UCAS Handbook

2021 Entry

Contents

Introduction 2

Time Frame 3

- Summer Term (Year 12) 3
- Summer Holidays 3
- Autumn Term (Year 13) 3
- Spring Term (Year 13) 4
- Summer Term (Year 13) 5

Overview of offer process 6

Register for UCAS 7

Completing the UCAS Form 9

- Overview 9
- Personal Details 9
- Choices 10
- Education 11
- Employment 13
- Personal Statement 14

Completing your UCAS application 17

Frequently Asked Questions 18

Introduction

Applying to university and choosing your next steps can be a daunting process. It requires a great deal of careful thought and research. The more organised and pro-active you are, the easier your application will be. There is plenty of support available at King's to help you so please make use of this.

This Handbook will guide you through the process of applying to university. It outlines the key dates and deadlines that you will need to be aware of over the next 18 months. We are here to support and guide you but ultimately you are responsible for ensuring that your UCAS form is completed accurately and on time. The UCAS website has step-by-step instructions and is a very useful resource – please use this tool when dealing with any application queries.

If you require any further assistance at any point, please contact your Form Tutor or the Careers Officer, Mrs Foster, who will be able to help you.

Time Frame

Summer Term (Year 12)

Internal exams: Your internal exams and the professional judgement of staff (taking into account your work throughout Year 12) will form your predicted grades for your UCAS application.

UCAS Launch Mornings: Friday 19 June and Friday 26 June 2020. The UCAS mornings will enable you to start your UCAS application, receive expert advice about choosing a course or university, gap years, apprenticeships and writing your Personal Statement.

Mock interview practice: Students who are likely to require an interview will receive mock interview practice**.**

Senior Advisers' Evening: Tuesday 23 June 2020. This will be an opportunity for you and your parents/guardians to discuss your university application with senior advisers, subject teachers and members of the Sixth Form team.

University Open Days: Attend virtual university open days.

Summer Holidays

University Visits: Attend virtual university open days. You can take a virtual tour of most universities through either the university's website or the Unifrog site.

Research universities and courses: Use Unifrog to explore different universities and courses.

Work Experience: This is your last opportunity to do any relevant work experience before your UCAS application is sent off. Whilst we appreciate that it is very difficult to get work experience at the moment try to see if there are any virtual experiences available or arrange to talk to people who work in your chosen area. Mrs Foster has highlighted a number of opportunities in the Careers E-Bulletins.

Reading: This is a very easy way to make your UCAS application interesting. Most admissions tutors will expect your Personal Statement to reflect wider and deeper reading and interest in the subject beyond the curriculum. For recommended texts and resources, ask relevant subject teachers and search on the Geek Out section on Unifrog.

Personal Statement: Start drafting and re-drafting(!) your Personal Statement. The more time you spend on it now, the easier it will be in the Autumn Term. Guidance can be found in this Handbook.

Autumn Term (Year 13)

Change of plans?: If your plans change over the summer, please let your Form Tutor know as soon as possible.

Entrance Tests: If you are required to sit any entrance tests for the courses you have chosen to study, make sure you have registered for these. Please check entry requirements for each individual course to see if you need to sit a test. For some tests, e.g. UCAT, registration should be done entirely by you. Please ensure you are registered to sit the appropriate test. For more information, please contact Mrs Holliday.

Deadlines for competitive entry applicants (Oxbridge/Medics/Dentists/Vets):

DATE	ACTION
11 September 2020	First draft of Personal Statement to be submitted to Form Tutor.
18 September 2020	Second draft of Personal Statement draft to be submitted to Form Tutor.
30 September 2020	Completed UCAS forms to be given to Mrs Foster, the Careers Officer, with green form attached (see 'Completing the Process' below).
15 October 2020	UCAS deadline for receiving Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry, and Veterinary Medicine applications.
September-November 2020	Mock interview practice
December 2020 – March 2021	Interviews

Deadlines for all other applicants:

DATE	ACTION
21 September 2020	First draft of Personal Statement to be submitted to Form Tutor.
29 September 2020	Second draft of Personal Statement draft to be submitted to Form Tutor.
18 November 2020	Completed UCAS forms to be given to Mrs Foster, the Careers Officer, with green form attached (see 'Completing the Process' below).
15 January 2021	UCAS deadline for receiving applications.
Receipt of application – March 2021	Applicants may be called to interview.

