UCAS Handbook

2026 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

Register for UCAS 6

Completing your UCAS application 6

- Overview 6
- Personal Details 6
- Nationality 7
- Where you live 7
- Contact details 7
- Supporting information 7
- Finance and funding 7
- Diversity and inclusion 7
- More about you 7
- Education 8
- Employment 10
- Extra Activities 10
- Personal Statement 10
- Choices 10

Your Personal Statement 12

Finalising your UCAS application 15

Frequently Asked Questions 16

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. 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)

Aspire sessions: Students who are making a competitive application are able to join Aspire sessions.

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.

Senior Advisers' Evening: Tuesday 17 June 2025. 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.

UCAS Launch Day and Alumni Networking Event: Our UCAS Day on Wednesday 18 June 2025 will enable you to start your UCAS application, including writing your Personal Statement. You will also have the opportunity to network with former King's pupils who are currently at university.

University Open Days: Attend university open days.

Summer Holidays

University Open Days: Attend university open days. You can also take a virtual tour of many universities through the university's website.

Research universities and courses: Use Unifrog/UCAS/University websites 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. Keep an eye on the Careers Bulletins where Mrs Foster highlights a range of opportunities.

Super-curricular activities: 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, search on the Geek Out section on Unifrog and look at the Read, Watch, Listen Unifrog tool.

Personal Statement: Draft and re-draft 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, on Unifrog and on the UCAS website.

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 and LNAT, registration should be done entirely by you. Please ensure you are registered to sit the appropriate test. For more information, please contact our Exams Officer Mrs Camargo Auton.

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

DATE	ACTION
10 September 2025	First draft of Personal Statement to be submitted to Form Tutor.
17 September 2025	Second draft of Personal Statement to be submitted to Form Tutor.
24 September 2025	Completed UCAS application to be given to Mrs Foster, the Careers Officer, with green form attached (see 'Finalising your UCAS Application' below).
15 October 2025	UCAS deadline for receiving Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry, and Veterinary Medicine applications.
September-November 2025	Mock interview practice
November 2025 – March 2026	Interviews

Deadlines for all other applicants:

DATE	ACTION
22 September 2025	First draft of Personal Statement to be submitted to Form Tutor.
6 October 2025	Second draft of Personal Statement to be submitted to Form Tutor.
10 November 2025	Completed UCAS application to be given to Mrs Foster, the Careers Officer, with green form attached (see 'Finalising your UCAS Application' below).
14 January 2026	UCAS deadline for receiving applications.
Receipt of application – March 2026	Applicants may be called to interview.

Spring Term (Year 13)

UCAS Deadline for all other applicants: The deadline for most applications is 14 January 2026. You will notice that we submit your application long in advance of this date – the sooner, the better. Offers can 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 May at the earliest. The date by which you receive responses from all five universities will determine your reply date and this will be updated in your UCAS Hub.

Offer Holder Days/University Visits: You should visit your firm and insurance choice universities.

Apply for Student Finance: If you are going to university in September 2026 you will need to apply online for student finance, generally from March 2026. You do not need a confirmed place to apply.

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 your UCAS Hub. If you have any queries, please speak to your Form Tutor or Mrs Foster.

Results' Day: 13 August 2026 (This may be subject to change).

Register for UCAS

In order to apply to university, you will be required to register for UCAS 2026 entry and set up your own UCAS account.

Completing your UCAS application

Overview

The UCAS form has 13 sections that must be completed. They are set out on your 'Profile' page. Each section can be selected by clicking on relevant tile. 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 list on the left will show the progress of each section. The sections are:

- Personal Details
- Nationality details
- Where you live
- Contact details
- Supporting information
- Finance and funding
- Diversity and Inclusion
- More about you
- Education
- Employment
- Extra Activities
- Personal Statement
- Choices

To move to another section, just click the tile 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, select 'Save this section'. 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

Your name should already be visible. Just add your title and complete the mandatory fields (marked with an *)

Nationality

State your country of birth and your nationality.

Where you live

State your current address first and then add any previous addresses from the last three years.

Contact details

Provide the best telephone number to contact you on and use your personal email address. This can be updated in the Hub preferences if needed.

If you want to authorise someone to act on your behalf, select 'Yes' and provide their name and relationship to you. Students normally nominate their mum or dad.

Supporting information

Answer the questions relating to the EU.

Finance and funding

You need to choose **UK, ChI, IoM, or EU Student Finance Services** This means you will be charged British fees, not international fees. You **must** select this, 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.

Diversity and inclusion

This information is only shared with universities once you have secured a place – it does not influence any decision making.

There are some mandatory fields (*) but you can respond with 'I prefer not to say'.

More about you

Include any circumstances that you might need support with. 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 'none'.

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.

Start by clicking 'Add place of education'.

Type in 'The King's School, Macclesfield' and select it. The Exam Centre Number is 40525.

Add your start and finish date. If you joined King's in Y7, your start date will be September 2019. Your finish date will be July 2026.

Now add your qualifications. Click the 'Add qualification' button and search for your qualification.

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 or Sport). 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 2024** for all exams*

Subject	**Board**	**Subject**	**Board**
Art & Design	EDUQAS	German (International GCSE)	Pearson
Biology (Triple)	AQA	History (International GCSE)	Pearson
Chemistry (Triple)	AQA	Latin	WJEC
Computer Science	Pearson	Maths (International GCSE)	Pearson
Creative iMedia (Level 1 or Level 2 Certificate)	OCR	Further Maths (Level 2 Certificate)	AQA
Design & Technology	AQA	Music	Pearson
Drama (International GCSE)	CAIE	Physical Education	AQA
English Literature (International GCSE)	Pearson	Physics (Triple)	AQA
English Language (International GCSE)	Pearson	Religious Studies	AQA
French (International GCSE)	Pearson	Spanish (International GCSE)	Pearson
Geography	AQA	Combined Science (Trilogy)	AQA

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 2026** for all exams.

