

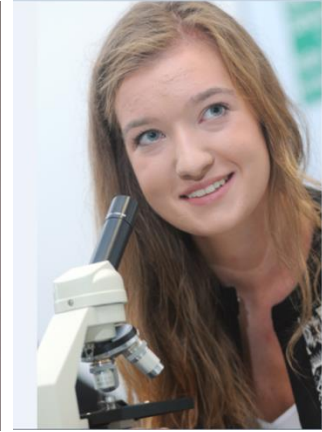


UCAS Parent Seminar

Tuesday 3 June 2025

with Miss L Griffiths (Director of Sixth Form), Mr B Fitzgerald (UCAS co-ordinator)
& Mrs K Douglas (Head of Careers)

The UCAS Process at Upton Hall School



1 Choose courses

- UCAS Hub
- Unifrog
- Sunday Times 'Good University' Guide
- Russell Group?
- Which? University
- Open Days
- **5 choices (range)**

2 Apply at www.ucas.com

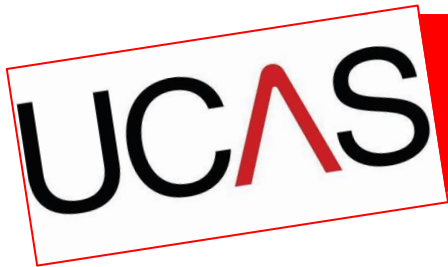
- Set up an application online
- Personal statement submitted
- Pay UCAS directly online (£28.95) and press 'send' - Fee waived for FSM and Bursary.
- Reviewed by school and reference added.

3 Track the application

- Testing for some courses (in school/at test centre)
- Offers
- 'Conditional offers' most common
- Interviews

4 Confirm choices

- Offers usually come in by 31 March or 7 May (must respond by a certain date)
- Firm**
- Insurance**
- 'Extra'**
- Apply for Student Finance



When?

These are our **internal** deadlines; national deadlines are different and set by UCAS.

Early entry 'undergraduate courses

**PERSONAL STATEMENT
DEADLINE:**

Mon 15th September

FINAL DEADLINE:

Mon 29th September

Deadlines: All other undergraduate courses

**PERSONAL STATEMENT
DEADLINE:**

Mon 20th October

FINAL DEADLINE:

Mon 3rd November

** Any students wishing to apply to read Music through the Conservatoire route, should see Mr Fitzgerald as an earlier deadline will also apply.*

Choosing a University Course

There are over **150 universities** in the UK, offering a total of **almost 40,000 undergraduate courses**.

Some you may not have heard of include:

- BA Animation
- BSc Audiology
- BSc Ecotourism and Adventure Tourism
- BA Arabic and Persian
- BA Special Effects
- BA Packaging design
- BA Playwork
- BSc Police Studies
- BSc Disaster Management
- BA Viking studies



So how do students select a course?

Choosing a University Course

Top tips:

Is there a **profession** that they want to pursue?

Which **subject** do they feel passionate about?

How **far** do they want to travel?

Would they prefer a **campus/city-based** university?

What are the **job prospects** like?

Check the **course content** and structure.



Choosing a University Course

Students have access to this excellent tool, Unifrog.

The screenshot shows the Unifrog website interface. At the top, there is a browser address bar with the URL <https://www.unifrog.org/student/home>. Below the address bar, the text "ACCESS ALL THE TOOLS BELOW" is displayed, followed by "Searching for Opportunities". The Unifrog logo, featuring a green cartoon frog character, is positioned to the right of the text. The main content area is divided into four colored boxes, each representing a different tool or category:

- University** (purple box): "You have 3 shortlists" and a link to "View shortlists". A "Start >" button is at the bottom.
- Apprenticeships** (pink box): "You have 1 shortlist" and a link to "View shortlist". A "Start >" button is at the bottom.
- MOOC** (teal box): "Make your first shortlist".
- Oxbridge** (blue box): "Make your first shortlist".

A text box on the right side of the screenshot provides additional information: "This is a 'Destinations Platform' for which students have log on details. It lists both university/non university destinations. Unifrog sources its information from a range of websites, including UCAS, university league table providers, UniStats etc."

University Testing for 'Apply 2025'

Some Cambridge tests are completed at interview and others are completed beforehand.