Spring Term (Year 13)

UCAS Deadline for all other applicants: The deadline for most applications is 15 January 2021. You will notice that we submit your applications long in advance of this date – the sooner, the better! Offers come in as soon as forms are submitted.

Offers: Most universities aim to reply by the end of March. Although many reply quickly, sometimes responses are later than this. You do not need to reply to offers until the beginning of May at the earliest. The date by which you receive responses from all five universities will determine your reply date. This will be updated in UCAS Track. If you have

decided to take a gap year, you will need to contact your chosen universities to negotiate a deferral of your offer to 2022.

Open Days/University Visits: If possible, you should visit your firm and insurance choice universities.

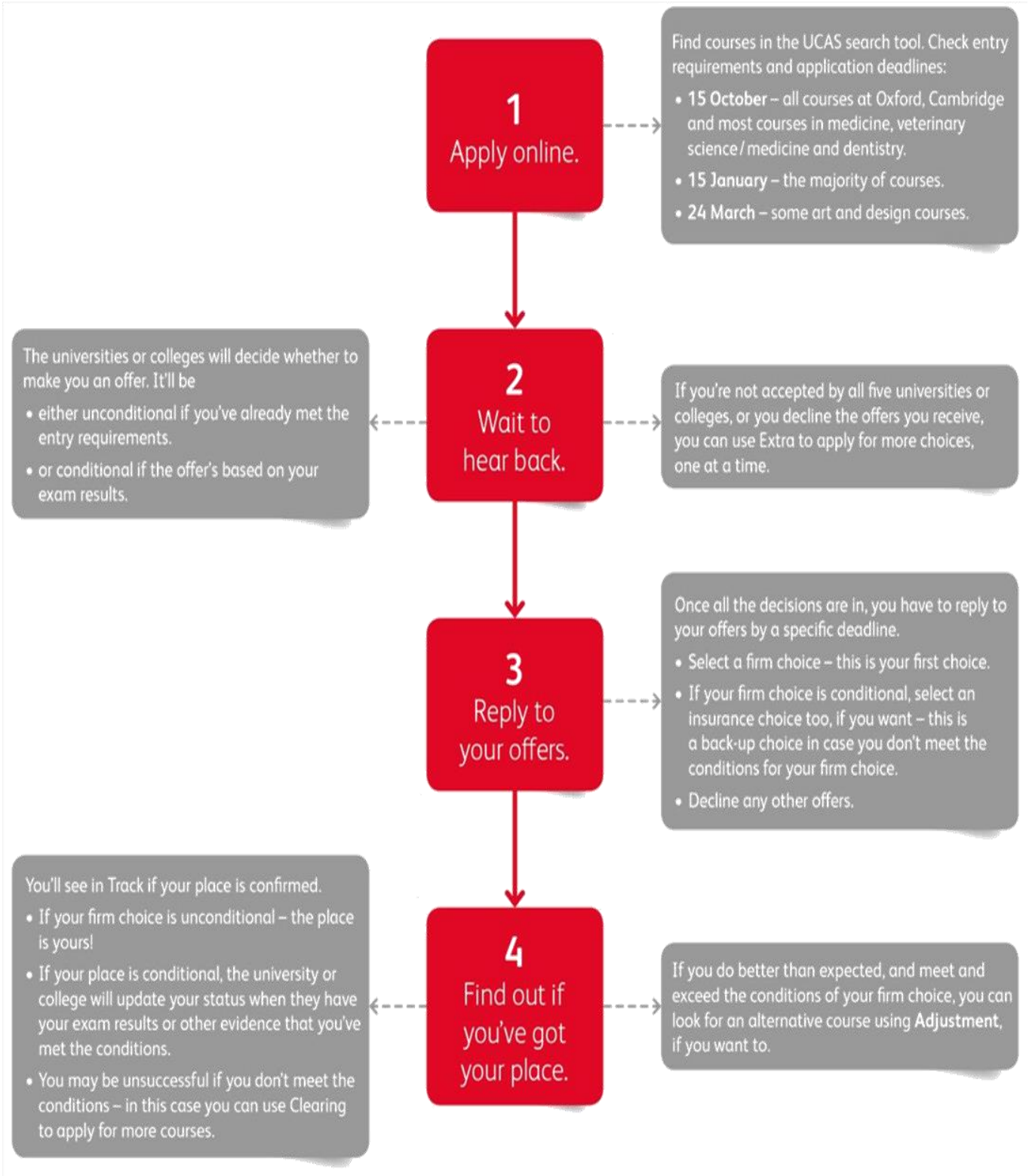
Summer Term (Year 13)

