

2016-17

# Student Guide to UCAS Applications



Farmor's School  
AN ACADEMY

**SIXTH**  
**FORM**

SC

VI

6/1/2016

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# Registering on the Apply System

The APPLY system is available for use wherever there is internet access. The following guide should take you through all the necessary steps to make a successful application. There is help on writing personal statements after the APPLY guide.

## INITIAL PROCESS

1. Go to <http://www.ucas.com>
2. Click on
3. Click on
4. Go through process for registering. You will need to set up a password and verify an email address. You will be given an ID and username. Note them below as you will need them to log on.

There are lots of advice videos on UCAS:

[www.ucas.com/fillinginyourapplication](http://www.ucas.com/fillinginyourapplication)

## POINTS TO NOTE

**Registering:** 'a School or College'

**Buzzword:** *FARMORS2017*

**Which Group:** Select your tutor group from list eg. **ARW**

- This guide is designed to help you through the process of applying to universities through UCAS. The APPLY system is simple to follow, but help is always on hand if you have any difficulties.
- **Your tutor should always be the first port of call** as they not only know how the system works, but also have the experience and expertise to be able to help with writing personal statements. They should be involved at every stage of the process and are more than willing to offer advice on courses and institutions where they can, or to point you in the right direction if they themselves do not have the necessary knowledge. It is also important for you to remember that they will be the ones writing your reference!

Further assistance and advice can be obtained from your teachers, Mrs White, Miss Crawford and Nikki. The onus is on you to make the most of the help that is on offer. If you do, the chances are you will end up with the strongest application possible. Good luck!

## The UCAS Process

Time	Student	Teacher/Tutor
<b>29.6.16</b>	UCAS APPLY training. Register with UCAS <b>APPLY</b> and start to complete form. Must note username / password in UCAS manual	UCAS adviser password issued; begin mentoring students through the process.
<b>29.6.16 to 15.07.16</b>	<b>Research universities and courses and complete as much of the form as you can</b>	On-going monitoring of personal statements and application process.
<b>End of Summer term</b>	Complete sections of UCAS form and have personal statement in draft form	Teachers begin to write references on SIMS. Tutor signs off UCAS form and statement completed so far to allow students to finish on 15 <sup>th</sup> July.
<b>September/ October</b>	Complete rest of the UCAS application form with help of tutor. Once <b>PERSONAL STATEMENT</b> is completed, student proof reads using final checklist and prints off a copy for tutor to check and use to write reference.	Teachers write references on SIMS. Deadlines: <b>16<sup>th</sup> September (Oxbridge/Medicine/Vet Science/Dentistry students). 19<sup>th</sup> October (all other applications)</b>
		Check and approve personal statement. Tutor completes reference in Word, adds to the application form and saves in their tutor folder in the 6 <sup>th</sup> Form shared area.
<b>September/ October October/ November</b>	Receive 'OKAY' from tutor to send form to EW to check online Make <b>Payment of £24</b> online and <b>PAY AND SEND ONLINE</b>	<b>Tutor checks completed application form</b> and gives 'OKAY' to student.
		Application & reference checked by EW/SC. Any issues are taken up with tutor / student. Emma White approves UCAS form and sends to UCAS.
<b>October/ November</b>	Student receives confirmation from UCAS of received application.	Tutor begins monitoring offers received through advisor track
<b>December onwards</b>	Wait for decisions from universities.	<b>JANUARY 15<sup>th</sup> – last date for UCAS applications</b>

# Important Dates in the Application Process

**Mid-September 2016** UCAS will accept applications from this date

**September 16<sup>th</sup> 2016** Farmor's subject reference deadline for Oxbridge/Medicine applications.

**October 15<sup>th</sup> 2016** The UCAS deadline for **Oxbridge** applications and applications for **Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine** and **Veterinary Science**

**October 19<sup>th</sup> 2016** Farmor's subject reference deadline for all applications.

**November 24<sup>th</sup> 2016** Farmor's deadline for the **completion of all applications by students.**

**January 15<sup>th</sup> 2017** Last date for applications from UK and EU residents for all other courses to be received at UCAS and to be guaranteed equal academic consideration.

