

# UCAS Applications

I have sent my applications – what happens now?

You have just submitted your UCAS application form and breathed a sigh of relief that you are one step closer to embarking on a life of seminars, lectures and independence in September 2022 or, for some of you, September 2023.



**PHEW!**

**BUT WHAT HAPPENS NOW?**

## January to March: Receiving Offers from Universities

Firstly, it is really important for you to know that **all applications received by universities before the 26th January 2022 are guaranteed to be given equal consideration, regardless of when you submitted.**

(A few courses had an earlier deadline of 15 October 2021 including medicine, dentistry, veterinary science courses, and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.)

Generally, universities start considering applications as soon as they arrive. This is true, even before the January deadline has passed. So some lucky early applicants will already be holding offers from some universities. Do not worry, the equal consideration rule still applies.

If you have not yet applied, there is still time. Lots of courses will still have places that you can apply for after the 26<sup>th</sup> January deadline.

Universities will either reply with their decision or sometimes with an invitation for an interview. You should **use UCAS TRACKING to view your offers** and you will have received an email from them shortly after submitting your application.

Often this will be within a couple of weeks of receiving your application, but sometimes it can take longer. It all depends on how many applications the admissions tutors are working through.

Some universities do not even start processing applications until the January deadline has passed so please do not worry if you have not heard back yet.

**Receiving a decision will sometimes take until the end of March.**

The absolute final deadline for universities to send their decisions about applications received by the 26<sup>th</sup> January deadline is not until **19<sup>th</sup> May**, although this would be very unusual! After this, any outstanding applications where no offers have been received will automatically be entered into Clearing. Again, this would be very unusual!

## RECEIVING AN OFFER....

Offers will either be **conditional** on your achieving certain grades or **unconditional**.

Conditional offers are specific to you and will tell you clearly what you need to do in order to meet the terms of your offer, such as achieve a minimum number of UCAS points overall or achieve particular grades in your BTECs or A levels (or other international equivalent qualifications) and may ask for particular grades in certain subjects too.

Unconditional offers will offer you a place regardless of what your final grades are. **HOWEVER – they are sometimes based on you selecting the university as your first choice and you will have to then turn down all your other choices. Unconditional offers always require careful consideration – unless you are lucky enough that this is definitely your dream university and your number one choice!**

# UNCONDITIONAL OFFERS - Please carefully read this advice before jumping to accept.....

## I have an unconditional offer. What should I do?

### Firstly STOP AND THINK – Don't make a rushed decision....



- Carefully weigh up this guaranteed offer: if you really have your heart set on a different university, please do not let that 'first love' go just yet, even if it may be more challenging to get there...
- Could accepting this offer maybe stop you from working quite as hard to get the best grades you can? Honestly? How might you feel about that on results day and in the future?
- Take time to review all your options - revisit all your course and university options, and consider them equally. Perhaps take a trip to see them again, in person. **You have until 10<sup>th</sup> June to make up your mind unless the offer (unusually) contains an earlier acceptance date.**
- Talk to teachers, careers advisers and even admissions officers at the university which has made the offer – do you have any questions about their offer?

**NO OFFERS RECEIVED... Don't worry!**

## **UCAS EXTRA**

In the unlikely event that you do not receive any offers from your choices, please do not worry. You will then immediately be eligible for UCAS Extra and informed of this through tracking.

Using UCAS EXTRA, you can now add another choice to your application. You will wait for a response and, if you do not receive an offer from that choice, you can then make another - and so on.

Please do ask for help and guidance if this is the case.

## January to March: Interviews

For a few courses at some universities, you might be required to attend an in person or online interview before a decision is made. If you are asked to attend an interview, it should show up in your UCAS Track, specifying a time and date. If you cannot make the suggested interview slot, then it is best to contact the course administrator at the university directly. They will be able to help.

If you are invited to an interview, preparation is key. Remember, this is an important opportunity for you to impress a tutor, who will often use your UCAS application and your Personal Statement in particular as a guide for your conversation.

**You should be prepared to explain anything you have written in your personal statement, including discussing knowledge, skills, books or topics you have mentioned and be ready to talk in general about your subject area of choice.**



## **MORE ABOUT INTERVIEWS ...**

As well as being a chance for you to demonstrate your passion for the subject you want to study, interviews also offer you the chance to find out more about the university, to see if it feels like the right place for you to study.

So have your questions ready – find out more about the course content, types of learning activities (projects, seminars, tutorials) and assessment styles.

## THE DECISION

Once you have all your university offers, it is decision time. The final cut off date for this is usually **9<sup>th</sup> June**, but you must check each offer individually as some universities may ask you to decide earlier or lose your place.

Usually most students will make their decision before then so that they can start looking at student finance, accommodation and start making plans!

From those courses where you have received an offer, you will now need to select which course at which university you want to accept as your **firm choice** – this is your first choice.