Reply to Offers: Make sure you have replied to your offers and made decisions about your firm and insurance choice by the deadline set out in UCAS Track. If you have any queries, please speak to your Form Tutor or Mrs Foster.

Apply for Student Finance: If you are going to university in September 2021 you will need to apply for student finance. You can do this online before the end of May 2021.

Results' Day: Thursday 12 August 2021.

Overview of offer process



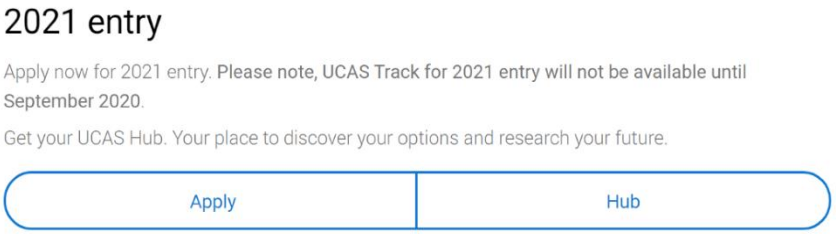
Register for UCAS

In order to apply to university, you will be required to register for UCAS 2021 entry. You will register as part of our UCAS Launch morning on 19 June. You will need to follow the steps below.

1. Search www.ucas.com/students

2. Click on 'Undergraduate'.

3. Go to '2021 entry' then click 'Apply'.



4. Click on 'Register' and 'next'

5. Read and tick to accept terms and conditions – click 'next'.

6. Fill out details (First name/surname, etc…) click 'next'.

7. Postal Address, tick 'UK' – click 'next'.

8. House number/name and postcode – click 'next'.

9. Phone number and email – **make sure you pick an email you regularly use and make sure it is sensible.** ***DON'T*** use your school email – it will close at the end of Year 13 and you may need to access information after this time. Click 'next'.

10. Everything you need to know – Select 'Get updates on everything – stay in the know'.

11. Tick how you want UCAS to contact you – we recommend via email at the very least – click 'save'.

12. Choose a password and make sure it is one you will remember! It must contain at least one uppercase letter, one lowercase letter and one special symbol e.g. ! Remember to write it down for your own use. It is important that you don't lose it.

13. Pick your security questions. Choose something appropriate that you will remember – click 'next'.

14. You will be given a username. **Make a note of this; it will not be shown again**.

TOP TIP! Take a picture of your log on details with your 'phone!

15. Click 'log in now'.

16. You will be asked ‘How are you applying?’ Select ‘Through my school/college’. Click ‘next’.

17. Enter the school’s buzzword – Cumberland21 Click ‘next’.

18. Our school’s address should appear – select that this is correct Yes ‘next’.

19. Select your current tutor group.

20. You will be shown your personal identification number. Again, you will need to write it down so that you don’t lose it.

21. Click ‘Please click here to verify your email address’.

22. Go to your emails. Open the email which contains your verification code. Copy the code.

23. Go back to the UCAS page and enter the code where asked to ‘verify email’. Click ‘verify email’.

24. You are now registered to use UCAS. Before completing the application, go back to the Welcome Page and read through the relevant information ‘Completing your application’ and ‘Applicants applying through a school’ and ‘Deadlines for submitting your application’.

