

International undergraduate guide

Students

Buckingham Palace,
London

Blackpool Tower,
Blackpool

Manchester
Central Library,
Manchester

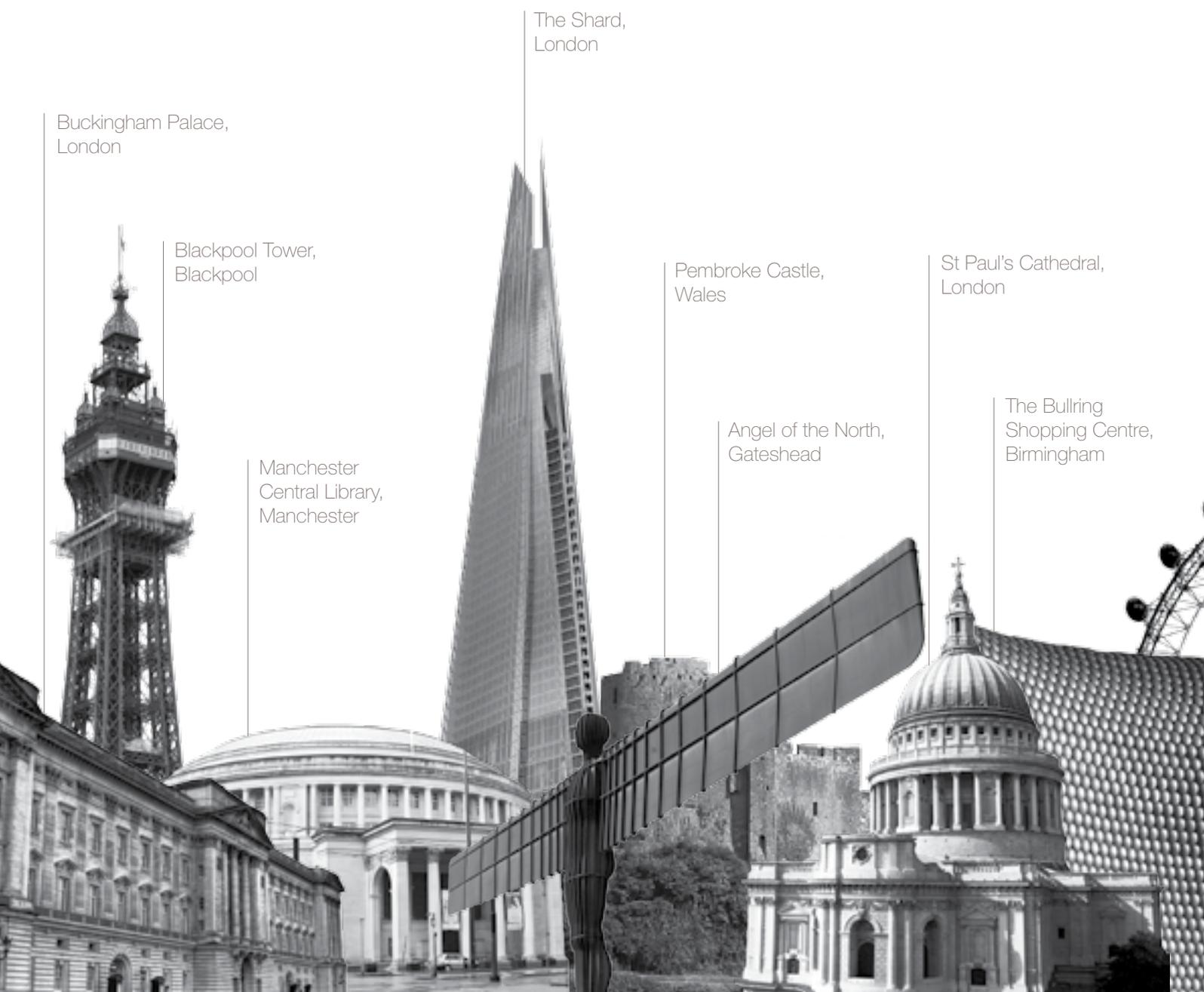
The Shard,
London

Pembroke Castle,
Wales

Angel of the North,
Gateshead

St Paul's Cathedral,
London

The Bullring
Shopping Centre,
Birmingham







UCAS is the organisation responsible for managing applications to universities and colleges in the UK.

This guide will help you understand the process of applying for higher education in the UK. It contains information on:

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For more information and to download our international undergraduate guides for parents and students visit www.ucas.com/international.



Why choose the UK?