Test	Registration	Test date/s	Location of test
UCAT	Register now (including any access arrangements) booking open 17th June)	7 July - 26 September 2025	Pearson Vue Test Centre
LNAT (for Law in Oxbridge, LSE, Glasgow, King's, UCL, Bristol, Durham, SOAS)	Registration and booking opens 1 August	1 September onwards (for Oxbridge, take before 15 October)	Pearson Vue Test Centre
Oxford Tests (MLAT, MAT, TSA, HAT, PAT....)	TBC- as a guide, last year it was 15 th August to 4 th October (<u>before UCAS deadline</u>)	21 to 27 October	Pearson Vue Test Centre
Cambridge Tests (TMUA for Computer Science or Economics, ESAT for Chemical Engineering, Engineering, Natural Sciences, Veterinary) Required for certain courses at Imperial, LSE, Warwick, Durham	29 September (Note that this is <u>before UCAS deadline</u>) If you have access arrangements, book by 8 September	9-10 October for ESAT, 13-14 October for TMUA	Pearson Vue Test Centre



UCAS 'Tariff' Points

AS Level	A Level	New Tariff points
	A*	56
	A	48
	B	40
	C	32
		28
	D	24
A		20
B	E	16
C		12
D		10
		8
E		6





UCAS 'Tariff' Points

For the BTEC Extended Certificate in IT

Grade	Tariff points
D*	56
D	48
M	32
P	16

For the AQA Extended Project (EPQ)

Grade	Tariff points
A*	28
A	24
B	20
C	16
D	12
E	8



The Application Form

All completed via **UCAS Apply 2026**

Personal details

Student finance

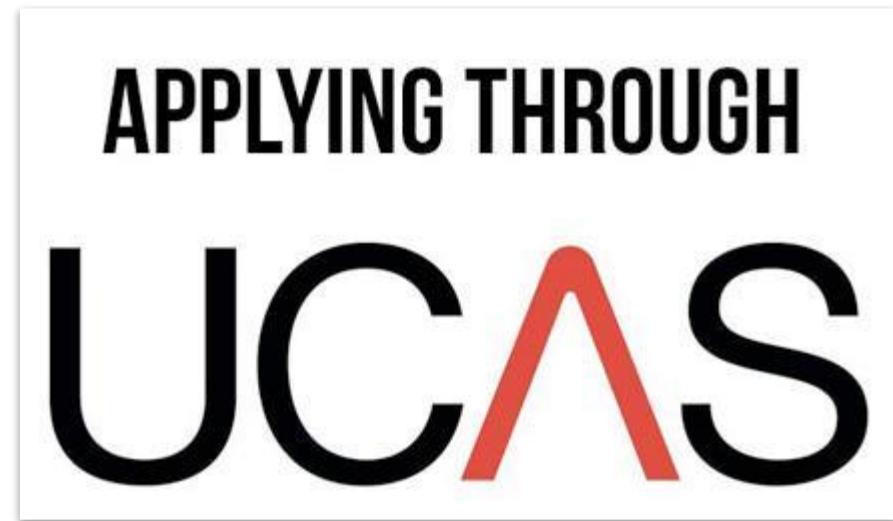
Education/qualifications

Courses (x5)

Deferred entry?

Personal statement

Reference and predicted grades



Personal Statement

The statement is split into three sections. The overall limit is **4000 characters** (including spaces and blank lines), which is approximately 600 words. Each section has a minimum character count of 350 characters.

The **same personal statement is used for all courses** applied for.

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

- Give your motivation for studying the course. Show the reader that this is something you are really interested in, and are committed to studying in depth. If your likely future career depends on this course, mention it here.