**February 25<sup>th</sup> 2017** *Extra starts for eligible students*

**24<sup>th</sup> March 2017** *Art and Design deadlines for some courses*

**30<sup>th</sup> June 2017** *deadline for all application in the normal process; all received after this will automatically go into clearing.*

**31<sup>st</sup> August 2017** *end of period for conditions to be met and end of Adjustment.*

## Music & Conservatoire Applications

*1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 closing date for applications  
(Applications open in mid-July 2016)*

*29<sup>th</sup> August 2017 final deadline for all applications to UCAS for starting in 2017.*

The reason for the relatively early Farmor's deadline is to give you the best possible chance of gaining a place at your preferred institutions. It can still be the case of 'the earlier, the better' as some universities consider applications as they arrive. It also ensures sufficient time for the form to be processed, references added etc.

Once you have made your application you will receive an acknowledgement (the AS2 letter). This letter will include an individual applicant number which allows you to track your application on the UCAS website.

## **Interviews**

There is a trend towards interviewing students. Come and ask for any help and advice that you may need plus more subject specific information. We can set a mock up interview for you if you would like.

## **Important dates in the Oxbridge Application calendar**

Candidates must check to see if there is a written test for their subject, and ensure that they have registered, where required. See Rachael Mundy (Exams Officer if unsure)

### **1 October 2016**

Standard deadline for registering for the BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT).

### **15 October 2016**

Final deadline for registering for the BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT), the English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT), the History Aptitude Test (HAT), the Physics Aptitude Test (PAT) and the Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA)

### **15 October 2016**

Closing date for all UCAS applications.

Closing date for receipt of application forms for the accelerated medical course.

### **1 September–20 October 2016**

Law National Admissions Test (LNAT)

### **5 November 2016**

BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT)

English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT)

History Aptitude Test (HAT)

Physics Aptitude Test (PAT)

Aptitude Test for Mathematics and Computer Science

Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA)

Tests for all Modern Languages courses

Tests for all Classics courses

### **Usually around 10 November (date to be confirmed)**

Closing date for submissions of written work, if required by your subject.

### **Usually around 10 November (date to be confirmed)**

Portfolios for Fine Art must be delivered to the Ruskin School of Drawing & Fine Art by noon.

### **December 2016**

Interviews take place in Oxford. Written tests, for those subjects which require them during the Oxford interview period in December.

### **By mid-January 2017**

You will be notified of the outcome of your application.

# **Student and Tutor Responsibilities**

## **Students are responsible for...**

- Seeking advice about institutions and courses they are interested in using Unifrog.
- Attending open days at institutions as part of your research, but not attending more than four.
- Completing the 'Course' part of the UCAS form before requesting references to be sent out
- Requesting Subject References to be sent out – this is done once they have chosen the courses for which they are applying (see flow diagram) & talking to their tutor about other information to be included in the reference.
- Writing their personal statements with assistance from their tutor
- ***Thoroughly*** checking their completed form before showing to tutor for checking
- Only sending their UCAS form to the referee AFTER being given the go ahead by their tutor
- Making payment of **£24** on-line (for multiple courses) or £13 (if applying for one course only).
- Make decision, with help, of firm acceptance and insurance by date given by UCAS

## **Tutors are responsible for...**

- Giving impartial advice on institutions and courses where they can or pointing their tutees in the right direction for advice e.g. subject teachers, library resources, Mrs White.
- Assisting tutees with their personal statements and their UCAS forms
- Checking that the details are correct on their tutees' application forms
- Checking progress of the students on the APPLY system
- Encouraging students to start / complete their UCAS forms
- Writing the school reference for their tutees and adding it to the application form
- Monitoring the offers received by their tutees

## **How do universities and colleges view deferred entry applications?**

Gap years are brilliant and most universities and colleges will allow you to apply for deferred entry, but check with them before applying. When you apply, include details of your proposed gap year in your personal statement to support your application. Some Medicine/Maths courses may frown upon this.

