

A large, solid yellow rectangular graphic overlay is positioned on the left side of the image. It contains a white horizontal line above the main title text.

# UCAS Parents' Evening



# What is UCAS?

UCAS is an **independent charity** providing information, advice and admissions services. We're there to help people **discover** what their next step might be.

## UCAS **does**:

- provide information, advice, and support
- process applications
- complete fraud and verification checks
- take part in education sector engagement

## UCAS **doesn't**:

- make decisions or offers
- set entry requirements
- advise on finance
- advise on immigration or visas

# What is UCAS?

**350+** universities and colleges:

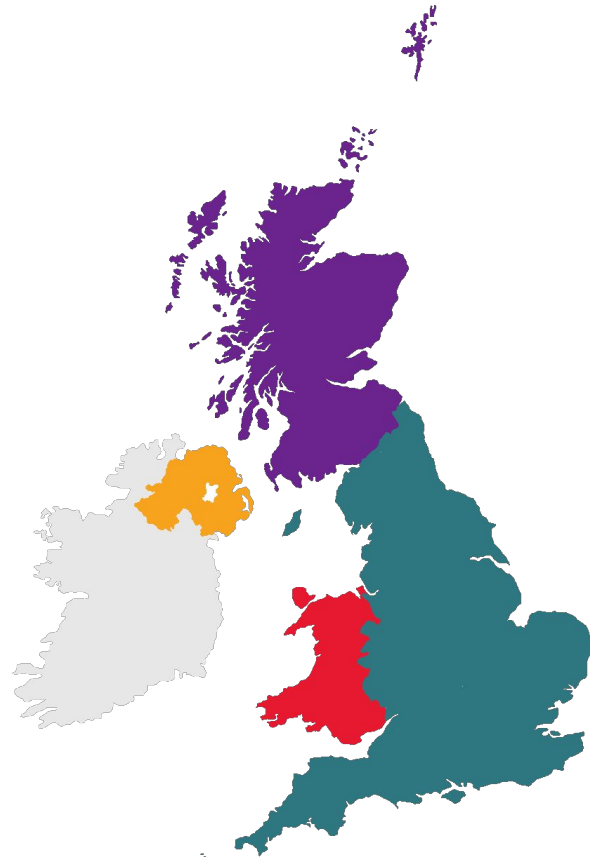
**4** in Northern Ireland

**15** in Wales

**19** in Scotland

**324** in England

**35,000+** courses available



# Discover options



HIGHER  
EDUCATION



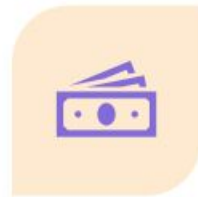
APPRENTICESHIPS



STUDYING  
ABROAD



GAP YEAR



GETTING A JOB

Register for the UCAS Hub to understand all your options and make the right choices for you: [ucas.com/hub](https://ucas.com/hub)

# Why higher education?

## Opportunities while studying:

- Chance to study a subject they are **passionate** about.
- Achieve a qualification that could lead to their chosen **career**.
- Grow in **confidence**, make lifelong friends, and gain **independence** and important life skills that will widen their prospects.

## With a degree, they'll have:

- the opportunity to follow their **career path**
- **better job prospects**, as many employers target graduates
- **higher earning potential**

# Choosing the right university for you

- **Style** – from the traditional, with a focus on subject-based courses and research, to modern universities, with a greater focus on vocational courses.
- **Location** – some are based in large cities, others in smaller towns - a major influence on the environment and lifestyle.
- **Size** – larger universities can have more than 20,000 students, whereas some of the smallest have only a few thousand.
- **Culture and facilities** – influenced by a range of factors, including the diversity of students who attend.
- **What graduates do** – all universities collect destination statistics. It can be interesting to find out the types of jobs or further study students go on to.
- **Tuition fees** – can vary between course providers. Check if there are any scholarships or bursaries available.
- **Living costs** – accommodation, transport, and food can vary enormously.