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

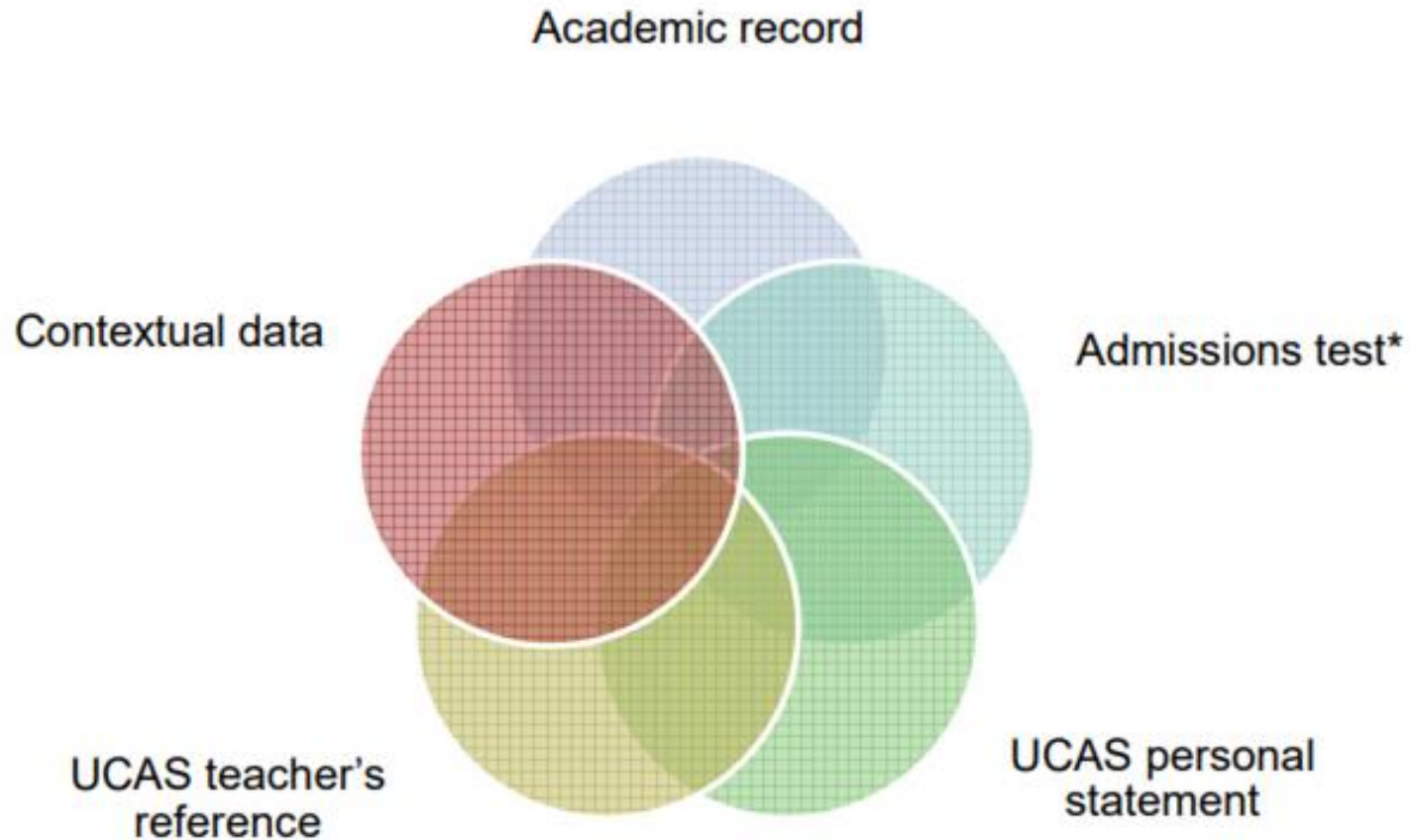
- **This is the main section and likely to be the longest.** Give evidence of what you have done which is relevant to your future course. This might include:
 - - a particular part of your A Level course which is something you would like to study further
 - - anything you have come across in your wider reading which is relevant to the course you want to study. Don't just list books or articles- in each case, give details about what appealed to you, or what you would like to learn more about. Try and show an awareness of current developments or debates in the subject.
 - - any relevant work experience (particularly if you are applying for medicine, veterinary medicine, dentistry, nursing, physiotherapy, radiography, or other NHS careers)

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

- Write about anything extra-curricular which is not directly relevant to the course, but shows skills like teamwork, organisation or responsibility. It might include D of E, employment, mentoring younger students or other voluntary work.

Personal Statements

How is it used?



Pay and Send

Students pay for their application individually with a credit/debit card online and then send it to school.



Predicted Grades/References



Subject references and predicted grades from subject teachers.



Full reference written by Sixth Form Team. Predicted grades from teachers entered on UCAS form.

Have you any other references apart from your mother's?

University Offers

3 Track the application



Offer and reply combinations

Unconditional firm (UF)	You're in!
Conditional firm (CF)	You're in if you meet the conditions.
Conditional firm (CF) and conditional insurance (CI)	You've made a first and second choice – you'll be in at the first if you meet the conditions. If not you might have met the conditions for the second – if so you'll be on that course instead.
Conditional firm (CF) and unconditional insurance (UI)	You've made a first and second choice – if you meet the conditions of the first you'll be on that course. If not you'll definitely be on the second.

UCAS

There are different types of offers: Conditional and Unconditional. Once students decide on their offers, they mark one as FIRM and one as INSURANCE. They have a significant amount of time to decide.

Student Finance

Fast facts

1. Applications usually **open in February** for courses starting the following September.
2. Students can get a **Tuition Fee Loan of up to £9,535*** to cover the fees charged by their university. *(current figure)
3. And a **Maintenance Loan** to help towards their living costs such as rent and bills.
4. Interest will be charged on the loan from the day we make their first student finance payment until the loan is repaid in full or cancelled. The interest rate is linked to the UK Retail Price Index (RPI).
5. A student graduating will start **repaying the loan when** they earn **over £25,000 a year**. Repayments will be 9% of income above that threshold.
6. Students **don't need to wait until they have a confirmed place** at university or college to apply for finance – they can use their preferred choice and update it online later if they need to.
7. They are written off after 40 years.

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

This table is for maintenance loans in 2025-26. Use the student finance calculator on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) to find how much you could borrow.



A graphic from Martin Lewis's website showing recent changes.

