



**APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

**FOR**

**HIGHER EDUCATION**

**An Information Booklet for Parents,  
Students and Teachers**

**September 2024**



# The Key Dates

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## 2024/25

### 2024

- 30 April: UCAS Apply for 2025 available
- 3 September: Applications can be submitted to UCAS.
- 24 September: School deadline for most applications to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and applications for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science and Veterinary Medicine.
- 15 October: All applications to universities of Oxford and Cambridge and applications for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science and Veterinary Medicine must be with UCAS. Forms being sent by school on the 14 October.
- 15 November: School deadline for UCAS forms.

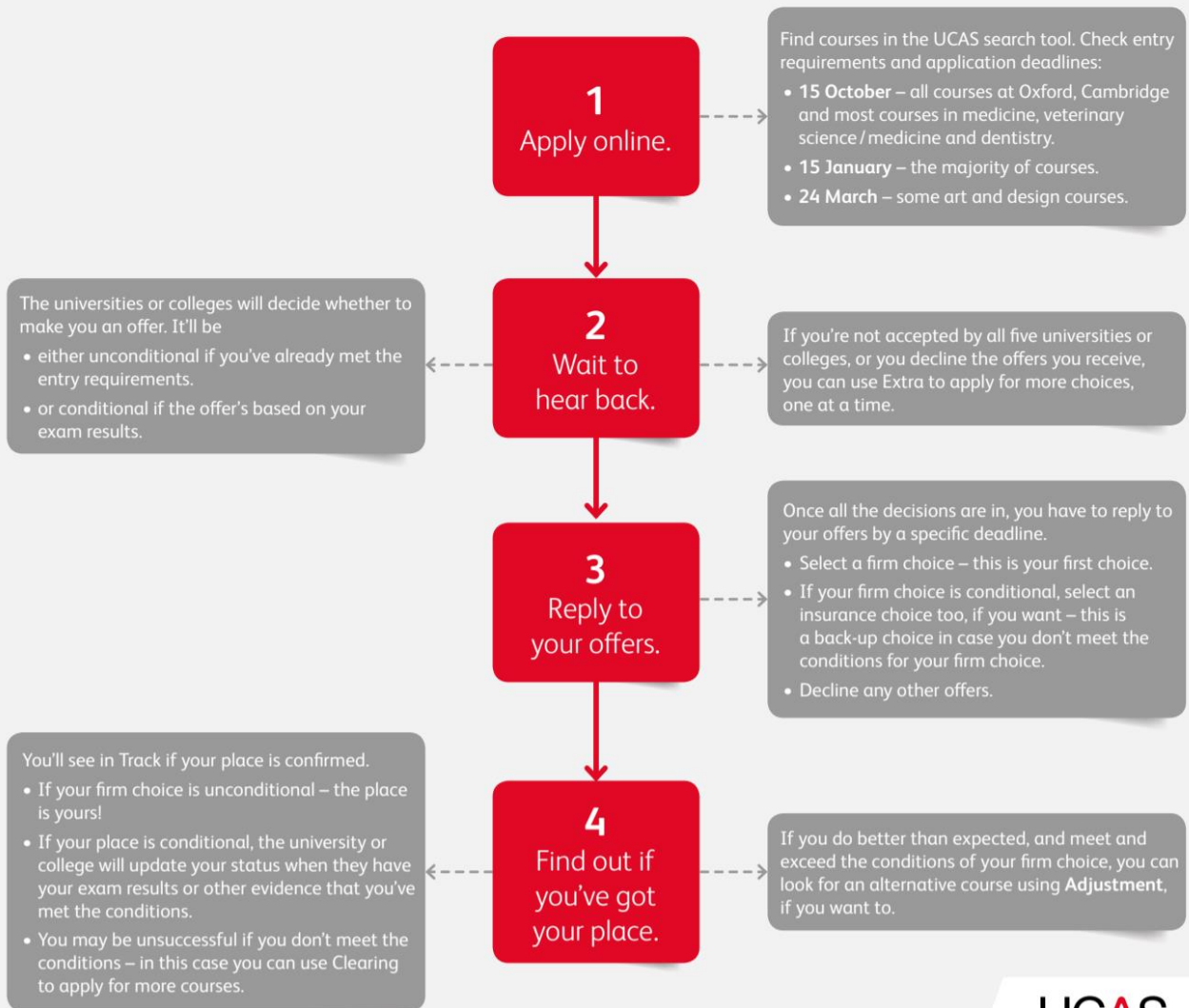
### 2025

- 29 January: Deadline for application to all courses except those listed for the 16 October.
- 26 February: Extra opens.
- 6 June: The deadline for your child to confirm their first and insurance choices from the offers that have been made. A later deadline may apply if your child is still waiting for a decision from a university.
- 4 July: Final date to apply in Extra for 2024. After this date, all applications must be made through clearing. Last date for receipt of applications at UCAS. All applications received later i.e., (18.00 UK time) are automatically entered into clearing.
- 14 August: GCE A Level Advanced Diploma and Pre-U results are published, and full Clearing information service starts.