25. You can now begin to complete your form. Before you start, watch the ‘How to Guides Apply’ video. You can then start to complete your personal details.

Completing the UCAS Form

Overview

The UCAS form has five sections that must be completed. They are listed on the left hand side of the UCAS screen. Each section can be selected by clicking on its name. You do not have to complete the sections in order and you do not have to complete the form in one go – you can save and come back to it. The five sections are:

- Personal Details
- Choices
- Education
- Employment
- Personal Statement

To move to another section, just click the name of the section that you would like to move to. If you miss out any important information, a red exclamation mark and a green message will alert you. When you have completed a section of the form, tick 'Section Completed' and 'Save'. The section will then be marked as complete.

Always remember to save what you have done before logging out!

Do not walk away from a computer without logging off, even if it is only for a few minutes.

Most information you will be required to submit will be straightforward. If a section is not applicable to you then leave it blank. You must complete everything marked with an *. For specific guidance, please see below.

Personal Details

Preferred First Name: Applicants are asked to provide the name they are normally known by if it is different from the name provided in their registration details; for example, Henry and Harry.

Date of First Entry to UK: If you were born outside the UK but now live here, you must give the date when you began living here permanently.

Area of Permanent Residence: Select the county in which you live e.g. Cheshire, Staffs, etc.

Residential Category: Select 'UK Citizen – England'

Reference Numbers: This section will not be relevant to most students.

Passport Details: This section will not be relevant to most students.

Student Support: You need to choose a code to indicate how you expect to pay for your tuition fees. **ALL student fee codes will be Fee Code 02 (UK, ChI, IoM, or EU Student Finance Services)**. This means you are charged British fees, not international fees. You **must** select this code, even if you are not expecting to apply to Student Finance. *You* **MUST** *also complete the box below which is entitled 'Student support arrangements'*.

You **MUST** select the local authority area you live in (Cheshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, etc.), not where you go to school. This can easily be done by clicking 'see list' and selecting the appropriate area. You must complete this even if you are funding university yourself.

Nominated Access: *You **MUST** nominate someone trusted to act on your behalf*. The nominated person (usually a parent) will need your Personal ID, application number (which you will receive shortly after you submit your application), username and password. These details will enable them to use Track and contact universities on your behalf.

Disability/Special Needs: If you have a disability or special needs, please select the most appropriate category and provide details. This will help universities to meet your needs wherever they are able to do so. You must state your disability/special needs - you will not be disadvantaged. If this box is not applicable to you, you must select 'no disability'.

Tick the 'Section Completed' box.

Choices

Before completing this section, please make sure you have done all the appropriate research and have had conversations with parents, tutors, subject teachers and your Careers Officer.

When completing this section be very careful to ensure the information and course codes you input are accurate. You may enter your choices in any order. Universities will not be aware of the other institutions you apply to. All applications are sent 'blind' so they do not know where else you have applied or your order of preference.

You are advised to apply for the same subject area across all five choices. This is because you are only allowed to submit one Personal Statement which must be specific to your course. Your choices must be signed off by your parent/guardian and the relevant Head of Department.

Deferred Entry

Most universities will accept students who wish to defer their entry to 2022 but you must check with the individual institution first. Some departments and courses (e.g. Mathematics) do not encourage gap years. It is your responsibility to do the research and check.

If you wish to apply for deferred entry, you indicate this in the 'Choices' section of UCAS Apply by ticking the box entitled 'defer' against all course options you select. If you do intend to take a gap year, remember to explain this decision in your Personal Statement. Universities will expect to see that you have a specific reason, purpose or plan and that a gap year will add value.

If you defer entry after your application has been submitted you must contact the appropriate admissions department and they will update your application. Be prepared to explain why your plans have changed and what you will be doing in your gap year.

Education

This section requires a lot of different information so please ensure that the data you input here is accurate. It is your responsibility to check that everything is correct.

Highest level of qualification: When you are asked to state the highest level of qualification you expect to have before you start your course, please enter 'Below honours degree level qualifications' and save.

Current School: 'The King's School, Macclesfield' with the Centre Number 40525. Fill in all information. For start date, if you started King's in Y7 this will be September 2014. Your finish date will be July 2021.