Welcoming...

- The UK has a long history of welcoming international students to study at its universities and colleges.
- Every year, around 110,000 people from outside the UK apply through UCAS to study a full-time undergraduate degree course in the UK.

Quality and reputation...

- A UK degree provides an excellent foundation for securing employment in the global marketplace.
- UK qualifications are recognised and respected throughout the world, because our higher education courses meet strict academic standards.

Diversity...

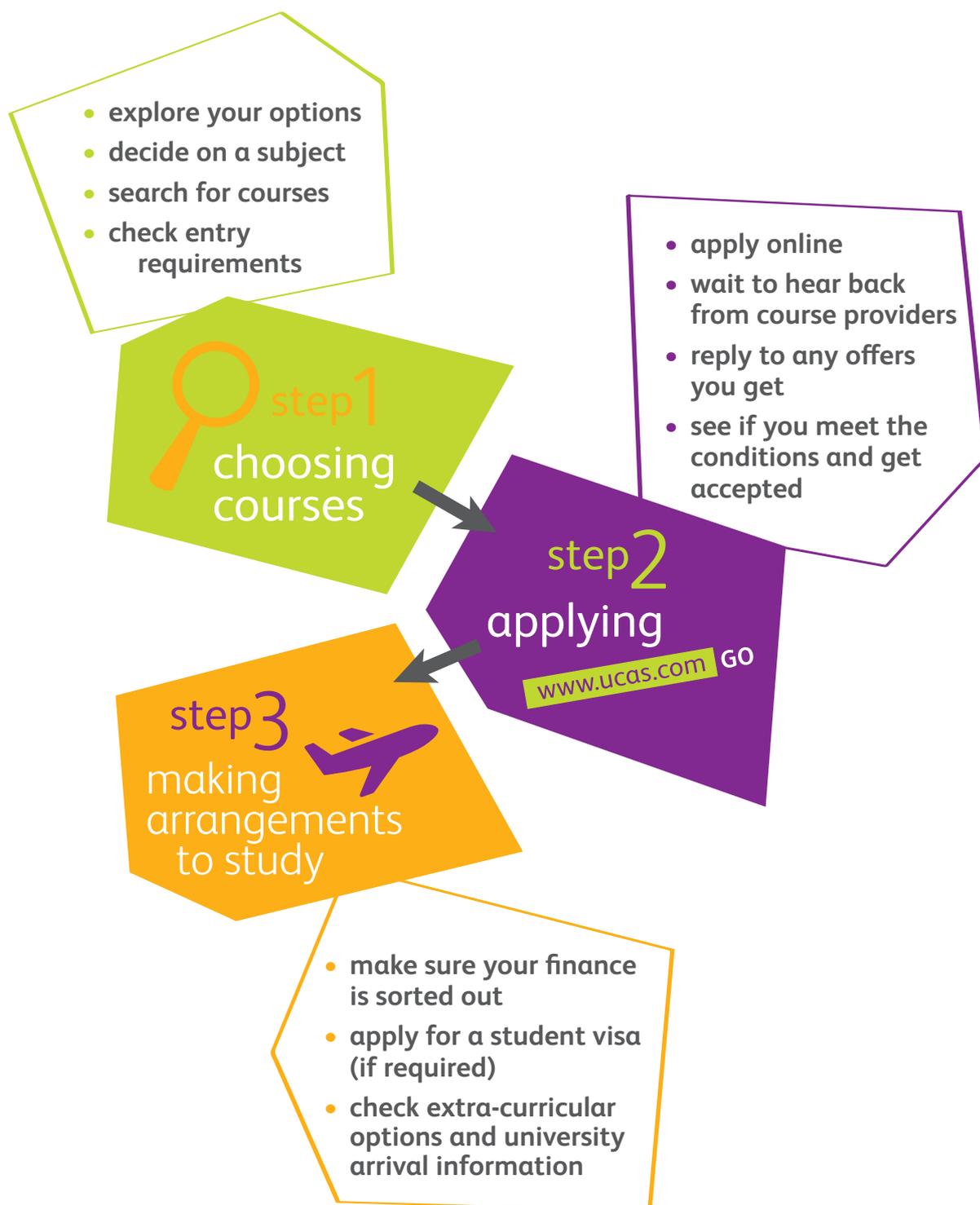
- British universities and colleges provide a multicultural, diverse, creative and inviting environment, which gives students the freedom to achieve their personal ambitions and reach their full potential.
- With over 35,000 available courses, there are options to inspire anyone.