# University Guidance for Parents

All UK University places are allocated through UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). The following flowchart provides an overview of the process. At Methodist College, students will have been guided through the online UCAS application from early June 2024.

## How it works: applying to a UK university or college



UCAS

# First Stop – The Student Sections

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## How to apply

Applications are made online using our secure web-based application system Apply. Its on-screen help guides users through the application.

Because it is online students can use Apply anywhere that has internet access. They can rework and resave details in their application as often as necessary, before submitting the final version to their teacher, adviser, referee or UCAS, as appropriate.

Students complete up to seven sections (one is for UK applicants only) in their application

- Personal details
- Additional information (UK applicants only)
- Student finance
- Choices
- Education
- Statement
- Employment

As their application progresses to completion, they can see the status of each section.

- Not started ☐
- In progress ☐
- Completed ☒

Applicants who apply through a UCAS-registered centre, such as a school, college or careers centre, need the buzzword for their centre.

## Number of choices allowed

Each student can make a maximum of five choices on their application, including:

- No more than four choices in any one of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or veterinary science
- No more than one course at either the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge.

It's not compulsory to use all five choices. If they apply to fewer than five choices to begin with, they can add more later, as long as they have not replied to their offers. They should, however, remember to check the application deadline for the course.

## Invisibility of choices

We send the application on to each of the chosen universities and colleges at the same time. Each university or college has access to the information about their choice only. They must not ask applicants to reveal their other choices.

Only much later in the application cycle, when an applicant has received decisions on all their choices and replied to any offers, will each university or college be able to see details of the other choices. This ensures that each university or college decides independently whether to offer a place and what conditions, if any, to attach to an offer.

## Disabilities, special needs and medical conditions

Universities and colleges welcome applications from people with disabilities, special needs or medical conditions, and try to provide as much support as possible.

It's a good idea to contact individual universities to discuss what they might need as early as possible – even before sending their application.

Universities and colleges will consider the application on the same academic criteria as any other, and any medical information will remain confidential.

If they are concerned about disclosing their disability, please encourage them not to be. Early disclosure will help support to be put in place in time for the start of their course.

## Students who are care leavers or looked after children

All applicants with a permanent home in the UK are asked if they have ever been in local authority care, including foster care, semi-independent living or in a residential care home.

Disclosing they have been in care means that the university or college may be able to help with:

- support for all-year-round accommodation, including during vacations
- sorting out their finances
- bursary entitlements
- support services such as counselling, childcare, disability and careers guidance

Universities and colleges treat this information in confidence and may contact a student to discuss, whether or not, they need any extra resources or support during the course.

# AFTER THE APPLICATION ARRIVES AT UCAS

## What happens at UCAS when we receive an application?

Once an application has been processed through our databases it will normally be with the universities and colleges within two working days of being sent to UCAS.

## At the universities and colleges

### What happens at the universities and colleges when they receive an application?

The universities and colleges begin their decision-making process; this differs between individual universities and colleges, and even for different courses at the same one. There are no guidelines about what or when something will happen. Applicants will hear about their individual choices at different times; students may be contacted within a very short time, or it may be some months before they hear anything.

### Checking for decisions about choices

When the universities and colleges have received and considered a student's application, they send their decision to us, and we update Track for the applicant to see. So that they know something has changed we send them an email. This means it's vital they check their emails regularly.

Sometimes applicants are invited to undertake an assessment before the university or college can decide whether or not to make an offer. They may need to sit an admissions test or attend an interview, perhaps both, depending on the subject and popularity of the course. Art and design students in particular, might need to present a portfolio of their work. Invitations to submit a portfolio or attend an interview or audition may be received in Track or direct. They must respond to invitations to interview as soon as possible. They can accept, decline, or request a new time or date.

All decisions are made at the universities and colleges. UCAS does not have any involvement in deciding whether or not to make an offer.

## Offers

An offer may be either conditional or unconditional.

**Conditional offer** - means that the offer has conditions. For example, the applicant has to achieve certain exam results. Unless a different date is specified, the conditions must be met by 31 August 2022 (even if entry is deferred to 2023). The conditions may include achievement of specific grades, possibly in named subjects, or a certain number of UCAS Tariff points.