# Choosing the right course for you

- What does the course cover?
- Courses with the same title may be very different.
- Look carefully at the core course content, and the range of optional studies/modules available.
- Which modules are the most interesting and relevant to your career aspirations?
- See if the course or university/college offers any internship, placement, or study abroad opportunities.
- How is the course taught – structured teaching, or more independent research? How many lectures are there, and how much group work will be done in seminars?
- How is the course assessed?

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# Research resources

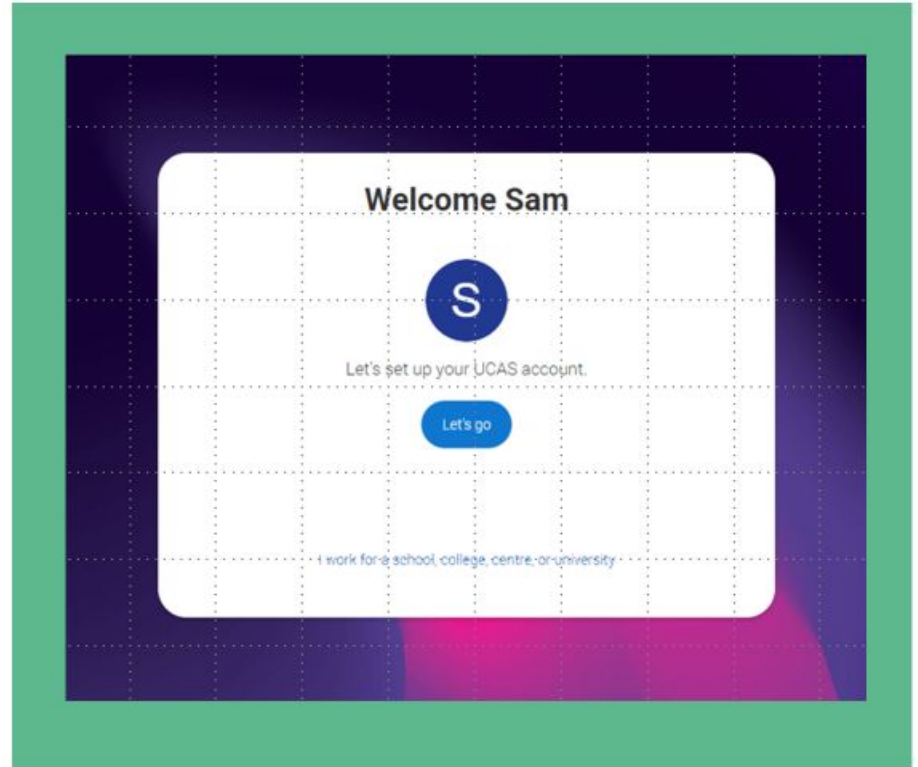




# Discover options

Register with the UCAS Hub to:

- explore careers, subjects, places, and apprenticeships in one place
- find and favourite over 35,000 courses
- search for open days, events and virtual tours
- turn predicted grades into UCAS Tariff points
- speak to those in the know using [Unibuddy](#)
- try before you apply with [Subject Spotlights](#) from Springpod.
- take the [UCAS Quiz](#) to find career matches
- start your application



## Your next steps | [Open legacy to do list](#)

### DISCOVER WHAT TO DO

Browse subjects and careers with related courses and apprenticeships.

[Discover more](#)



#### FAQS

### What subject should I take?

Read our subject guides to see what might be right for you.

#### HOW TO

### How to apply

All you need to know about applying to university, college or an apprenticeship.



### DISCOVER CAREERS

Try our quiz and get recommended careers that match your skills and personality traits.

[Take the quiz](#)



#### FAQS

### Key application dates

Find out what you need to do and when.

#### HOW TO

### How to nail that personal statement

Writing a personal statement can be daunting. Follow our tips and advice to help make it easier.

### DISCOVER WHERE TO GO

Browse universities, colleges and employers and learn more about cities and regions in the UK.

[Find out more](#)



## What's happening

### Replying to your offers - your questions answered

Getting ready to reply to your offers? We've got all your questions answered.

