

CONTACT US

Student Recruitment

+44 (0) 1243 816000
studyhere@chi.ac.uk

Admissions

+44 (0) 1243 816002
admissions@chi.ac.uk



@chiuni



UNIVERSITY OF
CHICHESTER

Parents' and guardians' guide to applying to university



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What is UCAS?

UCAS is the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service.

UCAS helps students make informed choices through the higher education application process.

Key Dates

Year 12

- **March – August**
Research courses and visit universities

Year 13

- **8th September**
Applications open on the UCAS website
- **15th October**
Deadline for Oxbridge, Veterinary Science, Medicine and Dentistry
- **15th January**
Official UCAS deadline (applications can be sent after this date, however, universities cannot guarantee this application will be given equal consideration)
Check your student's college/sixth form deadline
- **25th February**
UCAS Extra opens. (see page 14 for more information about UCAS Extra)
- **5th May**
If you received all your university decisions by 31 March, you must reply to any offers by 5 May, otherwise they will be automatically declined
- **3rd June**
Deadline to reply to UCAS. If you receive decisions from all your university choices between the end of March and the 6 May 2021, you must reply to your offer of a place or it will be declined.
- **4th July**
UCAS Extra closes
- **Clearing**
Clearing starts on 5th July through UCAS (see page 14 for more information about Clearing)
Check specific dates with universities

** All dates are correct at the time of writing. Please check ucas.com for the latest information*

Extra-curricular activities

There is more to a university application than just academic achievements.

Admissions tutors and academics will want to learn how students have developed their skills and experiences through other activities outside of their study.

Work experience

Work experience looks great on personal statements, but only if applicants reflect on what they have learnt and how this relates to their course of choice.

For vocational-based courses relatable work experience is invaluable. For students who are thinking of applying for teaching, work experience in a school setting is going to be of benefit.

Part time work

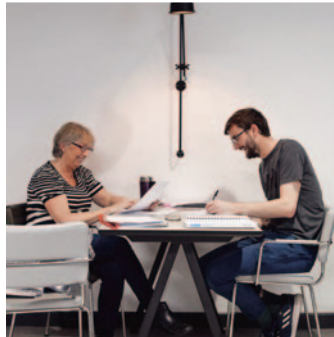
Part time work shows dedication and commitment. Be specific in examples when demonstrating skills – talk about a specific situation and how you handled it.

Volunteering

Volunteering shows an applicant has determination and drive. It's also a great way to build on interpersonal and communication skills.

Clubs and hobbies

Talking about clubs and hobbies can help show a student's personality in their Personal Statement, however, make sure these are relevant and appropriate.



Research

Make informed choices by learning what each university has to offer.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Match course requirements to predicted grades. Ensure the course choices made are realistic and based on what your student is likely to achieve.

COURSE CONTENT, REPUTATION AND FACILITIES

Ensure the module guides are read to ensure the course of interest is right for them. Also research what course-specific facilities there are.

TYPE OF DEGREE

Options vary between single honours degree, combined degree (joint honours) or major/minor degree.

CAREER IDEAS

Will this course help them to achieve their goal?

STUDENT UNION

As universities vary in size, so do their student unions. Student unions offer a wealth of support and social opportunities for students.

ACCOMMODATION

If your student applies to the University of Chichester and accepts us as their firm choice, then they will be guaranteed a room in our University accommodation for their first year. Many universities cannot offer this so ensure you research availability of accommodation.

TEACHING METHODS

Universities teach and assess in a multitude of ways including coursework, exams, practicals, presentations and group work.

GRADUATE PROSPECTS

It can be helpful to find out what careers or further study students go on to do after graduating. Visit discoveruni.gov.uk to find out more.

COMMUTING

Some students decide to commute to university, depending on their contact time. Contact time is how much students need to be in university for their course. Timetables vary from course to course.

SIZE

University sizes vary greatly. Some students will be keen to get 'lost in the crowd' whilst others prefer a smaller 'community feel' like that of the University of Chichester.

WE GUARANTEE YOU A ROOM IN OUR HALLS *

If you apply to us by the UCAS 15th January deadline and then accept our offer as your firm choice, we will guarantee you a room in our halls of residence.