**Unconditional offer** - usually means that the applicant has already met all the university or college's entry requirements for the course. They might still have to meet other requirements, such as financial or medical conditions.

**Unsuccessful** – the university or college has not offered the applicant a place on the course.

## Replying to offers

When an applicant has a decision for each of their choices, they need to decide which ones they want to accept. The date they must reply to their offers is shown in Track.

They can accept one offer as their firm choice and, if that is a conditional offer, they can also accept a second offer as an insurance choice, in case they do not meet the conditions of their firm choice. Any other offers must be declined. Applicants reply to their offers in Track.

It is important that applicants think very carefully when they choose their firm and insurance choices and should ensure that they do not accept an offer from any university or college if they would not be prepared to attend their course there.

It's important that an applicant replies before the date we give them. The date depends on when they received the last decision from their universities and colleges.

Last decision from university or college received on or before	Applicants must reply on or before
16 May 2025	6 June 2025
17 July 2025	24 July 2025

## Extra – A Chance to Apply to More Universities and Colleges

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### Extra – a chance to apply to more universities and colleges

All is not lost if students are unsuccessful in being offered a place for any of their five choices, or they declined all their offers. In this case you can encourage them to use Extra to apply to other universities and colleges that still have vacancies.

#### There are four steps to using Extra

1. Search for courses with Extra vacancies on the UCAS search tool at [search.ucas.com](https://search.ucas.com).
2. Think about related and quite different subjects.
3. Get in touch with the university or college to check they can consider them. If they want to apply for a course that's different from their initial choices, they can explain that they've changed their mind and offer to send them a revised personal statement to support their application. They cannot change their original personal statement.
4. Add the details in Track.

The Extra process operates from 26 February to the beginning of July 2025.

When universities and colleges receive applicants' exam results, they decide whether or not the applicants have met the conditions of their offer. If they have, they will confirm the place and the applicant is placed. **This is called Confirmation.** It can be viewed in Track.

**If a university or college confirms a 'firmly accepted' offer, the applicant is committed to taking up that place. The insurance choice, if any, becomes redundant.**

**If a university or college does not confirm a 'firmly accepted' offer, they may meet the conditions of their insurance choice, in which case they are committed to take up the place.**

It's imperative that if applicants choose an insurance choice, they are prepared to take up the place. If they end up committed to their insurance place and do not want it, they will have to withdraw altogether or negotiate with the university or college to be entered into Clearing. They are under no obligation to agree.

If a student has achieved better than expected results and has **met and exceeded** the conditions of their firmly accepted offer, they will have a short time to research and secure an alternative course in Adjustment.

If a student doesn't meet the conditions of either their firm or insurance choice, they may still have their place confirmed. This is at the discretion of the university or college.

If a student doesn't have either their firm or insurance place confirmed, they will automatically be able to use Clearing.

Lists of courses with places in Clearing are published until late September on the search tool on [www.ucas.com](https://www.ucas.com) and in some national newspapers.

Students should check the lists for suitable courses and then contact universities and colleges to find out more about the course and to see if they will offer them a place. They should do this themselves as admissions tutors will want to speak to them personally, not through parents or teachers.

After speaking to admissions tutors and being offered a place, applicants in Clearing must enter details of the university or college and the course into Track. The university or college will then confirm the place provided it is still available. If the student is unsuccessful, they can repeat the process.

# Sample of UCAS Form – Page 1

Matilda Daisy White 1856698108

(Group: Mrs Stott; Submitted: ; Application status: In progress)

UCAS

## Personal details

COMPLETE ✓

Title	Miss
First name	Matilda Daisy
Last name	White
Previous name(s)	
Preferred name	Daisy
Date of birth	17 October 2006
Gender	Woman

## Nationality

COMPLETE ✓

What is your country of birth?	United Kingdom
What is your nationality?	UK national
Dual nationality	

## Where you live

COMPLETE ✓

Add the addresses you have been living at since 1st September 2022 to the present day.

### Address 1 (Current address)

Dates you lived here:	01/2007 - Present
Address:	2 Hillside Drive, Belfast, County Antrim, BT9 5EJ
Reason:	Permanent home
Please confirm your home address	
Home address:	2 Hillside Drive, Belfast, County Antrim, BT9 5EJ
Area of permanent residence	Belfast
Residential category	UK Citizen - Northern Ireland

## Contact details

COMPLETE ✓

Mobile number	+447896926853
Other telephone number	+447896926854
Email address	mdwhite861@yahoo.com
Postal address	2, Hillside Drive, Belfast, BT9 5EJ

## Nominated access

Do you want someone else to act, or speak on your behalf, about your application?	Yes
Full name of nominee	Jamie White
Relationship to you	Father

## Supporting information

COMPLETE ✓

Have you ever lived or worked in the EU (excluding the UK), European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland?	No
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# Sample of UCAS Form – Page 2

Matilda Daisy White 1856698108

(Group: Mrs Stott; Submitted: ; Application status: In progress)

UCAS

Do you have a parent, spouse or civil partner who is an EU (excluding the UK), EEA or Swiss national?