Unique value...

- Studying in the UK gives you an opportunity to enhance your English language ability - a great skill to have in the global business arena.
- UK undergraduate and postgraduate courses tend to be shorter than in other countries, helping reduce tuition fees and living expenses.

Applying to study in the UK

You can apply to study in the UK through UCAS in three simple steps:



The next few pages will give you more information about what you have to do at each step.

Step 1 - Choosing courses

You can make up to five choices in your application. It's really important that you pick courses which suit you; because this is the starting point of your future career. So before you apply make sure you:

Research courses at search.ucas.com

- **Choose a subject you enjoy** – you should have a genuine interest and passion for the course.
- **Explore job websites and graduate opportunities** – to see what employers are asking for, so you know what to work towards.
- **Choose the study method to suit you** – undergraduate degrees usually last three or four years. Some include a year working in industry, others include several periods working in jobs that are related to the course. Choose the method of study which will suit you.

Research the right place to study

- **Visit university and college websites** – most have an online prospectus which will give you a feel for a university and what it can offer you.
- **Attend open days** – if you are able to visit the UK prior to making your application, we suggest researching open days. They are a great chance to see a university's facilities and speak to other students.
- **Meet with UCAS** – we attend a variety of events around the world. To check if we are visiting your country visit www.ucas.com/internationalevents.

Check entry requirements

- **English language requirements** – universities and colleges will tell you what standard of English you need for their courses. Some may ask you to demonstrate proficiency in English or to take an English language test. We suggest you visit each university or college's website to find out which English language tests are acceptable.
- **Minimum entry requirements** – universities and colleges will set entry requirements as a guide to the kinds of qualifications, subjects and exam grades needed. You can find entry requirements and application deadlines in our search tool at search.ucas.com.





Other things to consider

- **Course fees** – often called ‘tuition fees’. Universities and colleges charge different amounts. You can find out how much by looking at university and college websites and on our search tool www.ucas.com/search.
- **Living costs** – including accommodation, food, utility bills, clothes and travel. It costs more to live in London and some other big cities than to live in other parts of the UK. The Brightside International Student Calculator will help you budget the cost of studying in the UK <http://international.studentcalculator.org.uk>.

For more information on choosing courses visit our website www.ucas.com. It contains useful information about universities, colleges and courses, and it signposts to other key websites.

Advisers

You may choose to seek advice about studying in the UK from a careers tutor or teacher or visit a particular university’s office or agent representative in your country. Collectively UCAS refers to this group as ‘advisers’.

As well as providing course and general information on studying abroad, some advisers can also help with the completion of the UCAS application. Some may offer help with the UK visa application process. Whether you decide to use an adviser is your choice, but if you do, we recommend you ask if they are from a **UCAS registered centre** to make sure you get the best advice.

Step 2 - Applying

When you're ready to make your application visit www.ucas.com/apply and use our **Apply** service. You can use it anywhere in the world at any time. **Apply** provides lots of online help to complete the application.

Contents of an application

There are six sections to an application; however you don't have to complete the whole application at once:

- **Personal details** – to allow us to contact you.
- **Choices** – the place to add your five choices. There's no preference order and your universities and colleges won't see your other choices.
- **Education** – an opportunity to list your current and pending qualifications.
- **Employment** – if you have had a job, provide details.
- **Personal statement** – this is the part of the application which gives you the chance to tell universities and colleges why they should want you as a student. As it is such an important part of the application, we have provided more information on what to include on the next page.
- **Reference** – if you're applying through a UCAS centre they will complete the reference once you have submitted your application. If you are applying independently you will have to ask a teacher or appropriate person to complete the reference before submitting your application.

When completing your application you should nominate one or two people who can contact UCAS on your behalf if needed. This is called 'nominated access'. This means that your teacher, adviser or parent can access your application and take action for you.





Personal statements

Universities and colleges will want to know why you are interested in the course and what you hope to do after your studies. Here are some dos and don'ts for when you're writing your personal statement.

Dos

- Do create a list of your ideas before attempting to write the whole personal statement.
- Do expect to produce several drafts before being totally happy.
- Do ask people you trust for their feedback.
- Do check university and college prospectuses, websites and course entry requirements, as they usually tell you the criteria and qualities that they want their students to demonstrate.
- Do use your best English and don't let spelling and grammatical errors spoil your statement.
- Do be enthusiastic – if you show your interest in the course, it may help you get a place.
- Do include information on positions of leadership you've had or ways you have used your communication skills.
- Do mention preparation you have done for the course to which you're applying.
- Do include why you want to study in the UK.