## **Can I apply to the same university or college for more than one course?**

Yes, apart from the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge.

## Choosing Universities and Courses

- Over the course of the year we have used a number of resources to help you decide on career / course / university. You also had the UCAS Convention to gather information.
- Careers – Naturally course choice may well be governed by career choice and it is essential to leave options open if you are unsure. Remember, 60% of all graduate jobs are open to applicants regardless of subject studied.
- You will find a range of useful resources in the LRC to help you when looking for the right university and course including some university prospectuses, but they can also be obtained by ordering them directly from the institution or from the website.
- A list of all the institutions with the courses they offer can be accessed on the UCAS website. The address is [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) . Find the Entry Profiles when you investigate particular courses, these provide a wide range of information regarding the qualifications and skills needed. There is a course search tool on the UCAS website which will also help you.
- Look at the entry requirements for any courses that you're interested in and then ask yourself whether you're likely to achieve those grades. Set your sights high, but do not set yourself unrealistic goals. If in doubt, talk to subject teachers about predicted A' level grades.
- [www.unifrog.org](http://www.unifrog.org) is a great website to go onto to help to inform your choices. You can find out about costs of courses, the way the courses are assessed, the amount of time you actually spend in lectures, and lots of other really useful information.
- The Sixth Form is informed of many open days and pre-application events and Nikki will email regular updates as well as pinning up information on the noticeboards in the Sixth Form area.
- The best way of finding out whether you're going to like a university or not is to visit it. Arrange to attend an open day and make sure you talk to as many people, especially students, as you can. Three or four open days are enough for anybody, and in fact any more can be counter-productive.
- The Complete University Guide ([www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk)), is an interactive site which allows you to alter the weightings of the different criteria to suit your own requirements and so create your own unique table.
- You can apply for a **maximum of five choices** on your application, but there **are restrictions** on the amount of choices **for some courses**.
- Check you have applied for appropriate courses – talk to tutors / teachers about grades required and whether you are likely to get some achievable offers.
- Check you have / have not deferred entry
- You only really need two choices: the one you really want to go to and one that is OK if you can't get into your first choice. You have 5 choices though so you have time to really finally decide. You have to accept your offers by the first week of May 2017.

# Useful Websites

## Higher Education

<a href="http://www.ucas.com">www.ucas.com</a> <a href="http://www.scit.wlv.ac.uk/ukinfo">www.scit.wlv.ac.uk/ukinfo</a> <a href="http://www.qca.org.uk">www.qca.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.educationguardian.co.uk">www.educationguardian.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.unistats.direct.gov.uk">www.unistats.direct.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.studentfinance.direct.gov.uk">www.studentfinance.direct.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.universitycompare.com">www.universitycompare.com</a> <a href="http://www.careersegg.com">www.careersegg.com</a> Oxbridge: <a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate">http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate</a> - tips on how to apply to Oxbridge and the process with key dates	<a href="http://www.opendays.com">www.opendays.com</a> <a href="http://www.push.co.uk">www.push.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.unistats.co.uk">www.unistats.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.whatuni.com">www.whatuni.com</a> – can compare the best University and degree courses for free – Degree course rankings, university reviews, degree course details, university profiles etc <a href="http://www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk">www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.timesonline.co.uk/uniguide">www.timesonline.co.uk/uniguide</a> <a href="http://www.highfliers.co.uk">www.highfliers.co.uk</a> <a href="http://universitycompare.com/university-rankings/guardian-university-league-table-2015/">http://universitycompare.com/university-rankings/guardian-university-league-table-2015/</a>
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## Finance / Student Life

There is a cost implication for university and you can find out more information at the websites below. There will be more information given out separately later in the year.