[More info](#)



### Chat to students

Chat with UK and international students who are already studying the courses you've applied for at universities and colleges across the UK, on Unibuddy.

[More info](#)



### University course tasters

Experience what a university course would be like with Springpod's Subject Spotlights. These interactive, virtual university course tasters feature real-life lectures, seminars, and academics.

[More info](#)



### Live now: Studying in the UK

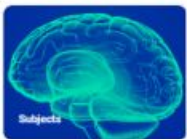
There's a lot to consider when moving to a new country. We explore accommodation, visas, scholarships and everything in between.

[More info](#)



# Build your profile. Favourite as you go.

Browse by

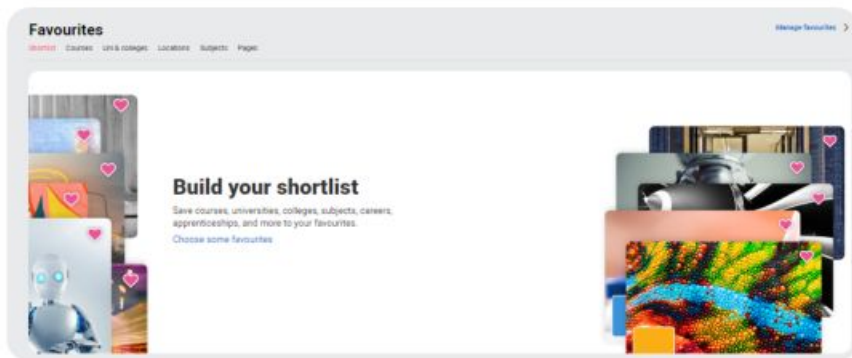


## Explore your future

What to do? Where to go? Discover all the options with our subject, industry, and career guides. Explore city, employer and accommodation information. Compare apprenticeships and course opportunities for you.

## Build your shortlist

Save for courses, universities, colleges, subjects, apprenticeships and more! Use to shortlist your top 5 choices, manage, keep those favourite information pages to hand.



# Subject Spotlights

Learn from some of the UK's finest academics as they give you a genuine, insightful, and engaging experience of studying their courses at their universities.

- On-demand interactive video **experiences**
- Have a go at **interactive quizzes** and **activities**
- Get **feedback** on how you've done.
- **Try** university degrees before you apply.
- **Certificate** of completion

Explore more Springpod [Subject Spotlights](#).

## University course tasters

Experience what a university course would be like with Springpod's Subject Spotlights. These interactive, virtual university course tasters feature real-life lectures, seminars, and academics.

[More info](#)



# Chat to students



A peer-to-peer chat facility hosted on [ucas.com](https://ucas.com) powered by Unibuddy.



An opportunity to connect with current students, ask questions and learn about their experiences



Over 4,900 active ambassadors, with unlimited chats available

## Chat to students

Chat with UK and international students who are already studying the courses you've applied for at universities and colleges across the UK, on Unibuddy

[More info](#)



# Personalised tools to help

## UCAS Quiz

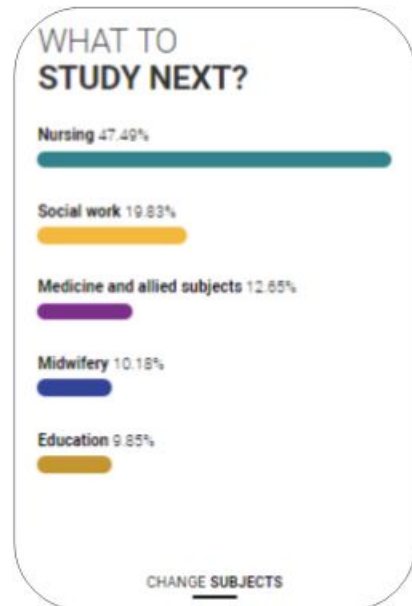
Find job and career ideas matched to your personality.

Plus a list of courses previous students studied in order to get there.