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

Vocational Courses

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

Other

Subject	**Qualification Type**	**Board**	**Result/Grade**
Additional Admissions Tests	Enter relevant test (e.g. UCAT, LNAT) and scores		
Certificate in Practical Spanish Level 3	Other (UK Qualifications)	SEG Awards	Pass/Merit/ Distinction
Community Sports Leadership Award (Level 2)	Other (UK Qualifications)	SLQ	Pass
Drama and Theatre Studies	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
Lamda Acting or Musical Theatre (Gold/Silver/Bronze)	Other (UK Qualifications)	Lamda	Pending
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.

Leave the Unique Learner Number question blank. If you are taking BTEC qualifications you will need to add your BTEC Registration Number here.

Employment

Include any paid employment that is relevant to the course that you are applying for. Use the Company name, not the personal name of your employer. If you have not had any paid employment, leave this section blank but still mark it as complete. (Unpaid or voluntary work should be mentioned in your Personal Statement).

Extra Activities

Include any activities that you have undertaken in preparation for higher education. Use the drop down box and choose from the options. Open Days are not relevant here.

Personal Statement

You will prepare your Personal Statement on Unifrog or UCAS and add it here when it is complete. See below for more information.

Choices

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

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 generally 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 subject teacher.

Type in the name of the university and the course and select from the options displayed. If you want to defer your start date state that here. Most universities will accept students who wish to defer their entry to 2027 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 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 want to 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.

If you wish to start in the first year of the course, leave the Point of Entry box blank.

You need to state whether you intend to live at home while studying.

Some courses might also require you to disclose your criminal conviction status.

If your course requires extra admissions tests and assessments it will be shown on this page.

Click the three dots in the bottom right of a card to see a summary of the information.

Your 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 will need to answer the following three questions:

1. Why do you want to study this course or subject?
2. How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?
3. What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

You are permitted to enter 4,000 characters. 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 or UCAS; 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 should then submit drafts to your Form Tutor and relevant subject teacher for comment. 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?

Further Personal Statement Advice:

Unifrog: a selection of successful subject specific Personal Statements in the Statement section

UCAS: The new personal statement for 2026 entry | UCAS – background information and subject specific guides in the 2026 format

Studential: www.studential.com/university/applying/UCAS-application-guide/personal-statements a selection of successful subject specific Personal Statements (Please note that many of these will be in the old style but the content will be similar).

Finalising your UCAS application

Once you have completed all sections of your UCAS form, check it again. Click 'Review and Submit' 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. Click 'Accept and proceed' and update your marketing preferences.

When you have read and understood the terms and conditions, tick the box to confirm. Then click 'Accept and proceed'.

You must ensure that your Personal Statement is signed by your Form Tutor and your subject teacher. Then, collect a green form from the Sixth Form Common Room. 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 subject teacher. 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 AND CHECKED.

Once everything has been approved, Mrs Foster will ask you to click 'Pay and submit' – please do not do this before it has been approved by Mrs Foster. Read the application screen and click 'I agree'. You will then be presented with a screen asking 'how do you want to pay?' Payment is by credit/debit card. The cost is £28.95. When you pay, it sends control of your application to school and you will see a read only version.

We will then add your reference and predicted grades and Mrs Foster will submit your application to UCAS on your behalf. Please allow approximately ten working days for this. You will be able to view the progress of your application and stay up-to-date with any changes on your UCAS account. Once your application has been sent to UCAS you will not be able to make any further alterations. You can however change your university choices within fourteen days of receiving your welcome letter. If you want to change a course, you will need to contact the university.

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

Check you've completed everything on the list below.

✔ Double check your form
✔ Go to 'check your application' and download and print it
✔ Get your Personal Statement signed by your 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 subject teacher
✔ Hand in to Mrs Foster
✔ Await payment instructions from Mrs Foster
✔ Pay UCAS, and then Mrs Foster will submit your application on your behalf
✔ Monitor your application via your UCAS account

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 Advice for parents, guardians and carers | UCAS Here you'll find a wide range of resources to help you through the process. 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. You can also contact King's Alumni via King's Connect.

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 and UCAS. 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 you 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. Take a MOOC in the subject or access some resources from Unifrog's Read, Watch, Listen tool to test if you are interested in it. 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 entry requirements?*

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

5. *How many choices can I make?*

Most students select 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 generally 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/vacancies/) and The Apprenticeship Guide (http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk). If you need any further advice, please see Mrs Foster. We will be looking at Apprenticeships in greater detail in Y13.

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 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.

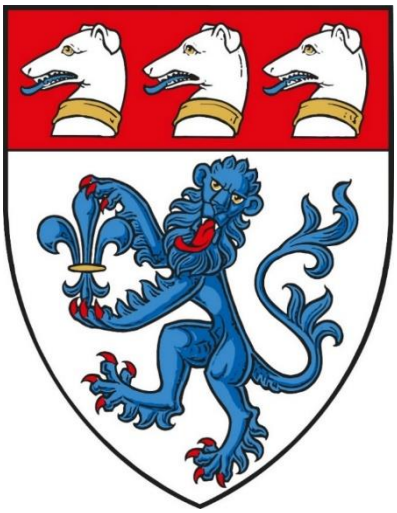
13. Where can I find out about summer schools and taster courses?

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. 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

Prestbury SK10 4SP

01625 260000 caroline.foster@kingsmac.co.uk

www.kingsmac.co.uk

www.facebook.com/kingsinmacc

@kingsmac