

# Student UCAS Guide... **the basics**

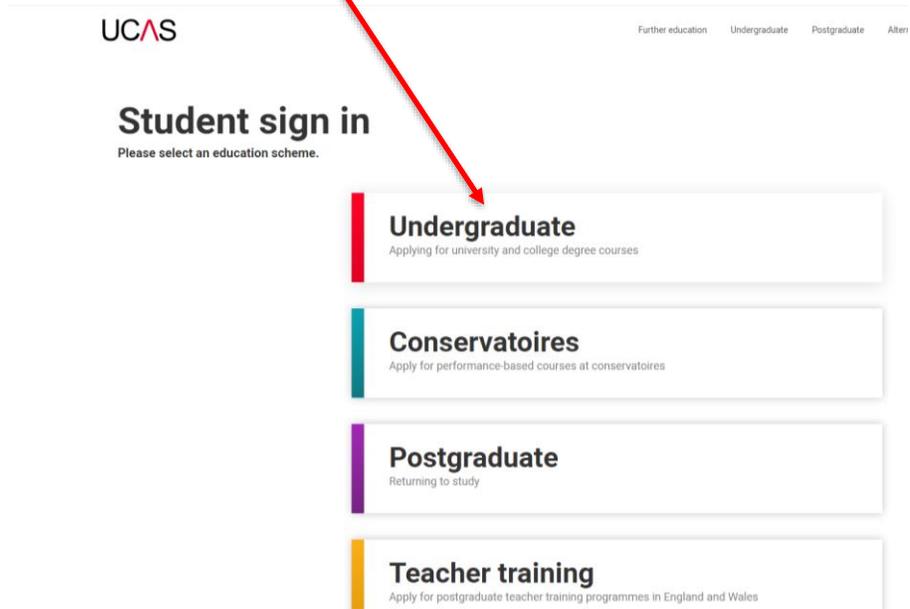
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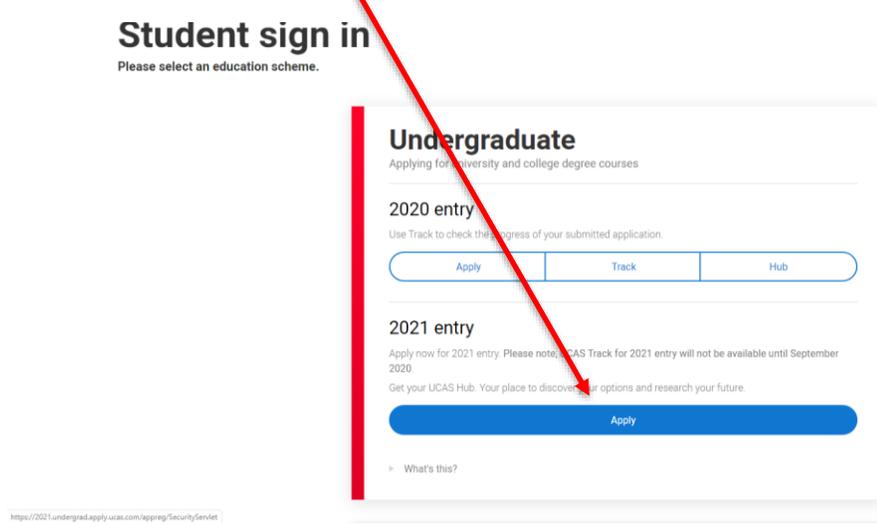
## How to register on UCAS website

On the UCAS student page of the website: <https://www.ucas.com/students>

Select "Undergraduate"



Then 2021 entry "Apply"



Then select “Register”

- Agree the terms and conditions
- Complete sections: basic details such as name, address, email address (use your personal email address not your school one)
- Create passwords and security questions
- You will be given entry your Username take a photo of this, or write it down.
- Finally, click ‘log-in’ when prompted.

Useful prompt for updates that can be sent to you

“How are you applying” – select “through my school/college”

2021 apply Initial UCAS questions: How are you applying? <Log out

Initial UCAS questions

How are you applying?\*

Through my school/college  ?

Through a careers organisation  ?

Through another organisation  ?

As an individual  ?

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Enter **Buzzword** “CLF2021” when prompted

2021 apply Initial UCAS questions: How are you applying? <Log out

Initial UCAS questions

You now need to enter your buzzword - this will be given to you by your school, college or centre. You will only be asked to enter your buzzword once.

(Buzzwords are case sensitive)

Buzzword\* CLF2021 ?

Your buzzword means we know which school, college, or centre you are applying from. By entering the buzzword, you give permission to share your data with your school, college or centre, so they can support you through the UCAS application process.

They will be able to check the progress of your application, attach a reference, add your predicted grades, and send your application to UCAS on your behalf. They will also be able to see decisions made by your chosen universities and colleges, and your replies.