## What to study next?

Broaden your horizons by exploring another subject area, that student's who did your qualification went on to study.

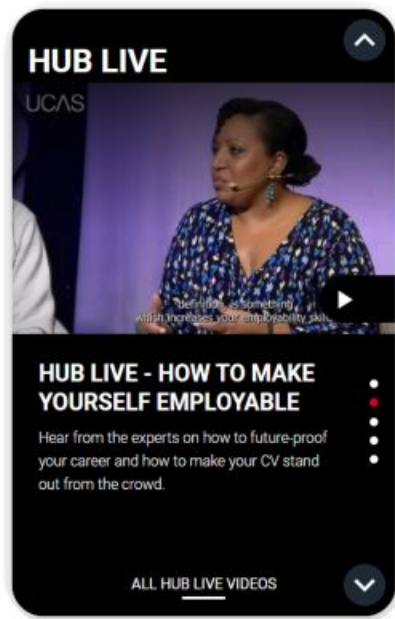


# Advice and events

## Hub lives

Watch expert interviews [on demand](#).

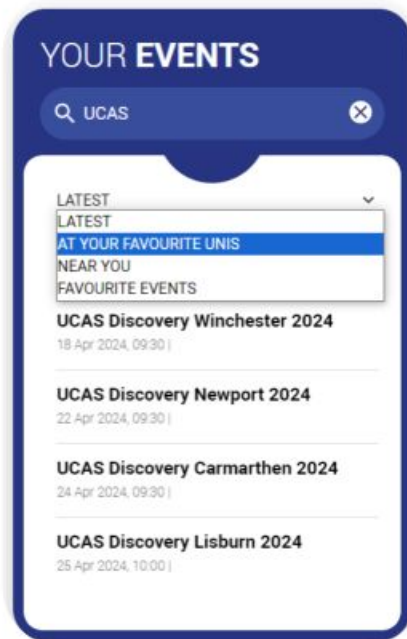
Make an informed decision about the right path for you. University, apprenticeships or the world of work.



## Your events

Filter to explore events, open days and tours to suit your needs.

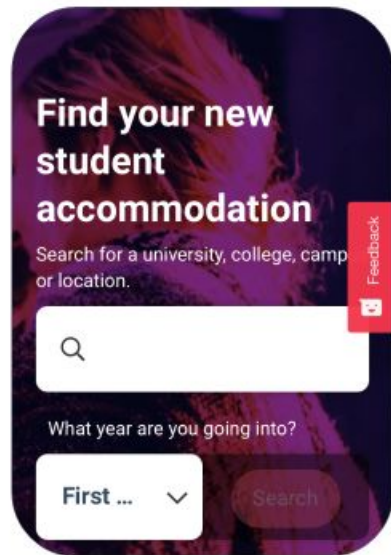
Register straight from the Hub for our UCAS Discovery events, with exciting new zones covering all pathways.



# What else do you need?

## Accommodation

High on the list when considering where to study, but it's not always easy to compare what's on offer. Understand what options there are using our [accommodation search](#).



The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for finding student accommodation. At the top, the text reads "Find your new student accommodation". Below this is a search prompt: "Search for a university, college, camp or location." There is a search input field with a magnifying glass icon. Below the input field is a dropdown menu labeled "First ..." and a "Search" button. A red "Feedback" button is visible on the right side of the interface.

## Personal Statement Builder

Designed to help you think about what to include, and how to lay it all out. It counts how many characters you've used, so it's easy to see when you're close to the 4,000 character limit.



The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for a personal statement builder. The title is "PERSONAL STATEMENT BUILDER" in bold, uppercase letters. Below the title, it says "4000 characters of 4000 remaining". The main visual is a large, stylized black and yellow fountain pen nib. At the bottom, there is a blue button that says "View personal statement guides" and a "CONTINUE WRITING" button.



# Apply key facts



It's an online application



Maximum of five choices.



Choice restrictions:

- medicine, veterinary medicine/science, dentistry (maximum of four)
- Oxford or Cambridge



Simple application cost:

- up to five choices – £28.50



Equal consideration.