* See website for full T & Cs



LOCATION

Location is important; check out the nearest cities and surrounding areas. The University of Chichester is set in a safe, green and vibrant area, close to the south coast, with fast city links to London. We were ranked as 3rd safest university in the country. *Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey 2018*

CAMPUS

Some smaller universities are based all on one site, however, most are spread out on different campuses, due to size and course facilities. This is something to consider when students decide on location and accommodation.

EVENTS AND VISITS:

UCAS FAIRS

This is the perfect opportunity to meet higher education providers all in one place and start your research. Your student can ask questions and find out what they can offer.

OPEN DAYS

Open Days are a great way to talk to academics face to face and get a real feel of each university and what it can offer. You are likely to spend three - four years at university, so this is a great opportunity to find out what a university is like to live and study at.

TASTER DAYS

These are tailored to give students the experience of what it may be like to study the course and often include lectures and hands-on workshops.

CAMPUS TOURS

As an alternative to open days universities offer student-led campus tours and ad-hoc visits. This is a great way to get a feel of everyday life on campus. It may also be possible to meet with a lecturer.



ONLINE

UCAS course search

The online course search tool is a great starting point to find courses that interest your student. You can search by subject and location. This will give you all the information you need including entry requirements, course outline and duration.

University-specific websites

This will enable you to carry out more detailed research into courses and also university life specific to that institution.

Personal statements

A personal statement is an opportunity for students to sell themselves to the universities they have applied to and show that they are the best student for the course.

What to include:

- Course choice
- Relevant interests
- Career ambitions and goals
- Transferable skills
- Formal tone and language

What NOT to include:

- Lists
- Qualification grades
- Names of schools, colleges or institutions
- Referencing a university by name
- Quotes out of context

What universities want to see:

- **Individual study skills** – your student should be able to cite examples relating to their current academic work. Remember to keep them relevant and related to the course.
- **Self-awareness** – your student will need to show they understand their own skill base. Are there areas they are really keen to develop related to the course?
- **Motivation and commitment** – what inspires your student to study this subject? Do they have a key defining moment or event that has pushed them to follow this subject?
- **Course understanding** – your student needs to show they have done their research into the course content including modules. However, do not refer to a university by name as the personal statement will be read by all the universities you are applying to.

- **Research skills** – encourage your student to show their academic skills through examples of good practice. The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a great example of independent research.
- **Time management** – meeting deadlines is going to be key at university. Your student will have already had to contend with these at school or college. Part time jobs/volunteering can also evidence this with the right examples.
- **Enthusiasm beyond the syllabus** – what reading does your student do outside of college or sixth form? Have they been to any summer schools or gone on specific trips?

The key thing when writing a personal statement is to analyse what you have learnt from experiences and expand on them.



Application process

Applications are made through the UCAS website.

Students have up to five choices of university and course.

Invisibility:

Each university will not be able to see who else your student has applied to.

Cost:

There is a cost involved in applying to Higher Education courses through UCAS. This is explained on their website www.ucas.com.

Deadlines:

- The deadline for most undergraduate applications is 15 January. Applications can be sent after this date, however, universities cannot guarantee this application will be given equal consideration
- For courses at Oxbridge and those in Veterinary Science, Medicine and Dentistry there is an earlier deadline of 15 October. This will also mean there is an earlier internal deadline and students will need to ask their school or college about this
- Sixth forms and colleges will have an internal deadline. This is to ensure tutors have time to check the application and write references

Clicking 'send' on the application portal will refer your student's application to their school or college (if currently studying), not directly to UCAS.

Once the sixth form or college have the application there are still more steps to the process. It is important that your student does not leave this to the last minute as this may prevent them from meeting the application deadline.

Restrictions

- Medicine, veterinary and dentistry (maximum of four choices and one other). For example a medical student might apply to four Medicine courses and then for a Biology degree.
- One course choice at either Oxford or Cambridge.



What next

After clicking 'submit'.

January – April

Your student will receive offers from universities.

March

Start to apply for student finance (please check the Student Finance England website for exact dates).

May – June

Students can start to apply for student accommodation.

May

Your student will need to choose their Firm and Insurance choices (see page 12).

If students have specific support needs, contact the university support services directly before the commencement of their course. There may be specific support packages available.