No

## Finance & funding

COMPLETE ✓

What will be your main source of funding for your studies?

UK, ChI, IoM or EU student finance services

Student support arrangements

Belfast

## Diversity & inclusion

COMPLETE ✓

Equality monitoring

Ethnic origin

White

Care support information

Have you been in care?

No

Parental education

Yes

Occupational background

Accountant

## More about you

COMPLETE ✓

Every year, over 60,000 students with a physical and/or mental health condition, long-term illness, or learning difference apply through UCAS to study at a university or college in the UK, and access a range of support available to help with their studies, day-to-day activities, travel, or lifestyle.

Would you consider yourself as living with any of the following?

A learning difference (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, or AD(H)D)

Further details about your disability

I receive extra time in school examinations.

Would you consider yourself estranged from your parents (i.e. you're not in contact with and supported by your parents)?

No

Do you have any caring responsibilities?

No

Are you a parent or do you have parenting responsibilities?

No

Do you have official refugee status or limited leave to remain, or are you seeking asylum?

No

Do you have a parent or carer who currently serves in the UK Armed Forces, or who has done so in the past?

No

Have you ever served in the UK Armed Forces?

No

Are you currently receiving free school meals, or have you been in receipt of free school meals during your secondary education?

No

## Education

COMPLETE ✓

☐ Qualifications checked

**Methodist College** September 2018 - June 2025



# Sample of UCAS Form – Page 3

Matilda Daisy White 1856698108

(Group: Mrs Stott; Submitted: ; Application status: In progress)

UCAS

National centre number: 71237

Type of study: Full time

Study mode: In person

## GCE Advanced Level (A-Level)

History

Grade:

Date: August 2025

Awarding body: CCEA

Psychology

Grade:

Date: August 2025

Awarding body: AQA

## GCE Advanced Subsidiary

History

Grade:

Date: August 2025

Awarding body: CCEA

History

Grade: B

Date: August 2024

Awarding body: CCEA

## Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Cert RQF (360) (2016 to Present)

Sport

Grade:

Date: August 2025

Awarding body: Pearson

Module name

Module date

Module grade

Anatomy and Physiology

August 2024

D

Fitness Training and Programming for Health, Spor

August 2024

D

Fitness Training and Programming for Health, Spor

August 2025

Professional Development in the Sports Industry

August 2025

## General Certificate of Secondary Education (Grade A\*-G)

Biology

Grade: B

Date: September 2023

Awarding body: CCEA

Chemistry

Grade: B

Date: September 2023

Awarding body: CCEA

English Language

Grade: A

Date: August 2023

Awarding body: CCEA

English Literature

Grade: B

Date: August 2023

Awarding body: CCEA

French

Grade: A\*

Date: August 2023

Awarding body: CCEA

History

Grade: A\*

Date: August 2023

Awarding body: CCEA

Mathematics

Grade: A

Date: August 2023

Awarding body: CCEA

# Sample of UCAS Form – Page 4

Matilda Daisy White 1856698108

(Group: Mrs Stott; Submitted: ; Application status: In progress)

UCAS

Religious Studies

Grade: A\*

Date: August 2023

Awarding body: CCEA

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Grade 9-1)

Drama

Grade: 7

Date: August 2023

Awarding body: Edexcel

Russian

Grade: 9

Date: August 2023

Awarding body: Edexcel

**BTEC Registration Number:**

**Unique Learner Number (ULN):**

**English language certificates**

Add your English language certificate numbers, if you have other certificates add them as qualifications.

**Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Number:**

**International English Language Testing System (IELTS) TRF Number:**

**Employment**

COMPLETE ✓

**Tesco**

Dates

October 2023 - Present

Address

Belfast Newtownbreda

Full-time / part-time

Part-time

Description

Cashier

**Extra activities**

COMPLETE ✓

No extra activities provided.