Previous School: If you previously attended another school, use the search link to find the correct institution. You do not need to list your primary school.

Qualifications: Academic qualifications gained so far will include GCSE and pending GCE Advanced Level. Qualification dates for all school exams are June followed by the year in which you took/are taking the exam. Please do not add individual modules (unless you are taking Applied Business). Please check your certificates to make sure that you enter the correct details – the universities may ask to see evidence of your qualifications.

GCSE

Qualification date will be **June 2019** for all exams*

Subject	**Board**	**Subject**	**Board**
Art and Design	EDUQAS	History	Edexcel
Biology (Triple)	AQA	Latin	OCR
Chemistry (Triple)	AQA	Maths	Edexcel
Computer Science	AQA	Further Maths (Certificate)	AQA
Design & Technology	AQA	Music	Edexcel
Drama	EDUQAS	Physical Education	AQA
English Literature	AQA	Physics (Triple)	AQA
English Language	AQA	Religious Studies	AQA
French	Edexcel	Spanish	Edexcel
Geography	AQA	Combined Science (Trilogy)	AQA
German	Edexcel		

*For those who sat GCSEs early or have retaken Year 12, your qualification date will be June 2018.

If you have taken GCSEs at a different school, it is your responsibility to find the name of the Examination Centre where you took it, the name of the Exam Board that awarded the qualification, and its formal title.

A Level

All grades will be 'Pending'. Qualification date will be **June 2021** for all exams.

Subject	**Board**	**Subject**	**Board**
Art and Design	EDUQAS	German	AQA
Art and Graphic Communication	EDUQAS	History	AQA
Biology	AQA	Latin	OCR
Business	Edexcel	Maths	OCR
Chemistry	AQA	Further Maths	OCR
Computer Science	AQA	Music	Edexcel
Design and Technology: Product Design	AQA	Physics	AQA
Economics	Edexcel	Government and Politics	AQA
English Language	AQA	Psychology	AQA
English Literature	AQA	Religious Studies	OCR
French	AQA	Spanish	AQA
Geography	AQA		

Vocational Courses

Subject	**Board**	**Result/Grade**
Level 3 Certificate in Applied Business	AQA	Pass/Merit/ Distinction
Level 3 Extended Certificate in Applied Business	AQA	Pending
Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Cert (360) Sport	Pearson	Pending

Other

Subject	**Qualification Type**	**Board**	**Result/Grade**
Additional Admissions Tests	Enter relevant test (e.g. UKCAT, LNAT) and scores		
Certificate in Languages For Business	Other (UK Qualifications)	IoLET	Pass
Community Sports Leadership Award (Level 2)	Other (UK Qualifications)	SL UK	Pass
Drama and Theatre	AS Level	EDUQAS	Pending
Duke of Edinburgh Award (Bronze, Silver, Gold)	Duke of Edinburgh Award	-	Pass
Entry Level Certificate in Practical Japanese (L3)	Other (UK Qualifications)	ABC Awards	Pending
EPQ	Extended Project (Level 3)	AQA	Pending
European Computer Driving Licence	European Computer Driving Licence	-	Pass
Global Perspectives	International GCSE	CAIE	Enter Grade
Lamda Acting or Musical Theatre (Gold/Silver/Bronze)	Other (UK Qualifications)	Lamda	Pending

Lowland Expedition Leader (Level 3)	Other (UK Qualifications)	SL UK	Pass
Trinity Arts Award	Other (UK Qualifications)	Trinity Guidhall	Pass

If you wish to include Music Examinations in 'Other Qualifications', you need only declare the highest level you have achieved.

Employment

You may include in this section any paid employment you have had. If you have not had any jobs, you still need to click on this section and tick the box to indicate it is complete. This section is only for paid work and not for any work experience.

Personal Statement

Your Personal Statement is very important. For those universities that may call you for interview, it offers a focal point around which to base discussions. For those that make offers purely based on your electronic application (the majority), it may be the only chance you have to impart something of your personality, interests, and commitment to the subject for which you are applying.