<a href="http://www.nusonline.co.uk">www.nusonline.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.studentzone.org.uk">www.studentzone.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.studentunion.co.uk">www.studentunion.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance">www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance</a> <a href="http://www.slc.co.uk">www.slc.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.bunk.com">www.bunk.com</a>
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## Employment / Careers

<a href="http://www.monster.co.uk">www.monster.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.doctorjob.com">www.doctorjob.com</a> <a href="http://www.glosjobs.co.uk">www.glosjobs.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.prospects.ac.uk">www.prospects.ac.uk</a> <a href="http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk">www.apprenticeships.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.theswac.org.uk">www.theswac.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.jobseekers.direct.gov.uk">www.jobseekers.direct.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.careerpilot.org.uk">www.careerpilot.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.thisisgloucestershire.co.uk">www.thisisgloucestershire.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.fasttomato.co.uk">www.fasttomato.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.careers4u.tv">www.careers4u.tv</a> <a href="https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk">https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.ucasprogress.com">www.ucasprogress.com</a>	<a href="http://www.realworkrealpay.info">www.realworkrealpay.info</a> <a href="http://www.movingupgloucestershire.com">www.movingupgloucestershire.com</a> <a href="http://www.whatnowglos.co.uk">www.whatnowglos.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk">www.notgoingtouni.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.thetimes100.co.uk/information">www.thetimes100.co.uk/information</a> <a href="http://www.allaboutschoolleavers.co.uk">www.allaboutschoolleavers.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.mycareersspringboard.org">www.mycareersspringboard.org</a> <a href="http://www.sscalliance.org">www.sscalliance.org</a> <a href="http://www.growingambitions.tes.co.uk">www.growingambitions.tes.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.yes2jobs.co.uk">www.yes2jobs.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk">www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk">www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk</a>
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## Gap Year

<a href="http://www.bunac.org.uk">www.bunac.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.yini.org.uk">www.yini.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.csv.org.uk">www.csv.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.yearoutgroup.org">www.yearoutgroup.org</a>	<a href="http://www.gapyear.com">www.gapyear.com</a> <a href="http://www.gap.org.uk">www.gap.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.worldwidevolunteering.org.uk">www.worldwidevolunteering.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.gogapyear.com">www.gogapyear.com</a>
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## Student Accommodation

<a href="http://www.bunk.com">www.bunk.com</a> <a href="http://www.thestudentvillage.co.uk">www.thestudentvillage.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.unilodge.com">www.unilodge.com</a> <a href="http://www.anythingstudent.com">www.anythingstudent.com</a>
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# Checklist for the Different Sections

## Personal Details

- E-mail address – no stupid e-mail addresses; e.g. [love2party@bt.com](mailto:love2party@bt.com)
- Fee Code – nearly always ‘02 LA’ (LA = Local Authority)
- Student support arrangements – make sure you have the right LA (Gloucestershire / Swindon / Wiltshire or Oxfordshire)
- Name and Age – often entered incorrectly
- Occupational Background – this is the occupation of one of your parents

## Employment

- Check you have listed all employment. If you have only done babysitting, this is valid employment and should be listed. Obviously if the list is long you may need to be more selective.

## Personal Statement

The personal statement is supposed to be just that – personal. Spelling and Grammar are important, as is layout and structure. You have had lots of advice on this.

- Leave a space between paragraphs – easier for the reader.
- Make sure you have sold yourself and focused on the skills and attributes you have gained rather than just listing experiences
- Don't start with, 'My name is ...
- You have 4000 characters or 47 lines of text – whichever comes first
- You cannot use bold, italics or underline.

## This section is where most mistakes occur.....

## Education

- Qualifications are often inputted wrongly. Double check your certificates or see Rachel Mehtar for a summary of this information.
- Input the grade for all your AS subjects (Advanced Subsidiary). You can put in module information **if you wish**. Use **August** as the date for cashing in/exam results etc.
- Your A Level exams (GCE Advanced) should be listed again and mark grade as 'pending'.
- For the A levels you are continuing, you do not have to input all the units taken/about to take. You may wish to if you have high grades in your AS modules. It is best, however, to be consistent – all your units for all your subjects or no units for all your subjects.
- You can also gain UCAS points for some extracurricular Qualifications like some music grades etc. You can find this out on the UCAS website.