**Personal statement**

COMPLETE ✓

Matilda Daisy White 1856698108

(Group: Mrs Stott; Submitted: ; Application status: In progress)

UCAS

The subject of Psychology and its broad reaching consequences have interested me from a young age. Certain behaviours and the reasons for them are a particularly important area given that mental health and the impact of our thinking are under greater scrutiny than they have ever been. This is a growing industry that needs people. Watching several documentaries when I was at primary school started this fixation and encouraged me to research topics beyond what is required in school. The Netflix series Mindhunter particularly stands out as it revolves around the rational for certain behaviour that would be considered abnormal. The main characters of the show are psychologists from different fields, so it was an obvious choice for me to take it on at A level and has furthered my general interest in the topic. I find the area of nature versus nurture particularly fascinating. There are two very clear sides to either argument, both with very valid points. We can apply this information to ourselves and also the world around us. Being someone who has a tendency for overthinking things, it has been especially interesting to look at how I process information in more detail, using techniques from cognitive behaviour therapy and strategies from the book The Power of Letting Go. I like to ask questions and psychology does its best to answer a lot of them. The subject has the ability to change lives in the simplest of ways.

I have been fortunate to be able to take part in a research study undertaken by Queen's University's Psychology Department which investigates what makes students choose Psychology as an academic subject. Consequently, I have been able to see how a study is run, rather than just reading the theory in a textbook. Working two part time jobs in the retail sector has made me aware of the benefits of a routine with responsibilities such as minding the tills, doing stock control and helping customers. As Psychology is ultimately all about people, I have been grateful for the opportunity to interact with others and learn to act on my initiative when trying to resolve issues customers may have. I have seen the importance of working with others as part of a time, where your role is just one small cog in a greater part and where people are counting on you to be an effective and reliable colleague. The skills I have learnt will be invaluable at university. Time keeping and deadlines will be key in the future. Within school I am a Prefect, which has given me responsibilities in certain areas of the school and over younger pupils. Sport plays a big part in my life, both inside and outside school. I have been playing hockey since the age of 10 and currently play for both the school XI and a local club. As well as the discipline of the sport itself, the commitment of regular training and matches has been very beneficial and has fed into the social aspect of the sport. I enjoy the challenge of working on an aspect of my game in order to improve. I also go frequently to the gym and am currently pushing myself to improve my lift totals with a view, most likely at university, to compete in power lifting competitions. I have enjoyed making a definite link between sports and psychology, as one allows for better performance in the other. I look forward to acquiring the skills which will enable me to help others make a difference in how they about and tackle situations and hope that this will enable them to allow for positive change, whether it be in the classroom or on the sports field.

## Choices

COMPLETE ✓

### Psychology (C800)

University of Portsmouth (P80)

**Campus:** Main Site

**Start date:** September 2025

**Point of entry:** Year 1

**Live at home while studying:** No

**Deferred entry:** No



# Sample of UCAS Form – Page 6

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Matilda Daisy White 1856698108

(Group: Mrs Stott; Submitted: ; Application status: In progress)

UCAS

## Psychology (C800)

Queen's University Belfast (Q75)

**Campus:** Main Site

**Start date:** September 2025

**Point of entry:** Year 1

**Live at home while studying:** Yes

**Deferred entry:** No

## Psychology (C800)

University of Reading (R12)

**Campus:** Main Site

**Start date:** October 2025

**Point of entry:** Year 1

**Live at home while studying:** No

**Deferred entry:** No

## Psychology (C800)

Heriot-Watt University (H24)

**Campus:** Edinburgh Campus

**Start date:** September 2025

**Point of entry:** Year 1

**Live at home while studying:** No

**Deferred entry:** No

## Applied Psychology (C810)

Glasgow Caledonian University (G42)

**Campus:** Main Site

**Start date:** September 2025

**Point of entry:** Year 1

**Live at home while studying:** No

**Deferred entry:** No

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## Reference & predicted grades

NOT STARTED ○

### Reference details

**Referee name:**

**Reference**

ESTABLISHMENT DETAILS

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

OTHER SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION

**Date(s) unavailable**

N/A

# Sample of UCAS Form – Page 7

Matilda Daisy White 1856698108  
(Group: Mrs Stott; Submitted: ; Application status: In progress)



☐ Mark reference as complete

### Predicted grades

Methodist College

GCE Advanced Level (A-Level) in (Psychology)

Awarding body: AQA  
Certification date: August 2025  
Predicted grade:

GCE Advanced Level (A-Level) in (History)

Awarding body: CCEA  
Certification date: August 2025  
Predicted grade:

GCE Advanced Subsidiary in (History)

Awarding body: CCEA  
Certification date: August 2025  
Predicted grade:

Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Cert RQF (360) (2016 to Present) in (Sport)

Awarding body: Pearson  
Certification date: August 2025  
Predicted grade:

Module name: Anatomy and Physiology    Module date: August 2024    Module grade: D

Module name: Fitness Training and Programming for Health, Spor    Module date: August 2024    Module grade: D

Module name: Fitness Training and Programming for Health, Spor    Module date: August 2025    Predicted grade:

Module name: Professional Development in the Sports Industry    Module date: August 2025    Predicted grade:

### Application history

Application started	16 May 2024 08:08 (GMT+1)	Matilda Daisy White
Application first submitted	-	-
Application approved	-	-
Reference started	-	-
Reference completed	-	-
Reference approved	-	-
Sent to UCAS	-	-

# UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS - Notes

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The personal statement is very important. It may be the applicant's only contact with the selector. Please assist your son or daughter to complete their personal statement, by checking content, spelling and grammar.