You should then also make an **insurance choice**, which acts as a backup if you do not meet the requirements of your first-choice offer. Ideally therefore you should ideally pick one that is asking you to achieve fewer UCAS points or lower grades than your firm offer.

## More About THE DECISION

If you receive an **unconditional offer** and you choose to accept it, you immediately have a guaranteed place on that course. By accepting an unconditional offer, you are committing to attend and you will not then need an insurance choice.

**Take your time.....** You will usually have a few weeks to make your choices so use the time wisely.

Universities will usually invite you to an open day for offer holders during this time. Getting a feel for the universities and courses will help you to make an informed choice about your future.

# WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I HAVE CHOSEN MY TWO COURSES?

## ACCOMMODATION

If you are starting in the Autumn (and not deferring until 2023) you can now start thinking about where you want to live whilst you are at University – most students live in university arranged accommodation the first year and then move into their own accommodation at the start of Year Two.



Please visit this link for lots of helpful advice....

<https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/advice/student-accommodation/applying-for-university-accommodation>

# FINANCE – APPLYING FOR A STUDENT LOAN

A student loan is broadly split into two parts:

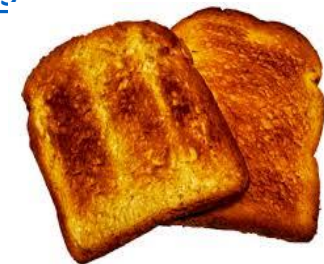
- A tuition fee loan to cover the cost of your studies - tuition fee loans are generally paid directly to your university or college so generally you won't see the money
- A maintenance loan to help you with the cost of living while studying. This is generally paid in three parts across the academic year.

You should find some help here about applying here – and do think in advance about budgeting – baked beans and water may get rather challenging even if the first week of high living was memorable..

<https://studentfinance.campaign.gov.uk/>

<https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/advice/student-finance/how-student-finance-actually-works>

<https://www.savethestudent.org/money/student-budgeting/student-budgeting.html>



# RESULTS DAY

The exact date of results day will depend on which qualifications you are studying.

While some BTEC results will be available earlier, A level results should be available on

**Thursday 18th August 2022.**

UCAS Track will update to tell you whether or not you have been accepted onto your firm (or insurance) choice. When this happens will depend on when your results are released. For example, A level applicants will be able to log on to UCAS Track from 8am on 18 August to see their decisions.

If your grades meet the requirement of your First Choice, your place is automatically confirmed. If your grades miss the requirement for your First Choice, but meet the requirement of your Insurance Choice, you will automatically be placed here unless you decide to decline your Insurance Choice and instead find another course through clearing.

Sometimes, if you have not met the conditions of your original course, your chosen university may offer you a place on an alternative course. It is entirely up to you whether you accept this new offer – make sure you ask any questions you may have about this new course before making your decision.

## **WHAT IF I HAVE NOT GOT THE GRADES I NEED?** *“Help will always be given at Gillingham School to those who ask for it”*

*We will be here at school on Results Day to help anyone who needs help and support....*

Please do not panic if you do not make the grades for your firm and insurance choices – there is still hope.

First, your university may still accept you. Their decision on this will depend on whether they feel you will succeed on your course (including considering the grades you have achieved) and whether they still have places available.

If not, you will automatically be able to enter Clearing, which is open from July until October, and this offers you another chance to “shop around” for available courses with your actual exam results. Lists of vacancies are continually updated on the UCAS website and you can use something called ‘CLEARING PLUS’ to automatically find out what courses are available that match your qualifications.

Remember, all universities will have been holding the equivalent of two places for most candidates as everyone has a First and a Reserve choice – on results day therefore many places will suddenly be released across all universities. Usually you will receive new offers within minutes or hours.

If a university offers you a place during this time and you want to accept it, you can add it as a “clearing choice” in UCAS Track. Just like your original applications, it is important you make the right choice for you so give it careful thought and visit the university if you can.

## WHAT IF I GET BETTER GRADES THAN I WAS EXPECTING – Can I change my mind?

**NB: THE PREVIOUS ADJUSTMENT SYSTEM NO LONGER EXISTS AS OF 2022**

If you achieve better results than expected, you can consider using the Clearing System to explore what may be available at another university.

**Only if** you receive a confirmed offer from the ‘new’ university and course should you then decline your current offers to be able to accept the new offer – please do ensure that you request/have a confirmation email from the new university! You can do this up to 7th September.

Most universities list the courses they expect to have available through clearing early (before results day), so start researching your options early, and be proactive.

Do not feel pressured to make a change – if you have been accepted to your firm choice and your heart is set on it, that is great...stick with it!





Above all, at any time in the next few months, speak out if you need help or advice.

Mrs Whyntie and your Tutor are here to support you on your journey to university.

Keep up the hard work for the next few months and look forward to exciting times ahead.....