You are permitted to enter 4,000 characters on 47 lines. You are not able to change the appearance of text using bold, italics or underlining tools. Accents and foreign characters will not appear on your statement, though this will not prejudice your application. You should write your Personal Statement in Unifrog; it can be copied and pasted in to your UCAS application later.

It is your responsibility to write your Personal Statement. You will begin constructing it during the UCAS Day and should continue to draft it over the summer holidays. You will be allowed to submit drafts to your Form Tutor. Once approved and signed off by your Form Tutor and subject teacher you will copy and paste your Personal Statement into your UCAS application.

There is not a single 'correct way' or formula for how to write a good Personal Statement. However, there are some things you should bear in mind.

Do:

- Check what your course admission tutors are looking to see in your Personal Statement
- Convey your passion and enthusiasm for the subject and show that you are ready to take on the challenge of university
- Tailor your statement to the course you are applying for
- Explain how your experiences, extra-curricular and super-curricular activities are relevant to your chosen course and career path. Use extra-curricular achievements as examples of the qualities you have and show how they demonstrate the skills and abilities you have, e.g. communication, independence, teamwork, time-management
- Use structured paragraphs to organise material
- Say what you want to get from your course
- Be honest and enthusiastic
- End on a positive note

Don't:

- Plagiarise, exaggerate or lie
- Try to include everything
- Write lists of achievements – use full sentences
- Cram as much information in as possible at the expense of good, clear English
- Write anything misleading, trivial or fictitious
- Try to be someone you aren't
- Use incorrect spelling or poor grammar

- Use over-used clichés
- Use unnecessary quotes from other people

The Three Sheet Method

Sheet 1: Create a mind-map of all relevant achievements. This should be fairly detailed. Think about what you did, what this involved, what your role was, duties and responsibilities, etc.

Sheet 2: Thoroughly research the course and the institutions you are applying to. Find out what skills are important for someone wanting to study this course and put them in order of importance. Build up a picture of the 'ideal student'.

Sheet 3: Combine sheets 1 and 2. You should now know exactly what skills are required for your course and have these ordered in terms of importance. You can now pick three or four of these skills to resonate throughout your Personal Statement and use your own experiences and achievements to show how you meet these criteria. Make sure you are critical about your experiences and how they relate to your course.

Please note that UCAS run every Personal Statement through plagiarism software. If they suspect you have copied your Personal Statement they will inform the universities to which you have applied. Universities will then decide whether to disqualify your application.

The ABC Method

This method helps you to highlight the skills you have developed and relate these to the course. It can help you write about these in more detail. You will still be required to do the research and find out about the skills that are required for your chosen course. Work through the following process at least five times to identify key skills.

Activity: What have you done?

Benefit: What skills have you gained? Provide evidence.

Course: How will this prepare you for your course?

Structuring the Personal Statement

A clear structure will help admissions tutors to better understand your Personal Statement. Structuring your Personal Statement will help you give priority to the sections that are most relevant and will showcase your skills. As a rough guide, the Personal Statement should be 80% course-related and 20% extra-curricular. Try drafting your Personal Statement using the following structure as a guide. However, remember that it is just a guide and there is no right or wrong way to structure your Personal Statement.

1. Introduction: Why do you want to study the course? What interests you about the subject area? What aspirations do you have, further to university study? Write about academic achievements. Note any useful or interesting subjects you are taking. What academic skills and knowledge do you have that will prepare you to succeed in your chosen subject?
2. Work Experience/Employment/Volunteering: Write about any skills you have gained from work experience, employment, or volunteering opportunities and how these prepare you for university study.
3. Extra-Curricular Activities/Awards: Mention any other achievements or activities that demonstrate you have the relevant skills for the course you are applying for and what you can contribute to the university community.
4. Conclusion: Write a brief summary. Why should you be offered a place? Remember what the admissions tutors are looking for and leave them with a good impression.