Students should contact course tutors or admissions tutors to ensure that they meet fully the entrance requirements for their chosen course and to request departmental materials.

Discuss seriously making an application to a home university. Students often change their mind about going away.

When choosing courses students should always look for the "value added factor" such as paid placements or study opportunities abroad. They should make full use of the Options Higher Education Convention this weekend to firm up their choices.

It is not advisable to apply to only 5 from Bristol, Durham, Edinburgh, Oxford, Cambridge, LSE, Nottingham, UCL and Warwick on one application as this could result in receiving no offers because of the volume of applications which they receive for high demand courses.

Students may leave one application space blank, as this enables them to apply for an alternative course later in the year, especially if they change their mind about the choices made.

If a student is unsuccessful in all the courses applied for, he/she should ask for a change of course offer from the universities to which he/she has already applied.

A student can apply to UCAS and CAO (the Central Applications Office in the Republic of Ireland), and they do not have to make their final choice until August 2024

There are aptitude tests for some Law courses (LNAT) and medical schools will require either the BMAT or the UCAT.

If you are embarking on UCAS for the first time or have any concerns do not hesitate to contact your son's/daughter's UCAS tutor.

If you are concerned about decisions/rejections from a university, contact the Admissions Office at once and request feedback. They refuse to talk to us about students because of data protection. However, if you send us a copy of the letter, we will try to do our best for the student.

It is advisable to obtain a folder in which to keep all communication which comes from UCAS or the universities. If the student does not understand the content of a letter, it should be brought to the Careers Office.

**The school's deadline for the completion of all forms for Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science to the school is 24 September 2024.** All other UCAS forms must be handed in by the 15 November to your Careers Tutor.

**Under no circumstances must a student withdraw from UCAS without consulting his/her Tutor or Mrs Stott.**

Students need to focus on academic work so that they realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential.

Prioritising and time management are crucial this year. Those who have part-time jobs may need to review the hours which they work.

Alarm bells should ring if students claim to have no work to do or they have finished it in school. They will always have work to do.

**Please encourage your son/daughter to attend their interview with their Careers Tutor and meet the deadlines which their Tutor sets when corrections need to be made. Quite often we are left sitting in our offices because they do not attend.**



# UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS – Notes Continued

This is a very stressful time for students, parents and teachers. By keeping in contact with us when you have particular concerns, it will help us to face difficulties early and with luck to resolve them.

## **STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**

## **ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE\***

Stranmillis University College and St. Mary's University College are now Colleges of Queen's University of Belfast. The Colleges offer a range of undergraduate programmes in the Education sector as well as in Early Childhood Studies, Health and Leisure Studies and Liberal Arts.

Applications for all full-time courses of undergraduate study at Stranmillis University College are through UCAS.

There are two routes into teaching. The consecutive pattern of training consists of a primary degree (e.g., B.A., B.Sc.) followed by a one-year course of professional training leading to the Post Graduate Certificate in Education. Alternatively, it is possible, after A Levels, to follow a course involving the concurrent study of a subject and professional preparation, leading to the degree of Bachelor of Education. Whichever route a student chooses, successful completion of the course brings a University degree and qualified teacher status.

At Stranmillis University College the approximate annual intake to the B.Ed. course is 70 students, chosen from over 1000 applicants. These students, preparing to teach in primary schools, must choose their main subject from the following list.

- |                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Art         | 6. Music              |
| 2. English     | 7. Physical Education |
| 3. Geography   | 8. Religious Studies  |
| 4. History     | 9. Science            |
| 5. Mathematics |                       |

All students will take Core Studies (Primary) as the Subsidiary Subject.

B.Ed. applicants may be invited for interview in February and will be sent some advice on preparing for the interview. A short presentation may also be required.

Obviously, the ratio of applicants to places is high and so this leads to considerable disappointment for many people. Applicants should bear in mind that very high-grade requirements need to be met, especially in the most popular subject areas such as Geography, History, R.E. and English. Successful applicants in these areas may have achieved a combination of A and B grades at A Level. The less popular subject areas may have slightly lower grade requirements.

