

The logo graphic consists of several overlapping squares in shades of purple, pink, and yellow, with a thin black vertical line passing through them.

UCAS

**The Universities and
Colleges Admissions
Service**

**Your Cycle:
UCAS 2026**

The UCAS Application Time Scale 2025 - 2026

- UCAS is open for students to begin the online application
- Early September: UCAS ready to process completed applications
- 15 October: deadline for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary science

**Internal early deadline:
End of September**

- 14 January: deadline for all other applications

**Internal deadline:
Before Xmas**

- Please note: Our internal deadlines are earlier to allow for processing applications.



Getting started

To start your application you will need to have registered on the UCAS 2026 Hub and you will need the UCAS buzzword when you start your application:

camdengirls2026

- Students should be in the process of:
 - Researching courses on Unifrog and the UCAS Hub www.ucas.com
 - Exploring university websites
 - Attending university open days.



- Admissions Tests

All these tests take place at external centres

- **UCAT** - for Medicine and Dentistry at ALL universities - please sit this test during the summer holidays
- **LNAT** - for Law
- **Oxford and Cambridge:** admissions tests for many subjects - you need to check!
- **ESAT** 9,10 October, 6,7 Jan
- **TARA** 15, 16 October, 12, 13 Jan
- **TMUA** 13, 14 October, 8,9 Jan
- **Oxford tests** between 21 and 27 October



Additional stuff

- **For Cambridge there is an extra form to be completed by 22 October**
- **In early November, Oxford and Cambridge will request samples of work for all Arts and most Humanities subjects**



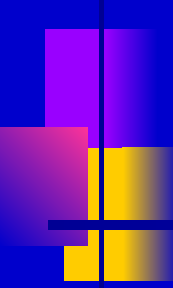
How to apply if you want a gap year

- There are two/three alternative ways of applying if you want a gap year. You can:
 - Apply in Year 13 for entry in September 2027 – this is called **deferred application**
 - Apply in year 13 for entry in 2026 and arrange a deferral later
 - Wait until after you have finished your A Levels and apply in 2026-2027 for entry in September 2027 – this is called **post-qualification application**



University Course Choices

- You have 5 choices to make and they are not ranked
- You then choose a firm and insurance choice in the Spring
- High demand universities and courses
- Russell Group - 24
- Vocational/non-vocational
- Use Unifrog and the UCAS Hub and their **Course Search Tools**



The UCAS Online Application

- Long form with 13 sections in which you tell your universities all about yourself
- As well as your personal details, you'll enter any previous schools, your GCSE grades and then this school and the A levels and EPQ you are taking. The grades for these are entered as pending because you don't have them yet.
- Would-be medics, vets and dentists can only apply for 4 such courses and must apply for at least one alternative
- You have to pay £28.95 to UCAS
- If you are eligible for Free School Meals, the fee is waived
- When you 'send' your application, it comes to Ms Bayley to check and approve so do not worry - you have a safety net!
- TIP - Use a private email address, not your school email.



Personal Statement

Your personal statement is usually the most time consuming element of the application form. It is your chance to show an admissions tutor that you are genuinely interested in the course for which you are applying and that you will make

- The same personal statement goes to all five universities so you **can't** tailor it to suit each one.
- This year the statement has a new format - there are three questions to respond to. You have to enter at least 350 characters in each response but apart from this, you can split the 4000 characters however you wish.



Question 1

Why do you want to study this course or subject?

Here is your chance to explain your motivation to study your chosen course.

Is there a starting point for your interest? Something you have learnt or read, someone who has inspired you or a formative experience?

Is the course a pathway to the career you are considering?



Question 2

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

- Talk about key educational experiences and show how they have built your academic interests.
- It is fine to talk about school based learning as well as academic interests you have pursued through courses or reading outside school.
- This is a section to prioritise if you are applying for an academic degree.



Question 3

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

- Focus here on extra curriculans - D of E, involvement in sports, any kind of hobby or activity
- Also mention part time jobs, work experience, volunteering.
- This question may need the longest response is you have lots of work experience to showcase, especially if you are applying for a vocational course like Medicine.



Personal Statement tips

- Don't expect to produce a flawless first draft - be prepared to listen to advice and re-draft
- Do not feel you have to write in an over-sophisticated style. Keep the style simple and clear so you come across as genuine
- There are many different opinions out there about what makes a good PS. Try not to get bogged down in these! As long as you write something which is honest, relevant, accurate and sounds like you, it should be fine.
- Avoid listing (books you have read, podcasts you've listened to), choose those that have interested you and go into detail about how you have pursued this interest.
- Once you are happy with your statement, you paste it into the relevant section of the UCAS form.....and breathe a sigh of relief!



Your school reference

Your reference is an important part of the application.

It is written by your subject teachers and your form tutor and attached to your UCAS application before submission.

But, very importantly, it is informed by YOU - Google Forms - coming soon

You do not have to request a reference or attach it yourself.



What do Admissions tutors look for in a reference?

- Details of specific pieces of work, tests and achievement
- Details of subject specific reading or activities undertaken outside of curriculum



What sort of information does your tutor include?

- Mitigating circumstances that have affected achievement or that students have overcome in order to achieve, such as:
 - being a young carer
 - health issues/disability
 - difficulties with schooling or housing
- Relevant work experience and/or difficulties in securing WE
- Extra and super curricular activities and interests which suggest you would be a good fit for the course you have chosen



Contextual Offers

- This is when a university makes a lower offer based on the student's circumstances or the school they attend.
- In 2024 CSG qualified for blanket contextual offers from Bristol university.
- It is always worth checking if a university might consider you for a contextual offer and there are several schemes which enable you to apply for one.
- They look at your school's results, your postcode, whether you have been in care, fsm, bursary etc



Predicted Grades

- These are decided by your subject teachers, form a key part of your reference and are based on your performance in year 12.
- Admissions tutors take very seriously your GCSE results, and your predicted grades.



How do I pay for university?

- You do not apply for finance on your UCAS form.
- Student loans are applied for next spring through Student Finance England.
- University costs the same (pretty much) wherever you go in terms of the tuition fees, but some places are much cheaper to live in than others and it is worth factoring this into your choices

Things to do during the summer and early autumn term



- Think about the sort of course that might suit you
- Research universities and visit
- Begin your online application form using the buzzword on slide 3
- Keep focused on your studies
- Read around your subjects to broaden your knowledge and to discover new areas of interest
- If you are considering Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine, see Ms Bayley
- If you are not applying with an official early deadline, do not just sit back and wait until Christmas!