Further Personal Statement Advice:

Unifrog: a selection of successful subject specific Personal Statements in the Know How Library

UCAS: www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/apply-track/writing-personal-statement

Studential: www.studential.com/university/applying/UCAS-application-guide/personal-statements a selection of successful subject specific Personal Statements

Which?: university.which.co.uk/advice/personal-statements/10-things-to-put-in-your-personal-statement

Completing your UCAS application

Once you have completed all sections of your UCAS form, check it again. Click 'view all' to check your completed application. Remember to print a hard copy of the final version of the UCAS form, including your Personal Statement, to keep for yourself.

You must ensure that your Personal Statement is signed by your Form Tutor and your subject teacher. Then, collect a green form from Mrs Foster's office. The green form is a 'University Courses Checklist'. You will need to fill it in and arrange for it to be signed by your parent/guardian and the relevant Head of Department. After the green form has been completed and signed, attach it to the front of your UCAS application.

You must then hand your completed application and green form to Mrs Foster who will check your UCAS form and approve it. PLEASE DO NOT HAND IT IN UNTIL ALL SECTIONS HAVE BEEN FULLY COMPLETED.

Once everything has been approved, Mrs Foster will ask you to click 'Pay/Send' – please do not do this before it has been approved by Mrs Foster. On UCAS Apply, read the application screen and click 'I agree'. You will then be presented with a screen asking 'how do you want to pay?' Payment for The King's School pupils is via credit/debit card. The cost is £26. When you pay it sends control of your application to school.

We will then add your reference and Mrs Foster will submit your application to UCAS on your behalf. Please allow seven working days for this. You will be able to view the progress of your application and stay up-to-date with any changes via UCAS Track. Once your application has been sent to UCAS you will not be able to make any further alterations.

<u>Think you've finished?</u>

Check you've completed everything on the list below.

✔ Double check your form – especially Personal Details and SPAG
✔ Go to 'view all' and print final copy
✔ Get your Personal Statement signed by Form Tutor and subject teacher
✔ Attach a green form to the front, complete it, and get it signed by a parent/guardian, and the relevant Head of Department
✔ Hand in to Mrs Foster
✔ Await payment instructions from Mrs Foster
✔ Pay, send and wait for the offers!
✔ Monitor your application via UCAS Track

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *As a parent, where can I find out more information to help my child through the UCAS process?*

You might like to look at www.ucas.com/parents Here you'll find a wide range of resources to help you through the process. The Parent Guide, Parent Videos and Parent Newsletters are particularly useful, offering hints, tips and useful advice. You can also telephone UCAS on 0371 4680468. You can also contact Mrs Foster who will be happy to answer any of your questions.

2. *Can I chat to current students to find out what it is really like?*

Yes. Take a look at www.ucas.com/chat-to-students, unibuddy and university websites to link directly with students who are studying your course to find out what it is really like.

3. *I still don't know what I want to study; how can I make a decision?*

Take some time and do some research, for example, on Unifrog. Look into all of the subjects you are interested in, including any new subjects. Think about why you are interested in that subject and where it could take you in the future. If you are considering a specific career, again, research it on Unifrog. It will tell you lots of useful information about that career and what qualifications you will need to get it. It may even have a video of someone in that job telling what it is really like. Try and gain some work experience in the area, even if it's only a couple of days here and there or talk to someone who does that job. You might also want to think about studying a joint honours course if you still can't decide. You could also try the Which? University A-Level Explorer Tool: http://university.which.co.uk/a-level-explorer. Don't forget that there are other options and university isn't for everyone. If you need any further advice, please see Mrs Foster.

4. *Can I search for universities by grade offers and entry requirements?*

Yes! You can search for university by grade offers and entry requirements on Unifrog.

5. *How many choices can I make?*

Most students can make a minimum of one and a maximum of five university choices. The exceptions are vets, medics and dentists who can only apply to four courses in this area. However, they can apply to an additional fifth choice as long as it's a different subject (e.g. Biomedical Sciences). Oxbridge applicants can make five choices but can only apply to Oxford or Cambridge, not both.

6. *How many applications can I make?*

You can make one application per UCAS cycle.

7. *I'm taking a gap year; can I apply next year?*

Yes! School are quite happy to help with your UCAS application if you want to apply during your gap year but we would encourage you to apply this year for deferred entry. We will provide you with a reference and are happy to check your form.