Stranmillis and St. Mary's have a close working relationship. Joint teaching takes place in a number of subjects which are offered in both institutions. The Colleges are currently establishing partnerships with similar higher education institutions throughout the European Union and beyond. These will offer students the opportunity to study and work in other countries as part of the undergraduate course.

### **St. Mary's University College New Admissions Procedures**

St. Mary's University College operates outside the UCAS system. All applications for entry to the College in 2024 must be made directly to the Admissions Office in the College.

## OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE + ENTRANCE TESTS FOR OTHER UNIVERSITIES

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There has tended to be a certain mystique about these universities and there are often two assumptions, summed up as follows: “Oxford and Cambridge are the best universities, and anyone who has a chance of getting a place should grasp it”, and “I couldn’t get in, I’m not good enough”. Not infrequently the first assumption is made by parents and the second by potential applicants; neither is necessarily correct. It is true that Cambridge and Oxford are two of the great universities of the world with an international reputation for scholarship and research, a history stretching back many centuries and academic staff who are highly regarded in their own fields. However, the course they offer may not be what some students are seeking, while for others, even those of high ability, the environment would simply not be right and there are other fine universities which may be more suitable. It is also true that the competition for places is severe and each year many very able young people fail to secure places, but those who are successful are by no means all in the ‘genius’ category.

What steps then should be taken before deciding whether to make an application to either university? As with any other decision about higher education, careful research is important before coming to a conclusion. The place to start is the official website of each of the two universities which gives information about Colleges and courses, as does the prospectus.

In addition, each College has its own prospectus and website and often also information sheets about individual subjects. Some of the Faculties publish booklets about the courses they offer. If it is at all possible, it is extremely valuable to pay a visit to either or both places. This can be done by making individual arrangements with the Colleges, all of which run ‘Open Days’, but it is equally possible to decide to visit at other times.

What academic standard should a potential applicant have reached? In general, those who apply should be capable of obtaining at least A\*A A in at least three A-Level subjects. Again, a suitable GCSE background for this purpose would include a significant number of A\* and A grades e.g., 9 A\* grades, while AS Level outcomes should be grade A with very high marks > 90%. Anyone who fulfils these criteria could reasonably consider the possibility of an application. All who are thinking of applying should seek advice in school, both from their subject teachers and from Mrs Stott, who has specific responsibility for applications to Oxford and Cambridge.

There will be some who are of the right academic standing and for whom the courses are appropriate who may be prevented from applying because they think the cost will be too great, or because they believe that all Cambridge and Oxford students are from very wealthy and privileged backgrounds. We would not like to think that anyone was deterred solely for reasons of cost without consulting further and exploring the possibility of grants and bursaries. Indeed, the cost of attending Oxford or Cambridge may well be less than for many other places, and the student body comes from all backgrounds.

The closing date for applications is 15 October 2024. Several subjects now require applicants to take written tests early in November, some examples are detailed below but the university website must also be checked.

**These tests are now run on-line by Pearson. It is imperative that you check application deadlines and apply on time!**

<https://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/apply/application-dates-deadlines>

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/guide/admissions-tests>

All medical schools require the UCAT:

<https://www.ucat.ac.uk/>

# APPLICATIONS TO THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

These are made through the Central Applications Office (CAO) which is totally separate from UCAS. Applicants may hold two offers from UCAS and apply for up to 10 courses in CAO from the degree list. Courses must be listed **in order of preference**.

There is no personal statement by the applicant or academic reference. Acceptance is on A-Level grades. The closing date for applications is 1 February 2024. CAO applications are dealt with in November - January of the Upper Sixth year. Application is made on-line.

On publication of results a first round of offers takes place late in August and a second round at the end of August. Each applicant may be offered a place in the highest of his/her preferences to which he/she is entitled. An offer of a place will lapse unless accepted within a specified period and unless a deposit is received by CAO before 5.15pm on the reply date set out in the offer notice.

All students applying through CAO should consult Mrs Stott for help with the application. **These points are due to change for students applying for 2025 entry.**

From 2020		Universities & Associated Colleges		Instits. of Technology & TU Dublin (other than DkIT)	
		4 <sup>th</sup> Subject			
Grade	Best 3 A Levels	A Level	AS Level	First 3 A Levels	AS Levels (& 4 <sup>th</sup> A Level where presented)
A*	185	45	31†	185	74††
A	156	38	26	156	62
B	131	32	22	131	52
C	106	26	18	106	42
D	84	20	14	84	34
E	63	15	11	63	25

† Extended Project is now accepted and scored as AS. It is possible to attain an A\* in this.