'Invisibility'.

# When to apply for 2025 entry

- **14 May 24** UCAS Undergraduate Apply opens for 2024 entry.
- **3 September 24** First day for receipt of completed applications.
- **2 October 24** Music conservatoire application deadline
- **15 October 24** Application deadline for courses in medicine, veterinary medicine/science, and dentistry, and courses at Oxford or Cambridge. (18:00)
- **29 January 25** Equal consideration application deadline. (18:00)
- **26 February 25** Extra opens.
- **30 June 25** Last date for applications before Clearing.

# Making a UCAS application

Begin at [ucas.com/apply](https://ucas.com/apply).

Sections to be completed:

- Personal details
- Choices – make up to five
- Education
- Employment
- Extra activities
- Personal statement
- Reference



# Completing the UCAS application

A student registers at:  
[ucas.com/apply](https://ucas.com/apply)

- Sections to complete:
1. Personal details
  2. Additional information
  3. Student finance
  4. Choices
  5. Education
  6. Employment
  7. Personal statement
  8. Referee details

Teacher/  
adviser adds  
their  
reference

Applications  
are sent to  
UCAS

Universities/  
colleges make  
their decisions

# The personal statement



The only section you have full control over



Your only chance to market themselves individually



The same for all of your choices



A maximum of 4,000 characters, or 47 lines



A minimum of 1,000 characters



There isn't a spelling or grammar check



No formatting is allowed

UCAS similarity detection service:  
every personal statement is run through software to check for plagiarism.

# Decisions

Universities and colleges will review the:



personal statement



qualifications



reference

They may also ask for:



admissions test



interview



portfolio/audition

And make one of three decisions:

**Unconditional offer**

**Conditional offer**

**Unsuccessful**

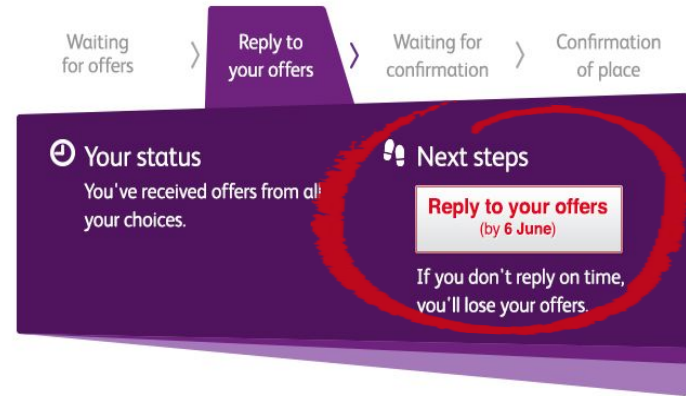
# Tracking applications

The UCAS Hub allows applicants to:

- follow the progress of their application 24/7
- see their choices and personal information
- view their offers
- reply to offers online

A student can hold up to two offers:

- **firm** – if they meet the conditions of the offer they will be placed here
- **insurance** – if they are not placed with their firm choice, they may be placed with their insurance choice.



# Other options

## Extra (26 Feb – 4 Jul)

- Used all five choices and had no offers.
- Add Extra choices for consideration one at a time.

## Clearing (5 Jul – Oct)

- Apply after 30 June, receive no offers, decline all offers, not met conditions.
- Find vacancies from 5 July and add a Clearing choice to your application.





# What can students be doing?

- research, research, research
- attend open days and events
- extracurricular and super curricular activities
- work experience
- volunteering
- independent learning outside the curriculum
- focus on this year's studies



# How can you support them?

Research

Use the parents/guardians' section of the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com/parents](http://www.ucas.com/parents).

Sign up

Sign up for updates from UCAS, and get everything you need to know about the application process direct to your inbox.

Open days

Attend virtual events and open days – you may have a different perspective.

Be proactive

Make sure they read everything carefully that is sent to them and don't book family holidays at key times!