Earnings	Uni goers	Non-uni goers
Up to £12,570	No tax	No tax
From £12,571 - £25,000	20%	20%
From £25,001 - £50,270	29%	20%
<p>From £50,271 to £125,140</p> <p>(though technically for some earning £100,000 to £125,140 their marginal rate – as the personal allowance is withdrawn – can be over 60%, or even higher for those with student loans)</p>	49%	40%
£125,140+	54%	45%



Bursaries/scholarships

Most universities run scholarships/bursaries. They also offer contextualised offers (also known as 'widening participation programmes').

It can be difficult to find information about bursaries but students can search on their Unifrog accounts for these in the **'Special opportunities'** tab (shown below).

Healthcare professions

Allied healthcare professions can get the NHS Bursary. Information available here: [NHSBSA Landscape Document](#) or for further opportunities in Wales, please click [here](#).



The screenshot shows the Unifrog student homepage with a grid of nine colored tiles. The tiles are: UK universities (red), US universities (blue), European universities (purple), Oxbridge (light blue), Apprenticeships (pink), College / Sixth Form (orange), Irish universities (green), Special opportunities (brown, circled in black), and Events (dark teal). Each tile contains a title, a shortlist count or instruction, and a 'Start >' button. The browser address bar shows 'https://www.unifrog.org/student/home'.

Category	Shortlist Count / Instruction	Action
UK universities	You have 10 shortlists	Start >
US universities	Make your first shortlist	Start >
European universities	Make your first shortlist	Start >
Oxbridge	Make your first shortlist	Start >
Apprenticeships	You have 2 shortlists	Start >
College / Sixth Form	Make your first shortlist	Start >
Irish universities	Make your first shortlist	Start >
Special opportunities	Make your first shortlist	Start >
Events	You have 0 upcoming events	Go to tool >

What if my child doesn't get the grades?

Click image to play clip.

How-to guides

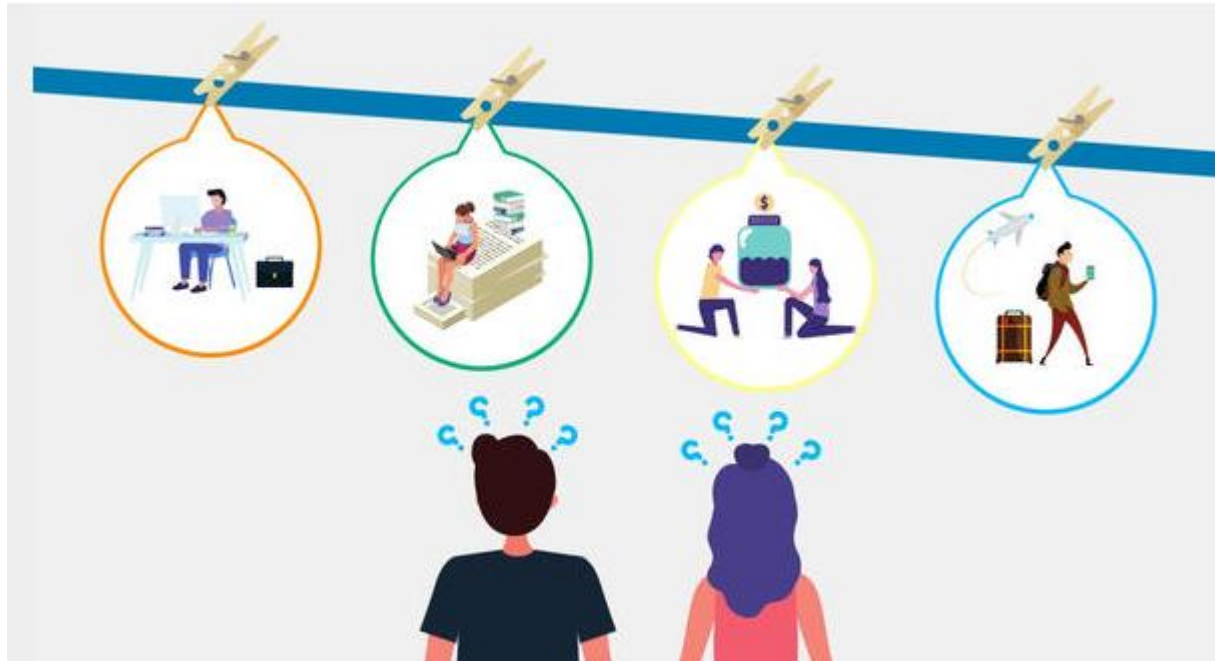
I already have an application -
how do I apply through Clearing?

UCAS

How do I apply through Clearing?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5YAqAJ-r00>

What if my child wants to take a year out before university?



Check that the university accepts deferred entries (this can be done through a phone call but better through email).

Select **deferred entry** on the UCAS form in Apply 2026.

Or apply post-results for **September 2027 entry**.