†† Applies to A Level only

## Universities and associated colleges:

Applicants are scored on the basis of their best four A Levels or 3 A Levels and an AS Level in a different subject from the same or preceding year. The maximum number of points that can be achieved is 600.

Note: Applicants presenting Grade E or above in one of A Level Mathematics, Further Mathematics or Pure Mathematics will have 25 points added to their score for that subject. The bonus points will only be relevant where that subject is scored as one of the applicant's best four subjects for points purposes. This gives a maximum possible score of 625.

## Institutes of Technology (other than DkIT) and other HEIs offering QQI HET awards:

Applicants are scored on the basis of a maximum of 4 different subject results at A and/or AS Level.

Applicants are scored on the basis of a maximum of 4 different subject results at A and/or AS Level. For scoring purposes, the following combination of A Levels and AS Levels are permitted:

1. The best 4 A Level results in a single sitting
2. The best 3 A Level results in a single sitting, plus the best AS Level result from the previous or the same sitting
3. The best 2 A Level subject results in a single sitting, plus the best 2 results at AS Level from the previous or the same sitting
4. The best 1 A Level subject result in a single sitting, plus the best 3 results at AS level from the previous or the same sitting
5. The best 4 AS Level subject results in a single sitting

## Important information for all GCE Applicants

- Evidence of GCSE examinations must be supplied in order to meet minimum entry requirements.

**Applicants are advised to contact the Admissions Office to verify entrance requirements.**

Applicants for Medicine will be required to sit the HPAT-Ireland aptitude test in February 2024. The test is taken in Dublin. More details on this test can be found on the website – [www.hpat-ireland.acer.edu.au](http://www.hpat-ireland.acer.edu.au).



## STUDENT FINANCE

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Application forms for Student Finance N.I. are available in the spring as an online application only. Every year a considerable number of students' do not submit the forms by the deadlines. This can cause their fee payments to be delayed or they could lose their full entitlement to student finance.

## SPONSORSHIP

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Sponsorship is a contract between the student and the employer. The student agrees to attend a course of study and works for the employer during parts of the university vacation.

Some employers insist that you work for them for a year before the degree course. A few insist that you work for them for a fixed period of time after graduation, but most do not.

Average sponsorship is around £1200.00 per annum, but this can vary. Full-time work undertaken during vacations is paid at the rate of £130.00 to £200.00 per week.

In the past sponsorship was focused on engineering but increasingly students reading computer science, business, actuarial science, economics and many others are finding sponsorship.

Students can apply for sponsorship from now onwards. Most places will be allocated by next February, so early application is essential.

Having chosen potential sponsors, students should write requesting a brochure and an application form. It is advisable to make several applications.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

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Scholarships are given by commercial bodies representing particular industrial groups e.g., Institute of Civil Engineers.

All universities have scholarships of their own to distribute among their students, details of which can be found in prospectuses or on the website. All universities offer bursaries to provide financial assistance to the most deserving.

There are some lucrative sports scholarships available.

## GAP YEAR

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Reference books dealing with Gap Year activities are available on request in the Careers Service and in the College Library.

## USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

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**Education Authority**

40 Academy Street

BELFAST

BT1 2NQ

**Telephone:** 028 9056 4000

**Website:** <https://www.eani.org.uk/>

Now acting on behalf of:

Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB)

North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB)

South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB)

Southern Education and Library Board (SELB)

Western Education and Library Board (WELB)

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**Department of Education for Northern Ireland**

Rathgael House

43 Balloo Road

BANGOR

BT19 7PR

**Telephone:** 028 9127 9279

**Website:** <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/contact>

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**A L E V E L R E S U L T S D A Y**

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**THURSDAY 14 AUGUST 2024**

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**IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT UPPER SIXTH PUPILS  
ARE AVAILABLE WHEN RESULTS ARE PUBLISHED.**

**ALL UPPER SIXTH PUPILS ARE REQUIRED TO  
ATTEND A MEETING WITH THEIR UCAS TUTOR**

**AT 9.00AM**

**IN WHITLA HALL**

**SO THAT FINAL DESTINATIONS CAN BE CONFIRMED  
AND THAT THOSE WHO HAVE DIFFICULTIES CAN BE HELPED.**

**PARENTS ARE REQUESTED TO ENSURE  
THAT THEIR SON/DAUGHTER WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THIS  
TIME AND THAT THEY REPORT TO THE COLLEGE AS REQUIRED.**

**HOLIDAYS SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN UNTIL AFTER  
RESULTS DAY AT LEAST BECAUSE OF CLEARING IMPLICATIONS**