# Apprenticeships

What are  
apprenticeships?

UCAS



Study



Job



Wage\*

[www.ucas.com/apprenticeships](http://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships)

\* Foundation apprenticeships in Scotland are unpaid



# Part 1: What's an apprenticeship?

- It's a real job where students **learn, gain experience, study for a qualification and get paid.**
- An apprentice is an employee, **with a contract of employment** and holiday leave.
- Over **650 different apprenticeships** available, from Nuclear Engineer to Architect to Digital Marketer.



# What are the benefits?

- Apprenticeships are funded by the Government and/or the employer so apprentices don't have loans or tuition fees.
- Wages vary depending on the industry but salaries can often be very competitive.
- By the end of an apprenticeship, they'll have the right skills and knowledge needed for their chosen career.



# How does it work?

1. An apprenticeship takes between **one to six years to complete**.
2. Apprentices typically work for a **minimum of 30 hours a week** (and most will work full time, between 37 – 40 hours per week). Part-time options are also available in some cases.
3. Apprentices have time away from their day-job **protected for study**. This tends to equate to about a day a week and is also paid time.

# Part 2: Apprenticeship levels

## LEVEL 2

Intermediate

Job roles include Nuclear Operative, Junior Estate Agent, Rail Engineering Operative, Finance Assistant.

GCSE

## LEVEL 3

Advanced

Job roles include Chef De Partie, Fashion Assistant, Veterinary Nurse, IT Solutions Technician.

A LEVEL

## LEVEL 4+

Higher

Job roles include Marketing Executive, Journalist, Clinical Dental Technician.

FOUNDATION DEGREE+

## LEVEL 6-7

Degree

Job roles include Aerospace Engineer, Police Constable, Cyber Security, Ecologist.

BACHELOR'S OR MASTER'S DEGREE

# The A – Z of apprenticeships

There are **over 600** possible apprenticeship 'standards' (training programmes) which exist. It's probably easier to name an industry that doesn't have an apprenticeship than to list all that do. Here are just a few ....

- Accounting and Taxation
- Architect
- Boat Builder
- Building Surveyors
- Civil Engineer
- Cyber Security Technician
- Data Analyst
- Doctor (from 2023)
- Early Years
- Ecologist
- Farrier
- Food Technologist
- Game Programmer
- Geospatial mapping
- Harbour Master
- Historic Environment Adviser
- Internal audit professional
- Intelligence analyst
- Journalist
- Junior 2D artist (visual effects)
- Knitted product manufacturing
- Laboratory scientist
- Licensed conveyor
- Midwife
- Marketing Manager
- Nuclear Scientist and Engineer
- Nursing
- Operational firefighter
- Orthodontic therapist
- Paralegal
- Physiotherapist
- Quality practitioner
- Rail engineer
- Research scientist
- Social worker
- Software Developer
- Teacher
- Town planning assistant
- Utilities engineering
- Veterinary nurse
- Vehicle damage assessor
- Water process technician
- Workplace pensions consultant
- Youth worker

[www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/#](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/#)



# When can I apply?

- Not one deadline
- Advertised throughout the year
- Larger organisations with multiple application processes may recruit earlier than smaller local organisations
- Higher apprenticeships with a Sep/Oct start tend to recruit in the previous academic year


[www.ucas.com/apprenticeships](http://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships)

UCAS



# Your pathways Side by side

When you register on [ucas.com](https://ucas.com), you can sign up to be linked to relevant apprenticeship opportunities that match your profile.



**Looking for Apprenticeships?**

We can match you to potential employers! Sign up for Smart Alerts to receive apprenticeship opportunities directly in your inbox.

