



Applying to University

A Parents' Guide to UCAS

What is UCAS?

UCAS stands for Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. It's the centralised service that students use to apply to university. ... Think of **UCAS** as an online dating service: through it you can select and apply to universities, the universities take your proposal and decide whether or not to offer you a place.

Timeline of a UCAS application

We start UCAS in the Spring Term of Lower Sixth.

Whilst this may seem early, this allows students to start their vital research and develop what will be an excellent application.

As students return in September for their Upper Sixth year, they need to be submitting their UCAS applications promptly and within deadline.

How it works: applying to a UK university or college



How do we support UCAS applications?



Prep sessions focused on destinations, applications and independent living skills



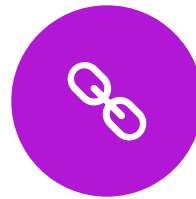
ASPIRE programme for those hoping to apply to Russell Group Universities, Oxbridge and Veterinary Medicine, Medicine or Dentistry courses



Careers and Employability Information, Advice & Guidance by qualified careers staff



Support in accessing work experience, summer schools and MOOCs



Facilitate links with unifrog.org and UCAS Hub



GSTs write references for their students' applications

What should students research?

Rural or Urban setting

Size of university

Campus or city based

Entry requirements

Course content

Distance from home

Cost of accommodation

Bursaries and grants available

Student satisfaction

Employment prospects

Links to industry

Sandwich year opportunities

Sector accreditations

Prospects for post-graduate study

Quality of teaching

What does a UCAS application look like?



A portal with sections that collect information and personal data about the student



A Personal Statement written by the student



A Reference from college and log of predicted grades

The application portal

- Students will sign up to www.ucas.com at the College Careers Day on 29th June 2021
- GSTs will support students in registering their application and link them up via a 'college buzz word' which allows us to see their application, later add their reference and track their offers
- Students will need to know their personal details (address inc. postcode, phone number, ethnicity etc., GCSE results, main income earner's job title and whether any of their parents attended university)
- They will also need a non-college email address that they check regularly
- By the time they are ready to submit their application they also need their 5 (or fewer) university course choices

Personal Statement

4000 characters and 47 lines maximum (approx. one A4 page of writing)

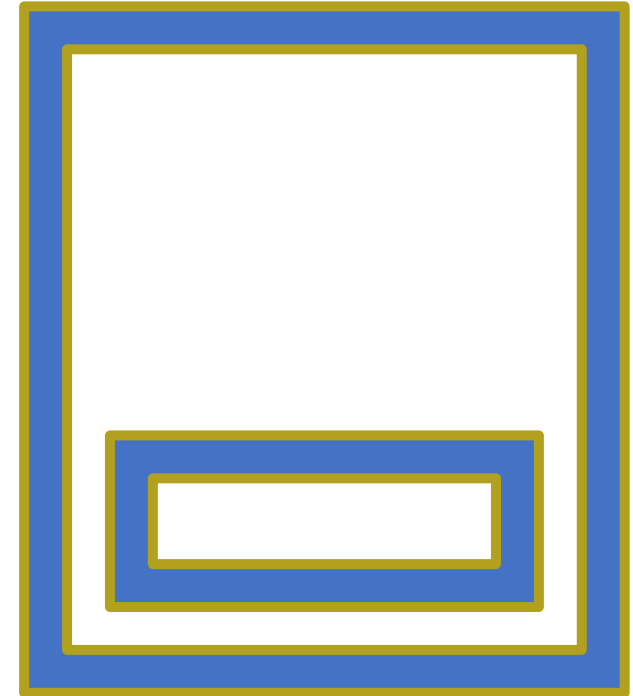
For most students this will be made up of 6 paragraphs:

- What I want to study and why- who or what has influenced me? What knowledge of this course/industry do I have?
- A level subject/ BTEC paragraph- skills, knowledge, experience, how I've gone above and beyond & links to my desired career.
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- A level subject/ BTEC paragraph- skills, knowledge, experience, how I've gone above and beyond & links to my desired career.
- Beyond college- hobbies, interests, paid/voluntary work, non-academic achievements, travel, DoE, NCS
- Summary- hopes and wishes for the future and why I am excited for university