If you do not want to link to a centre, you can add a reference from somewhere else, or if you no longer want them to see the progress of your application, please contact us.

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Then **Select your College** (if you don't know then please email [kate.knight@clf.uk](mailto:kate.knight@clf.uk))

UCAS 2021 apply Initial UCAS questions: Tutor group <Log out

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Initial UCAS questions

Please select your tutor group/application group. If you are unsure, please speak to your tutor or careers adviser or select the option 'don't know'.

Tutor/application group\* Please select... ?

- Please select...
- Don't know
- Greenbank College
- Kings Park College
- Mount Hill College

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**Make a note of your Personal ID number** – you will need this in all future UCAS and university correspondence

The screenshot shows the UCAS 2021 'apply' website. At the top, it says 'Welcome' and 'Log out'. A red arrow points to the 'Your Personal ID is: 149-194-8008' text. Below this, there is a video player for 'Apply 2021 English HOW TO GUIDES APPLY'. A green arrow points to a notification that says 'Verify your email address' with a link to verify the email.

There is a use “How to Guide”. You also need to **Verify your email address** UCAS will send a code to your personal email which you then add to the application.

Now you can begin to complete the **7 sections** of the application which are:

- Personal details
- Choices
- Education
- Employment
- Statement
- View all details
- Pay/Send

The screenshot shows the UCAS 2021 'apply' website with a red banner at the top that says 'Verify email: Success'. Below the banner, it says 'Welcome > Verify email' and 'Thank you; your email address has been verified.' There is a link to 'Click here to return to the Welcome page'. The left sidebar shows the same menu as the previous screenshot, with 'Completed' checked under the 'Key' section.

There are “how to” video guides for most sections.

When making your university choices, please remember there are **virtual open days** to support this: [UCAS-virtual-open-days](#)

**Tips for information required in “Personal details” section:**

- ❖ you will be asked for your Unique Learner Number, you will need to ask Kate Knight or your Head of College for this number:

Reference numbers

If you do not have any of the following reference numbers, please leave the boxes blank.

Unique Learner Number (ULN)  ?

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Number  ?

International English Language Testing System (IELTS) TRF Number  ?

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Passport details

(This section only applies if your permanent home is outside the EU)

Where relevant, UCAS collects applicants' passport information on behalf of universities and colleges, who need it for purposes of visa application and checks with the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). For further details about UK Visas and Immigration please visit the [UKVI website](#).

Do you require a student visa?  Please select ... ?

Have you previously studied in the UK on a student visa?  Please select ... ?

- ❖ You will be asked for a fee code – this is “02” in the majority of cases where you will apply (after the end of February 2021) for student finance

Student support

Fee code\*  Please select ... ?

Student support arrangements  Please select ... ?

01 Private finance

**02 UK, ChI, IoM or EU student finance services**

04 Research councils

05 DH/Regional Health

06 UK Govt international award

07 Training agency

08 Other UK Govt award

09 International agency

10 UK Industry/commerce

90 Other source

99 Not known

fee code '02 UK, ChI, IoM or EU student finance services'  see list ?

Please answer the EEA questions: The universities in the EEA (excluding the UK) charge fees you may be eligible for. Have you ever lived in the EEA (excluding the UK) or the UK? Do you have a partner (including a spouse or civil partner who is an EU national)?

Keep up-to date with your application

We'll keep you updated on the progress of your application - from deadline reminders to Track updates - by email and post. You told us when you registered what level of support you'd like to receive. Don't forget, you can change your mind at any time - simply hit the 'Update my preferences' button below, or go to the 'your details' section of Track once you've submit your application.

[Update your preferences](#)

We won't pass on your details...

We'll pass your data safe, and won't pass it on to third parties. For more information, take a look at our [privacy policy](#).

In the box below “Student Support Arrangements” you need to select your Local Authority from the list, this could be Bristol or S Gloucestershire for example. You can enter your postcode to the link below to find out: <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

In the “Education” section you select “below honours degree level qualifications”

The screenshot shows the UCAS 2021 Education section. On the left is a navigation menu with options like 'Welcome', 'Personal details', 'Education', 'Employment', 'Statement', 'View all details', 'Pay/Send', 'Help', and 'Options/Opssynau'. The main content area has a red header with '2021 apply Education' and a '<Log out' button. Below the header, there's a 'Welcome > Education' breadcrumb. A video player shows a guide titled 'HOW TO GUIDES FILLING IN THE EDUCATION SECTION'. Below the video, there's a dropdown menu for 'Please state the highest level of qualification you expect to have before you start your course\*'. The dropdown is open, showing options: 'Please select...', 'Honours degree level or above qualifications', 'Below honours degree level qualifications' (which is highlighted), and 'I will have no qualifications'. A red arrow points from the text above to this dropdown menu.