[Go to Smart Alerts](#)

# 6 steps to follow

UCAS

— Step 1 ————— Step 2 ————— Step 3 ————— Step 4 ————— Step 5 ————— Step 6 —▶

Register on  
UCASHub

Option to sign up to receive  
alerts on opportunities that  
match your profile

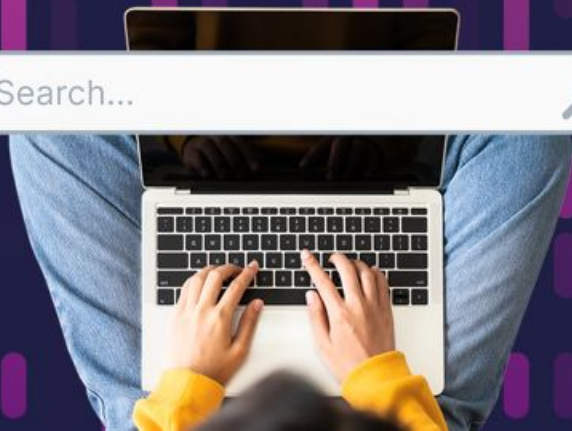
Explore subjects, courses,  
industries, job roles

Build your  
profile

Search  
for vacancies

Make an  
application

Search...



# How can I apply?

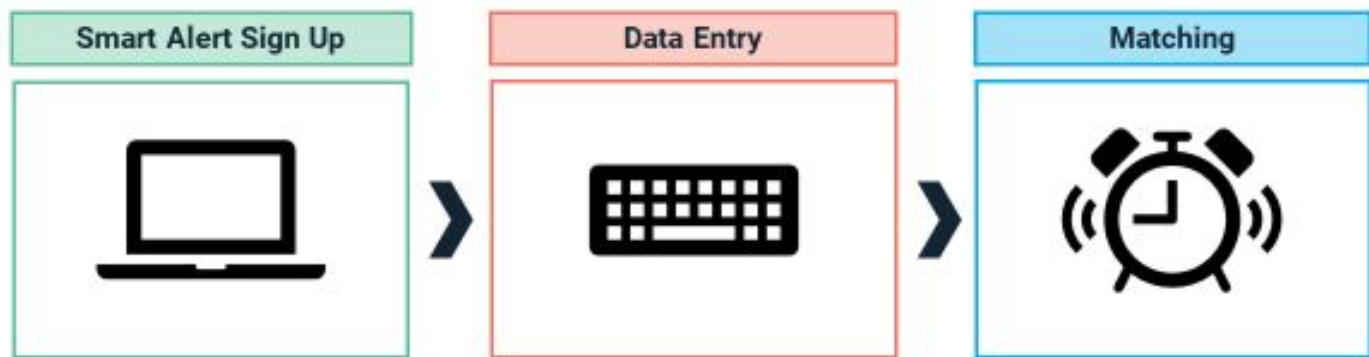
- Applications are made directly through the company or the education provider.
- There is no limit on the number of applications you can make.
- The application process might vary across vacancies, you could be asked for:
  - CV and Covering Letter
  - Application Form
  - In App/Site application
- You can apply for universities and apprenticeships at the same time!



# NEW: Smart Alerts

Smart alerts are a new matching service offered by UCAS.

The service enables students to be matched to regional vacancies.



Students register for Smart Alerts in their Hub account.

Students enter information on their preferences such as location and area of interest.

If this matches an employer's search criteria, then they are invited to apply.

# Useful Websites

[gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)

[apprenticeships.gov.uk/#](https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/#)

[notgoingtouni.co.uk/](https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/)

[www.prospects.ac.uk/](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/)

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Apprenticeships website. At the top left is the 'Apprenticeships' logo. On the right, there are navigation links for 'APPRENTICES', 'EMPLOYERS', and 'INFLUENCERS'. The main header features a woman with her arms crossed and the text 'Connecting people with ambition to businesses with vision'. Below this is the HM Government logo. Three main content blocks are displayed: 'BECOME AN APPRENTICE' (with a 'LEARN MORE' button), 'HIRE AN APPRENTICE' (with a 'LEARN MORE' button), and 'INSPIRE AND INFLUENCE' (with a 'LEARN MORE' button). At the bottom, there are logos for partner organizations: Travis Perkins, Clymac, VEOLIA, OOSHA, and AV. Below these logos is the NGTU logo and a search bar with options for 'Employers and Providers', 'Advice Hub', 'RAF', 'Parents', and 'For Providers'.