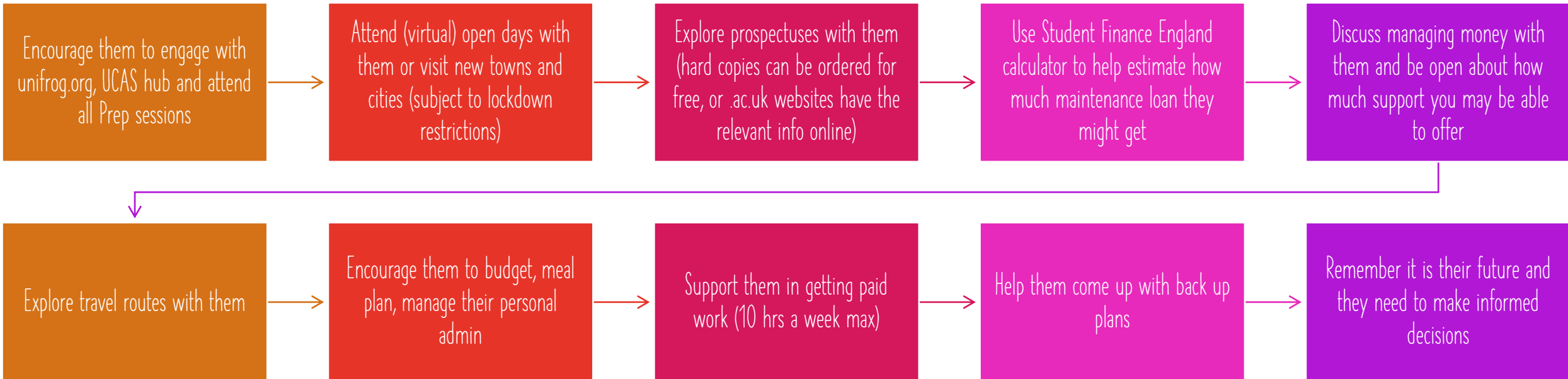
Only 1 statement is submitted and is sent to all chosen universities

GST Reference

- Each student who elects to apply via UCAS requires a reference
- Their U6 GST will provide this and again it is 4000 characters/47 lines long
- The GST utilises the end of L6 reports and the relationship built with college to construct an honest, yet supportive reference
- GSTs will focus on the student's strengths, academic abilities, wider interests and suitability for their chosen courses to endorse their application
- The GST will also enter the student's predicted grades, which the student agrees with their teacher in advance of the application being sent.



How can I support my child?



What happens after they've applied?



Students must apply within the relevant deadlines

(college internal deadlines will be in advance of the following external deadlines)

- Early Entrants- 15th October 2021
- All other applicants 15th January 2022



UCAS will send their application to their chosen universities



The student may need sit a University Admission Test and/or attend an interview or submit a portfolio of work

- Students need to have identified whether their chosen course/s require a UAT and book this accordingly. This is their responsibility and not all tests are taken within college
- Depts will advise students on how to build their portfolio
- GSTs and Careers Depts. Will help with mock interviews



Then university will then decide and respond:

- Conditional offer- agree a place based upon certain conditions (usually exam results)
- Unconditional offer- the student is guaranteed a place
- Alternative offer- the university offers an alternative course
- Decline- the university feels the student is not suited or doesn't meet the entry criteria

What happens after the student receives their offers?

Once they receive all offers back do they need to select a FIRM and INSURANCE choice (unless they select an unconditional offer for their FIRM choice)

If they are waiting on an offer that they know they don't want, they can withdraw that application and choose from the offers they have

If they hold no offers (either due to withdrawing or being declined) they can enter UCAS Extra in Feb 2022 and apply to any universities that still have places available through Extra. This is based upon applying to one course at a time, until they hold one FIRM offer (no Insurance offer will be allowed)

If they hold no offers or they apply really late, students can use UCAS Clearing from June 2022.

Equally if they don't meet their FIRM or INSURANCE offer on Results Day, they can apply for other courses through UCAS Clearing

If they do better on Results Day than expected they may be able to ADJUST their course

Where can I find other help?

- <https://www.gov.uk/apply-online-for-student-finance>
 - Use the finance calculator to estimate what size maintenance loan they may get
 - Students will register for Student Finance England in Prep in U6, and will then continue to apply from home, where parent/carer information will be required
- <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/ucas-undergraduate-advice-parents-and-guardians>
 - Sign up for the monthly newsletter
 - Watch videos
- <https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/advice/advice-for-parents>
- <https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/student-advice/applying-to-uni/application-advice-for-parents>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2020/sep/05/the-best-uk-universities-2021-league-table>