Decisions

The universities will assess your student's application and make one of the following decisions:

- **Unconditional Offer** – if your student's application meets all of the criteria and they have met the standard conditions of the offer.
- **Conditional Offer** – your student will be asked to achieve specific results in their current qualifications or other relevant experience.
- **Rejection** – if your student's application is not suitable, they will be rejected from the course.
- **Interview/Audition** – for some courses universities require a mandatory interview or practical audition.

Students need to choose a Firm and Insurance choice:

- **Firm Choice** – 'the one' – this is your first choice, the course you definitely want to study (dependant on conditions and requirements). Your student is committed to that course at that university.
- **Insurance Choice** – a back-up option if your student does not get into their Firm choice. This will usually hold a lower grade offer. This has the same level of commitment as a Firm choice, but only comes into play if your student does not meet the conditions of their Firm choice. Students do not have to have an Insurance choice if they are certain that they would only go to their Firm choice.

- Your student will have a deadline to reply to offers they receive from institutions. It's really important that they check these deadlines or they will decline by default for not replying.
- Before responding they will need to understand the conditions of their offer and contact the university if they have questions.
- Compare offers to decide which your student wants to accept and which they do not.
- Make sure you have visited the university in question and it is somewhere your son/daughter will be happy.



Accommodation

Every university is slightly different when it comes to student accommodation.

Some will have enough accommodation to offer to all of their first year students and others will have a limited number which may be on a first-come-first-served basis.

Accommodation, or Halls of Residence, as it may be referred to, can come in all shapes and sizes. Some will have en-suite facilities, others will have shared. Most universities offer the option between catered and self-catered with catered being the more expensive option.

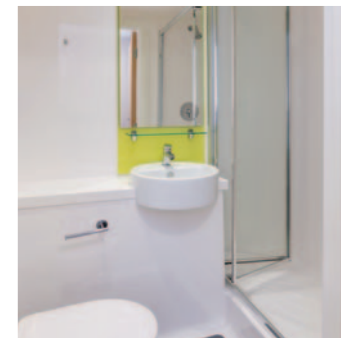
Prices of rooms will again vary with catered en-suite being the more expensive option. Where the university is located will also have an impact on price with London generally being the most expensive.

Whatever type of accommodation you opt for it is important to liaise with the university as early as you can. Go and look at the accommodation available to help you make an informed choice

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If things don't go to plan

The most important thing to remember is not to panic. Students can use the services below to continue to apply for a university place.

UCAS Extra

UCAS Extra is a way of applying to additional universities or different subjects BUT ONLY if your student has either received no offers from their original five choices OR if they have changed their mind about the course/subject they wish to study and intend to decline all offers/choices.

UCAS Adjustment

UCAS Adjustment is a process that is available to anyone who exceeds the grade requirements of their Firm choice. If that ends up being your student, they can use Adjustment to swap their existing university place for one at another university.

Adjustment is available from A level results day until 31 August. It's entirely optional: a lot of competitive courses will be full but, other applicants might have missed their conditions or swapped a course too, so it could be worth seeing what's available.

UCAS Clearing

Clearing is a UCAS undergraduate application. Clearing is another service you can use to look for alternative courses. If your student didn't get their place on a course, or didn't get the grades they required, Clearing allows them to apply for courses that still have vacancies.

Year out

Your student may wish to take a year out and defer the place on their course. They will want to take a productive gap year to make sure they get the most out of it. If your student is thinking about deferring check in advance with the university that this can be done.

Results Day

On the day of receiving your student's results, they will be able to view their UCAS Track to see whether they have been accepted to their Firm choice university based on the exam results they have achieved. If the university has rejected them then their Insurance choice will appear with a potential offer. They will also receive emails directly from the universities confirming these offers.

If your student intends to live away once they know which university they will be attending they will need to organise and confirm their accommodation. In the weeks that follow until their first day at university the institution will be in touch via email/letters confirming start dates, timetables and any other joining instructions.

Useful Information

UCAS national course search:

digital.ucas.com/search

UCAS apply and track:

www.ucas.com/ucas-undergraduate-apply-and-track

UCAS extra:

www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/types-offer/extra-choices

Student Finance England

www.gov.uk/apply-online-for-student-finance

Budget planner:

www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

University of Chichester:

chi.ac.uk/course-search

