



Aston University
Birmingham

Choosing a Course and a University The UCAS Process

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Schools and Colleges Liaison



It's possible...

- ▶ **University Graduates:**
- ▶ **Earn more and have better career choices!**
- ▶ **Start their own business**
- ▶ **Invent new products, develop new ideas**
- ▶ **Can follow their passion**
- ▶ **Engage in community activities**
- ▶ **Develop a wider circle of friends**
- ▶ **Travel further and live longer!**



Choosing The Right University

- Each University is different, what are you looking for?



Rankings and League Tables

Graduate employment record

City or countryside location

Stay at home or move away – regional preference

Facilities – student welfare, library, IT, sport

Accommodation – cost of living

Campus/non Campus University

Small or large University – 6,000 students or 40,000 students

Choosing a University

- Always visit the Universities you are interested in
- Never apply to a University in a place where you wouldn't want to live
- If you think you'd be happy there, you are more likely to do well in your course
- Choose institutions that make realistic offers for you!

Living at home or moving away?

► **Living at home –**

You can save money and keep in touch with home life whilst still making new friends and having new experiences

Offers the best of both worlds and becoming more popular with students

► **Moving away –**

Still a very popular option
Lead a more independent life



Students value the experience of living in Halls of Residence or shared accommodation as an important part of University life

Choosing the Right Course

Careful research is essential!

- ▶ Subject and course content
 - ▶ Combination of Subjects/ Sandwich Courses
- ▶ Entry requirements
- ▶ Opportunities in Europe and further afield
- ▶ Professional accreditation and recognition
- ▶ Career prospects (unistats.direct.gov.uk)



Over 40,000 courses.....

- ▶ Accountancy, Acoustics, Actuarial Science, Administration, Advertising, Aeronautics, Aesthetics, African Studies, **Agriculture**, Agroforestry, Air Conditioning, Akkadian, Amenity Management, Amharic Studies, Analytical Science, Anatomy, Ancient Civilisation, Anglo-Saxon, Animal Farming, Anthropology, Antique Restoration, Aquaculture, Arabic, Aramaic, Archaeology, **Architecture**, Area Studies, Art, Artificial Intelligence, Asian Studies, Asset Management, Astronautics, Astronomy, Audio and Video Systems, **Automotive Engineering**, Avionics, Baking Technology, Ballet, Band Musicianship, Banking, **Beauty Therapy**, Behavioural Science, Bengali Studies, Biblical Studies, Biochemistry, Biodiversity, Bioelectronic Engineering, Biological Imaging, **Biology**, Biomedical Science, Biometry, Bookbinding, Botany, Brazilian Studies, Brewing and Distilling, British Sign Language Interpreting, Broadcasting, Building, Bulgarian, **Burmese**, Business, Byzantine Studies, Calligraphy, Canadian Studies, Caribbean Studies, Cartography, Catalan, Catering Management, Celtic, Ceramics, **Chemical Engineering**, Chemistry, Childhood Studies...

Range of Courses –

Anthropology
Brewing and Distilling
Chinese
Dietetics
Equine Studies
Forensic Science
Geology
Humanities
International Relations
Journalism/Media Studies
Korean Studies
Logistics
Multimedia Technology

Neuroscience
Occitan
Palaeontology
Quantum Mechanics
Robotics
Speech Pathology
Toxicology
Urban Studies
Vision Sciences/Optomety
War Sciences (& Peace Studies)
X-Ray Techniques
Yacht Design
Zoology

Top Tip.....

- ▶ A good formula is.....

Choose:

a subject area that interests you

combine that with

a subject area you do well in



Subject Fit

If you are interested in:-

▶ **Biology**

- ▶ Biomedical Sciences, Human Biology, Genetics, Optometry, Zoology

▶ **Geography**

- ▶ Business, Environmental Sciences, European Studies, Logistics, Surveying, Town Planning

▶ **Maths**

- ▶ Accountancy, Computer Science, Engineering, Internet Systems

Never apply for a degree course you don't want to do!

Listen to other people but remember that you will be the one taking the course!

Demand for Courses

▶ High Demand for some courses

- ▶ Medicine, Dentistry, Law, Veterinary Science, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Psychology, English, History, Teaching, some Business and Sports courses

Greater competition and higher entry requirements

▶ Less Demand for some courses

- ▶ Engineering, Chemistry, Languages, Sociology (compared to Psychology) Philosophy, Physics

Less competition and lower entry requirements but still excellent graduate opportunities...

- 20% of Scientists/Engineers Graduates become Accountants / Financial Managers /Bankers
- 50% of Grad jobs don't specify a particular degree

Most popular University subjects in 2011

To apply to:

- ▶ Allied to medicine
- ▶ Art & design
- ▶ Business studies
- ▶ Social studies
- ▶ Biological science



Source: www.ucas.com/about_us/stat_services/stats_online/data_tables/hesubject

Check the Entry Requirements

- ▶ **Some degree courses require A'levels (or equivalent) in specific subjects:**

Dentistry, English, Engineering, History, Medicine, Modern Languages, Sciences

- ▶ **Some do not specify particular subjects:**

Business Studies, Law, Psychology, Social Sciences

- ▶ **Some have special requirements:**

Portfolio (Art, Architecture); Relevant experience (Dentistry); Practical workshop (Drama); Performance skills (Music)

Choose degree courses that make offers which are realistic for you;
Different Universities can make different offers for the same subject

Visits and Open Days

- ▶ Really important to visit the Institution you are interested in.
- ▶ Chance to see the facilities and immerse yourself in the environment – could you live/study there for the next 3 or 4 years?
- ▶ www.opendays.com
- ▶ Friends, family and advisers may offer different advice: whilst it's useful to have varied perspectives, you will be attending the university, so the final decision must be yours.