In this section you add your secondary school with dates and then each of your GCSEs, every single exam you have taken, regardless of the grade achieved.

For CLF Post 16 you will need to add John Cabot Academy, entering your start and finish date (June 2021). Add the subjects you are taking (with the grade you achieve at the end of year 12) plus the qualifications you will achieve at the end of year 13, entering “**Pending**” for the grade. This enables your Academic Mentor to add your predicted grade when completing your reference, prior to submission to UCAS.

**It is essential that you enter all your qualifications correctly**, if you are unsure please ask your teachers, your Academic Mentor or your Head of College for support.

## Key dates & deadlines

<b>19<sup>th</sup> May 2020</b>	UCAS Undergraduate Apply for entry 2021 goes live
<b>1<sup>st</sup> September 2020</b>	Students must ensure they are aware of and have registered for any <b>admissions tests</b> relevant to their course
<b>8<sup>th</sup> September 2020</b>	Completed 2021 entry UCAS applications can be submitted to UCAS
<b>15<sup>th</sup> October 2020</b>	Deadline for Oxbridge (Oxford & Cambridge) applications and for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science
<b>15<sup>th</sup> January 2021</b>	Deadline for most other courses except some Art and Design Foundation courses.
<b>5<sup>th</sup> May 2021</b>	Responses to offers – if you receive all decisions by 31st March you need to reply by 5 <sup>th</sup> May
<b>5<sup>th</sup> May 2021</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> deadline for replying to offers
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> deadline for replying to offers
<b>5<sup>th</sup> July 2021</b>	Last date to apply in Extra for 2020 entry
<b>6<sup>th</sup> July 2021</b>	Clearing opens <i>For students who don't have any offers, declined them or didn't meet the conditions of their offers</i>
<b>12<sup>th</sup> August 2021</b>	A Level results day

## University Admissions Tests

Many of the most popular university courses in the country require students to sit an admissions test. Students need to check **before 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020** to see if the courses they want to apply for require an admissions test.

In some cases, these tests can be arranged through CLF Post 16 but in others (for example the UKCAT for medicine) it is for the student to register themselves. Check with the Post 16 Exams team.

Full details of some admissions tests can be found on the UCAS website:

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/entry-requirements/admissions-tests>

## Important things to know about UCAS applications...

1. Students apply to universities online via **UCAS – the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service** at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com). Every aspect of the process, from submitting an application, to accepting offers happens through UCAS.
2. When students apply they can choose up to **5 courses from up to 5 different universities** (4 for medicine). They complete an online application form and write a **4000-character personal statement**, this is an essay detailing a student’s interest and suitability in their chosen courses. Support for this is available from Academic Mentors, Kate Knight, Heads of College and teaching staff.
3. Universities and colleges make offers based on a combination of academic ability, a good personal statement along with enrichment and extra-curricular activities and experiences that support a student’s chosen destination.
4. **Students need to look at course entry requirements** (either specific grades and/or UCAS points) to make sure they are picking suitable courses. Course offers may be subject to admissions tests, interview, audition, presentation, portfolio work or health checks.
5. Offers sent from universities will come directly to students via UCAS – you are likely to have **Conditional offers** (requiring certain grades/points) or **Unconditional offers** meaning the university does not require specific grades (these offers are rare). Once a student has received offers from all choices they can accept one **firm choice** (the favourite one) and one **insurance choice** (usually a lower offer, a “Plan B”).
6. Student Finance [www.gov.uk/student-finance-register-login](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance-register-login) will be available for applications from March/April 2021 – exact dates will be published on the website, they encourage all applications to be made by the end of May
7. On **A level results day**, if a student has achieved the required grades/UCAS points for their firm (or insurance choice) their offer to study at that University is confirmed - **UCAS track** will show the status of ‘accepted’. If they haven’t achieved the conditions of their offer or if they wish to change course, then:
  - a. They may contact their chosen university to see if the university will accept them with a reduced offer for a different course.
  - b. They can go through UCAS **CLEARING** where universities publish what course spaces they have remaining.
  - c. They may choose to do something else for September such as a gap year or may have the option of re-sitting exams or modules to try and apply the following year.
8. UCAS also offer a facility called **ADJUSTMENT** whereby a student who has done better than expected and gained grades/points higher than predicted, can look for an alternative place at University. This process is normally available for approximately two weeks around results time. Remember however that many courses will already be full so choices may be limited.

## Grades, points & tariff tables

UCAS gives all Level 3 qualifications or Grade 6 music examination a certain number of points depending on the grade or level. The UCAS website offers students a 'tariff calculator' to help them:

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/tariff-calculator>

The website also offers information about tariffs, what they are and how they are used.