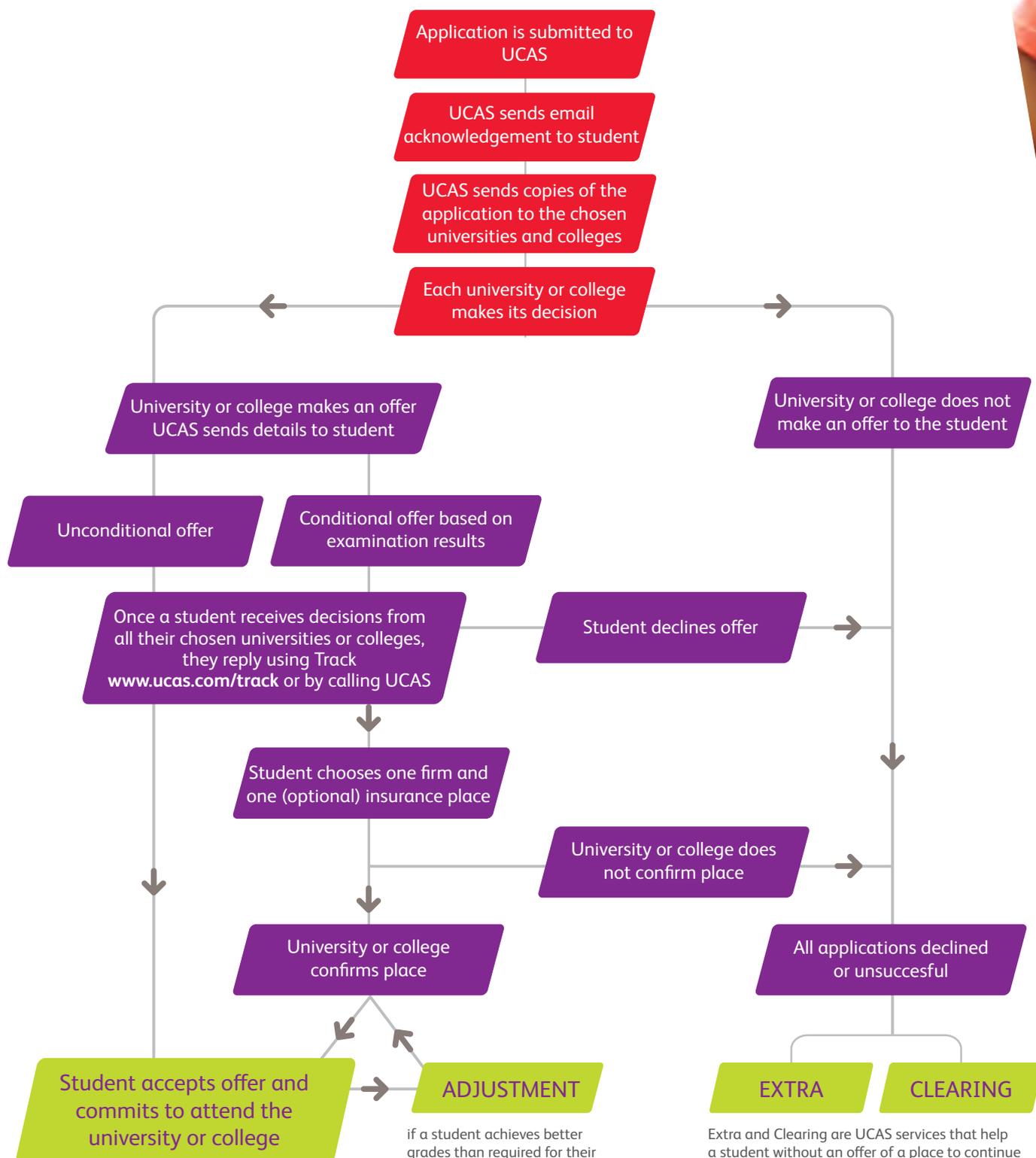
Don'ts

- Don't feel that you need to use elaborate language. If you try too hard to impress with long words that you are not confident using, the focus of your writing may be lost.
- Don't say too much about things that are not relevant – if you are starting to lose focus, take a break and come back to your statement when you feel more focused.
- Don't lie – if you exaggerate you may get caught out if you are called to interview and asked questions about your personal statement.
- Don't rely on a spellchecker as it will not pick up everything – proofread as many times as possible.
- Don't leave it to the last minute – your statement will seem rushed and important information could be left out.
- Don't expect to be able to write your personal statement whilst watching TV or surfing the internet – this is your future, so make the most of the opportunity to succeed.
- Don't cut and paste from examples. The personal statement must be your own work, and will be checked for plagiarism.

