way:

- Firm acceptance (F)
- Insurance acceptance (I)
- Decline (D)

### **Firm acceptance**

- If the student firmly accepts an offer, it means that this is their preferred choice out of all the offers received. As this is their first choice, they can only make this reply once.
- If the student accepts an unconditional offer (UF), they are agreeing that they will attend the course at that university or college and must decline all other offers. UCAS will send them a message which will have instructions about how to contact the university or college to confirm their place. These are usually made to students who have already met the entrance requirements.
- If the student accepts a conditional offer (CF), they are agreeing that they will attend the course at that university or college if they meet the conditions of the offer. They can accept another offer as an insurance choice.

### Insurance acceptance

- Students can accept an offer as an insurance choice if their firm choice is conditional. Their insurance choice can be conditional (CI) or unconditional (UI) and acts as a back-up to the firm choice, so if they do not meet the conditions for their firm choice but meet the conditions for their insurance choice, they are committed to that course.
- **Students do not have to make an insurance choice.** UCAS recommend that an insurance choice is made only if the student is certain that they would be happy to take up the offer.
- If an insurance choice is not made and they do not get into their first choice they will be entered into clearing.
- **It is important that students choose their insurance option wisely. There is no point in choosing a course which requires higher grades or more points than the first choice**

### Decline

Once they have decided which offer to accept firmly, and which (if any) to accept as an insurance, they must decline all other offers. If they do not want to accept any of the offers, they may decline them all. They will then become eligible for Extra or Clearing, depending upon their circumstances.

### There are four combinations of offers and replies:

<b>UF only</b>	Firmly accepted an unconditional offer. They cannot have an insurance choice.
<b>CF only</b>	Firmly accepted a conditional offer.
<b>CF + CI</b>	Firmly accepted one conditional offer and accepted another conditional offer as an insurance.
<b>CF + UI</b>	Firmly accepted a conditional offer and accepted an unconditional offer as an insurance.

### How and when to reply to offers

Use Track to reply to your offers. The students reply date will be displayed on Track and on the message UCAS sent to you. If they do not reply by the date given, your offers will be declined. The reply date is the students individual reply date so it may be different to other peoples. This is because it is based on when they received the last decision from their universities and colleges

### Results Day

Students will be able to check on-line from 7am on Results Day to see if they have been accepted at their chosen University, or not. Staff will be available all day from 7am and the following Friday at school to help with any issues or queries.

Clearing opens on the same day and students can start contacting Universities straight away – should they need to.

We recommend that students are in the country on results day but if they are not they need to nominate someone to collect results for them and give them access to their UCAS account. Exam results can only be collected by another person if a letter of confirmation has been received by the Exams Office.