The screenshot shows the search page of the Not Going to Uni website. The background features a young man and woman looking at a laptop. The main heading is 'Search For Opportunities' with a 'Sign Up Today' button. Below this is a search bar with three input fields: 'Job Title or Keyword', 'Search or Select Location', and 'Sector'. A 'Find Jobs' button is located to the right of the search bar. Below the search bar, it says 'Search through 820 opportunities'.

# Personal statements

- Extenuating circumstances
- Work experience
- Extra curricular activities

Use the ABC method for your personal statement

Activity - What you have done?

Benefit - What skills it has given you?

Course - How these skills relate to your course or career

# References - changes to 2024 applications

Section 1

Section 2

Section 3



# UCAS Predicted Grades

Typically, we will predict you one grade above your Internal Exam Grade.

However there are some exceptions:

- A's to A\*'s - A\* are rare and rely on you performing well on every paper, so we cannot allocate everyone on an A grades A\*s.
- If you have performed significantly better in your Internal Exams than other assessments.

## Worked examples:

Fred

Internal (end-of-year): A3

Mock: A2

Mini-mock: B1

Not likely to get an A\*



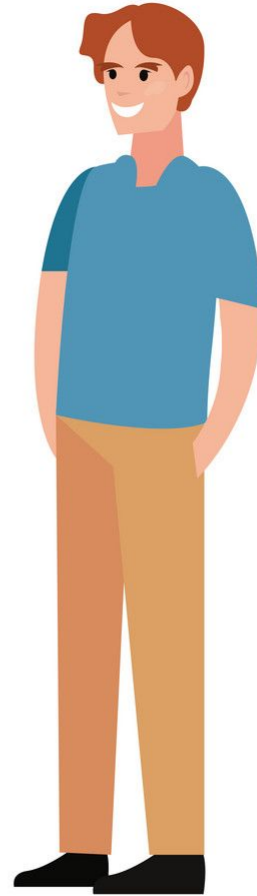
Ben

Internal (end-of-year): A1

Mock: A1

Mini-mock: A3

More likely to get an A\*



## Worked examples:

Claire

Internal (end-of year): B3

Mock: D1

Mini Mock: C3

Not likely to get an A



Maria

Internal (end-of-year): B1

Mock: B3

Mini Mock: C1

More likely to get an A



# UCAS Rules

Predicted grades should be:

- **entered for all pending qualifications**, unless the assessment method or structure of the qualification makes this inappropriate – failure to do so can lead to complications or, in some cases, the rejection of an application
- in the **best interests of applicants** – fulfilment and success at college or university is the end goal
- **aspirational but achievable** – stretching predicted grades can be motivational for students
- determined by **professional judgement** – your expertise and experience are vital in informing predictions
- **data-driven** – while each school will have its own process, you should look at past **Level 2 and Level 3 performance, and/or internal examinations to inform your predictions**
- finalised by the point of submitting an application – universities and colleges are only likely to consider the predicted grades received as part of the UCAS application. While they will make every effort to accommodate genuine errors in data entry, this may not always be possible for highly selective courses

# UCAS Rules

Predicted grades must **not** be:

- **affected by student, parental, guardian, or carer pressure** – there are risks associated with inflating and suppressing predicted grades
- **influenced by university or college entry requirements or behaviours** – predicted grades should be set in isolation of an applicant's university or college choice(s)
- affected by student behaviour or background – predicted grades should be made objectively and disregard external factors. Be careful to reflect on any preconceptions to mitigate against unconscious bias, particularly for **protected characteristics** (including sex, race, religion/belief, disability, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment)

# First task: personal statement

- To be sent to their tutor by Friday 24 May
- A key part to the application. They only write one.
- 47 lines/4000 characters (inc. spaces) Approximately 500 words
- Show your strengths, why you're passionate about the subject, work experience relevant to your application and ambitions



—

# Thank you