To help you start thinking about what to write visit www.ucas.com/personalstatement. You'll find a video guide, timeline, mind map and worksheet to download.

Once you've submitted your application

Once you submit your application, it's time to wait for the universities and colleges to consider you. Depending on what they decide, your application will follow one of the below routes:



ADJUSTMENT
 if a student achieves better grades than required for their firmly accepted offer, they may look for an alternative course that has places available whilst still holding their original choice.

EXTRA and **CLEARING** are UCAS services that help a student without an offer of a place to continue their application to find a suitable degree course



When to apply

We recommend you apply as early as possible. There are four application deadlines you should be aware of:

- **15 October** – deadline for applications for all professional medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and veterinary science courses, and for all courses at the universities of Oxford or Cambridge.
- **15 January** – advised application deadline for all courses except those listed above with a 15 October deadline, and those art and design courses with a 24 March deadline.

You can still apply for courses after the 15 January deadline. However some popular courses may not have vacancies after that date. We recommend you check with individual universities and colleges.

- **24 March** – application deadline for some art and design courses, except those listed with a 15 January deadline.
- **30 June** – if you apply after 30 June, you will be entered into a process known as **Clearing**. Through **Clearing** you have to contact universities and colleges direct to check if they have vacancies on courses. The courses are listed on www.ucas.com from mid-August until late September. Find more information about **Clearing** at www.ucas.com/clearing.



Step 3 - Making arrangements to study

Visas

Visit UK Visas and Immigration and the UK Council for International Student Affairs for information about applying for a student visa. There are links on www.ucas.com/international under 'How to apply'.

Living costs

For help in working out the full cost of studying in the UK, contact:

- the international offices at universities and colleges.
- your local British Council office www.britishcouncil.org.

Or use the Brightside International Student Calculator at <http://internationalstudentcalculator.org.uk>

There may be some limited financial help for undergraduate studies. This help may be called a 'scholarship' or 'bursary'. Universities and colleges will publish information about their own scholarships and bursaries on their websites.





Connect with UCAS

We are here to answer your questions about the application process.

- Visit www.ucas.com/international to find out all you need to know about applying, search over 35,000 courses and see if we're visiting your country.
- Call us on **+44 330 333 0230** to speak to one of our trained advisers between 08.30 – 18.00 (UK time), Monday to Friday. If you are calling from the UK call 0871 468 0 468.

Find us on social media

- Join our group to see what others are asking www.facebook.com/ucasonline
- Follow us to find out the latest news www.twitter.com/ucas_online

Read our blogs

- Read blogs from other international students www.ucasconnect.com/blogs

Watch our videos

- Watch and share our videos and 'How to' guides www.ucas.tv
- Watch video guides and find out what other international students think www.youtube.com/ucasonline

Guide to UCAS terms

Acceptance	This means the applicant has met all the conditions set by the university or college and they have a place.
Apply	The UCAS online application system for applying for higher education courses in the UK.
Clearing	A service available between July and September. It can help people without a university or college place to find suitable vacancies on higher education courses.
Conditional offer	The university or college will offer the applicant a place if they meet certain conditions, which are usually based on their exam results.
Extra	If the applicant has used all five choices on their application but has not been offered a place by any university or college, they can apply through Extra for another course. In Extra, they can apply for any course with vacancies. Extra is open between the end of February and early July.
Firm offer	The offer the applicant has accepted as their first choice.
HE	Higher education.
Institution	A university or college offering higher education courses.
Insurance offer	The offer the applicant has accepted as their second choice, in case they do not meet the requirements of their first choice.
Offer	When a university or college has considered an application they make one of two decisions: offer a place, or make the application unsuccessful.
Personal ID	A 10-digit individual number the applicant will be given when they register to use Apply. They will need to give this number if they contact us or the universities about their application.
Track	The online system where the applicant can track the progress of their application. They can use it to check if they've received any offers and make their replies.
UCAS registered centre	An organisation that students are able to make their application through. Centres are widely considered as a trusted source of applications by universities and colleges.
UCAS search tool	An online search available at search.ucas.com where the applicant can find and compare courses based on subject, university and location.
Unconditional offer	The applicant has met all the academic requirements and the university is happy to accept them.

www.ucas.com

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UCAS