8. How do I apply for Student Finance?

You can apply for Student Finance from early spring. To apply, go to: https://www.gov.uk/student-finance

9. What about apprenticeships?

You can apply for apprenticeships alongside your UCAS application. It is a completely separate process and you apply directly to the company. There are lots of fantastic opportunities with most companies offering great progression routes. You can search for apprenticeships directly on company websites or by using websites like Unifrog, Amazing Apprenticeships (https://amazingapprenticeships.com) and The Apprenticeship Guide (http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk). If you need any further advice, please see Mrs Foster.

10. Can I apply to universities abroad?

Yes. You can also apply to universities abroad. This is a separate process, so realistically you could end up with more than five offers. Most other countries don't have a centralised process like UCAS, so you usually have to apply directly to the institution. Unifrog has extensive information on international universities. For more information, a good book is 'Studying Abroad' by Cerys Evans (available in the library), or you can see Mrs Foster.

11. What is the UCAS tariff?

The tariff changed in line with the new A levels. The current points tariff is outlined below. UCAS have also developed a helpful points calculator so you can work out your points: https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/entry-requirements/tariff/calculator

A-Level	**EPQ**
A* = 56	A* = 28
A = 48	A = 24
B = 40	B = 20
C = 32	C = 16
D = 24	D = 12
E = 16	E = 8

12. Should I take a gap year?

Most universities will encourage students to take a gap year. You can take a gap year before going to university, although there will always be other opportunities to travel. Many students from King's will opt to take a gap year. Most of the time this is planned but on some occasions it can be brought about by A level results being worse or better than expected.

There are many fantastic opportunities for students both at home and abroad, including employment, travel, volunteering, work experience, and sport. Many students spend the first part of their year off working before travelling abroad. Whilst there are a great variety

of activities to choose from, gap years should aim to be beneficial as it is a good opportunity to gain valuable work and life experience.

There isn't a particular gap year that all universities approve of. However, if you do decide to take a gap year, be sure to write about it in your Personal Statement. It is vitally important that you discover well in advance whether a gap year is regarded positively by your particular university department.

Many students feel more mature, self-aware, confident and independent after a gap year. However, many parents often have concerns about their child taking a gap year, such as not wanting to return to university. This should be given serious consideration and some pre-university work may be required to refresh your knowledge of your subject.

If you are interested in taking a gap year, you should start researching this now. There is a great deal of information available on the internet and you can also see Mrs Foster.

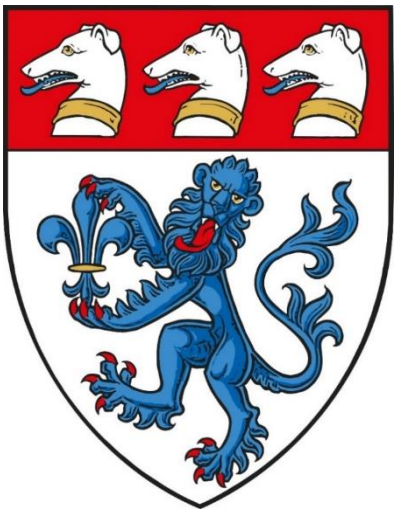
13. Where can I find out about summer schools and taster courses?

Summer schools and subject taster courses are a great way to boost your Personal Statement and gain an insight into university life and study. If you are interested in a particular university, find out if they offer a taster day – these will usually be listed on the university department's website. Many are currently offering virtual events. You can also access this information through Unifrog. Other useful websites include: www.unitasterdays.com and www.ucas.com/events/exploring-university/learn-about-uni-taster-course.

14. What do all the terms mean?

UCAS tends to use a lot of jargon. They have therefore developed a useful tool to explain what the terms mean at www.ucas.com/corporate/about-us/who-we-are/ucas-terms-explained

* * * * * * *



The King's School in Macclesfield

Cheshire SK10 1DA

01625 260000 caroline.foster@kingsmac.co.uk

www.kingsmac.co.uk

www.facebook.com/kingsinmacc

@kingsmac