3 key things to know about the UCAS Tariff: If you cannot find your qualification on the website please phone the helpline or ask for support from the Post 16 team.

- **The Tariff simply uses a different set of numbers**, which some course providers use to describe qualifications and grades in their entry requirements. But only one third of university courses use the Tariff, and most use qualifications and grades.
- **Just because a qualification is on the Tariff, doesn't mean a course provider will accept it.** Therefore, it's really important to check the entry requirements for the course you're interested in, don't just rely on your number of points.
- **There are only a certain number of qualifications on the Tariff.** A university, college, or conservatoire may accept a qualification even if it isn't on the Tariff, so it's best to check with them to see if they will accept your qualification. Remember, lots of course providers do not use Tariff points.

Some employers use the Tariff to help with their selection process but this is not encouraged by UCAS.

# My UCAS personal statement

1

1

Preparation

- You can only write one, so don't mention a uni or college by name
- Check uni and college websites to see what skills and qualities they'd like you to have
- Make a list of things you want to include
- Start drafting early

2

2

What to include

- Why you're interested in the subject
- Your enthusiasm for the subject
- How your previous studies relate to the course(s)
- Relevant aspects of jobs, placements, work experience or volunteering
- Demonstrate you're a great candidate and you have skills and qualities they're looking for
- Activities or hobbies that show your interest in the subject
- Any training or achievements that show your skills

3

3

How to write it

- Introduction – start with an opening sentence that encourages the reader to read on
- Structure what you want to include in an order that's most relevant to what the unis and colleges are looking for
- Conclusion – reinforce your commitment, enthusiasm and skills suited to uni / college life
- Check your grammar, spelling and punctuation
- Leave time to get feedback and redraft

4

4

Technical details

- Length – up to 4,000 characters or 47 lines of text (including spaces and blank lines)
- Make sure you don't copy – our software detects any similarities and this could jeopardise your application

## Personal statement - opening paragraphs

Your opening paragraph needs to be personal and to show your enthusiasm for your chosen degree subject, it needs to be a 'hook' to draw in the reader ... **avoid:**

- From a young age I have always been interested in ...
- X is a very challenging and demanding career ...
- I am currently studying a BTEC National Diploma in ...

There is no single correct way to write your personal statement. The key is that it really should be personal. Course selectors and admissions staff want to see an insight into your personality and your motivation for having applied to university to study a certain subject. While this is only a guide, you may want to include some or all of the following:

- Why you want to study the subject you've applied for
- Why you think you would be a good student of this subject (sell yourself to them!)
- How your A level (or other) study has prepared you
- Relevant or extra-curricular reading
- Any relevant work experience you have undertaken
- Extra-curricular activities or events

## Style and general tips – do's and don'ts

- **Do** use good essay style writing
- **Don't** waffle
- **Do** make sure you sound interesting and interested
- **Do** use full sentences and paragraphs rather than bullet points
- **Don't** repeat yourself, make each of your words count!
- **Don't** list your exam subjects and grades as they appear elsewhere on your application
- **Do** make sure you spell check your personal statement
- **Don't** make things up, you may be asked at interview to elaborate upon your personal statement
- **Do** ask your Academic Mentor and other trusted staff to check your personal statement
- **Do** prepare drafts of your personal statement in Word before uploading to your application
- **Don't** plagiarise – universities have software to check for this, any applicants who have plagiarised will have their whole UCAS application discounted

## Reference Information

Once you have completed your UCAS application form and “paid/sent”, your Academic Mentor will check through your application and add your reference before your completed application is submitted to UCAS by Post 16. Your reference includes paragraphs from each of your teaching staff on your achievements, your suitability for the course and a predicted grade.

**Here are the aims of a subject reference:**

- The aim as a subject teacher is to ‘**add value**’ to a student’s application. UCAS describe the need for ‘**insightful**’, ‘**objective**’, and ‘**meaningful**’ contributions.

**We ask teachers to include:**

- Academic and Practical **skills** specific to your subject
- Student capacity as an **independent learner**
- **Performance** in individual assignments/modules or course components AND...
- Are these results a **fair** reflection of ability?
- **Examples** of **exploring** the subject beyond the bounds of the curriculum
- Ability to **work hard** and keep to **deadlines**
- Any **additional preparation** by student in support of application
- **Attainment** in **comparison** to rest of group
- **Motivation** and **suitability** for the chosen HE course. (This can be a challenge to know)

## Other resources & links

[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) UCAS is the key place to look for information about applying to University.

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/entry-requirements/admissions-tests>

<https://www.ucas.com/connect/videos>

**UCAS how to videos**

<http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk>

<https://discoveruni.gov.uk/>

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/coronavirus-covid-19/attend-virtual-open-day>