Students

Where to start?

Step 1: Choosing courses

- > [Choosing a university or college](#)
- > [University and college map](#)
- > [List of universities and colleges](#)
- > [Open days](#)
- > [Choosing a course](#)
- > [Entry requirements](#)
- > [Specific subjects](#)
- > [Admissions tests](#)
- > [Books to help you choose](#)
- > [FAQs](#)

Step 2: Applying

Step 3: Offers

Step 4: Results

Step 5: Next steps

Step 6: Starting university or

Home > Students > Step 1: Choosing courses > Choosing a university or college

Choosing a university or college

There are lots of universities and colleges to choose from, so think about where you'll be happy. Would you like to be close to home or live in a different part of the country? Think about what you want - each place and its nearby town will offer something different.

Whatever your criteria, research the institution and its location before applying. Speak to friends, family, advisers and the institution itself for advice, but make sure the final decision is yours.

Which is the best university or college?

Different places suit different people, so it depends what you're looking for. There is no national curriculum for higher education courses, but the [Quality Assurance Agency](#) carries out external reviews and the [Unistats](#) website contains statistics and reports about students' views on the quality of teaching.

There are different guides and league tables that can help you, but check the source as it may be biased: some universities post league tables on their websites which show their courses at number one. For information and impartial advice check the [Times Online](#) or [The Complete University Guide](#), an interactive site where you can highlight your requirements and create your own unique table.

We provide a number of university guides on our bookstore. Go to the [UCAS bookstore](#) to see what's available.

[University and college map](#)

Search for universities and colleges and see where they are located on a map.

[List of universities and colleges](#)

A complete list of universities and colleges who use UCAS, their contact details and links to further information.

[Open days](#)

Visit the universities and colleges on an open day to get a feel for a place and ask your questions direct



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UCAS - Google Chrome
 https://apply2.ucas.com/ucasapply2012/Welcome.jsp;jsessionid=81f2d72592590c868596d9e79671453dd0f1cbd6d79d314686a4a5a925f76d19.e38Qc30Nc38Pci0LaxeSa3mRbxaLe6fznA5Pp7ft

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Welcome

Personal details

Personal information

Payment finance

Personal ID is:

Please make a note of this number and keep it handy. You will need to quote this number if you call our Customer Service Unit.

Before starting your application, please read through the relevant information below regarding:

- [completing your application](#)
- [applicants applying through a school, college or organisation](#)
- [applicants applying as an individual](#)
- [deadlines for submitting your application](#)

Send

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| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Personal details | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Personal information | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Payment finance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Personal ID is: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Please make a note of this number and keep it handy. You will need to quote this number if you call our Customer Service Unit. | |
| Before starting your application, please read through the relevant information below regarding: | |
| completing your application | |
| applicants applying through a school, college or organisation | |
| applicants applying as an individual | |
| deadlines for submitting your application | |
| Send | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Key

Completed

In progress

Not started

Help

Key

Completed

In progress

Not started

Help

The Procedure

- ▶ Applications are completed online via the UCAS website - £23 = 5 choices, £12 = 1 choice
- ▶ Select the **five** universities and/or courses of study
- ▶ Complete the UCAS form
 - ▶ personal details
 - ▶ choice of institution / course
 - ▶ examinations taken and results already obtained
 - ▶ examinations pending
 - ▶ personal statement

The logo for UCAS, consisting of the letters 'UCAS' in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter 'A' is stylized with a red triangle pointing upwards, while the other letters are black.

The UCAS Application

Admissions Tutors are looking for -

- Your academic record to date
- Your academic potential
- A strong reference from School / College
- Relevant, well written Personal Statement



Applying to HE – Timetable – 2014 entry

Sept '12:

Sixth Form/College begins.....

Jan-Sept '13:

Open/Taster Days, HE Fairs, HE Research

1 Sept '13:

UCAS begins accepting applications

15 Oct '13:

Closing date for Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Courses

15 Jan '14:

UCAS applications official deadline apart from

24 March '14:

Art & Design Courses deadline

March - June '14

UCAS Extra begins for eligible students

End April '14:

Deadline for Firm and Insurance Choices

July/August '14:

Exam Results! Places confirmed/**Clearing** starts

End Sept '14:

Higher Education begins!

What should you be doing now?

- ▶ Research universities + courses
- ▶ Visit different universities
- ▶ Do extra curricular activities
- ▶ Gain work experience
- ▶ Focus on doing well in exams!



Advice

- **‘It will all be worth it’**
- Remember the benefits of going to University:
 - Greater earning potential
 - Greater job satisfaction
 - More opportunities for foreign travel
 - Friends for life
 - Great social life



Finally.....

- ▶ Thanks for listening!
- ▶ Good luck with research and applications!
- ▶ Gill Clark g.clark@aston.ac.uk
- ▶ Any questions?
- ▶ [Aston Campus Tour](#)