## A level Subjects Exam Boards

<b>A level Subject</b>	<b>Exam board</b>
Biology	OCR
Chemistry	AQA
Drama & Theatre Studies	AQA
Economics	Edexcel
ELL	Edexcel
English Lit	Edexcel
Extended Project	AQA
Fine Art	AQA
Further Maths	Edexcel
Geography	AQA
Graphic Communication	OCR
History	Edexcel
ICT	AQA
Maths	Edexcel
Media	WJEC
Music	OCR
Music Technology	Edexcel
Philosophy	AQA
Photography	AQA
Physical Education	AQA
Physics	AQA
Product Design - DT	WJEC
Psychology	AQA
Sociology	AQA
Spanish	AQA

## **After Applying**

- After you've sent the application form to the referee, your tutor will write their reference about you based on the references from your subject teachers. Tutors will add this to your application form. Mrs White will check the reference.
- Mrs White cannot process the application until payment has been made.
- UCAS will then notify you by post and through 'Track' to confirm receipt of your application. This letter will also include your personal UCAS number.
- You can check on the progress of your application at any time by visiting the UCAS website ([www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)) and using your Personal ID number.
- Once you have received a reply from all of the institutions you have to decide on a first (firm) choice and an insurance choice.
- You will be expected to make an application for any student finance normally by the end of May even if you haven't decided on your firm choice of university.

### **What happens when my application is sent to UCAS?**

Once your application is completed and sent to us, UCAS process it. If they have to query anything, they'll contact you for more information. Your application will then be sent to your universities and colleges to consider and UCAS will send you a welcome letter.

### **What should I do if I don't receive my welcome letter?**

If your postal address is in the UK, allow 14 days for your letter to arrive. If your postal address is outside of the UK please allow 21 days. If you still haven't received the letter, please contact UCAS Customer Service Unit.

**UCAS PHONE NUMBER: 0371 468 0 468**

<b>Farmor's Apply Centre Number: 15248</b>
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### **Reply dates**

When you have received your last reply (offers / rejections) from universities, UCAS will send you a card/notification through 'Track' that details when you have to make a decision with regard to your firm acceptance and your insurance – **YOU MUST REPLY BEFORE THIS DATE**

- The decision as to which offers to accept as your 'firm' and 'insurance' is difficult. You need to be realistic but at the same time positive about your potential grades. Seek advice from your subject teachers.

### **What is Extra?**

Extra is a way of making a further choice after you have applied. You are eligible for Extra if you have used all five choices on your application and have either been unsuccessful at all of them, or have declined all offers you have received. You can apply for another choice on Track, providing that it is available in Extra (you can check this on Course Search). The Extra service operates from the end of February until the end of June.

## **What is Clearing?**

Clearing (available July-Sept) is a service that helps people find vacancies on higher education courses. If you have applied this year but have not gained a place or have declined your offers, you may be eligible for Clearing. Courses with vacancies will be listed on the UCAS site once Clearing has started.

## **Adjustment**

If you've done better than expected, **Adjustment** is a chance for you to reconsider where and what to study. If you've had a firm conditional choice accepted – and therefore made into an unconditional firm choice – you could potentially swap your place for one on another course you prefer. Adjustment is available 14–31 August. You register for Adjustment in Track following exam results.

## **FAQS from [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)**

### **Some of the information on my welcome letter is wrong. What shall I do?**

If your university or college is wrong, contact UCAS Customer Service Unit. If the course details are incorrect, contact the university or college concerned and quote your Personal ID. If they are happy to change the course details, they will tell UCAS and they will inform you.

### **How can I check the progress of my application?**

You can check the progress of your application on Track. You will need your Personal ID, and your username and password which you used to apply. UCAS also sends you a letter or email when they receive decisions from your chosen universities and colleges.

### **I want to change the year of entry I put on my application. What do I do?**

You need to contact your universities and colleges direct. If they agree to change it, they will tell UCAS and UCAS will display your new year of entry on Track.

### **Can I change my choice of university or college?**

You can change your choice of university or college **within seven days from the date on your welcome letter**, depending upon the time of year. After that, you can only make choice changes if your chosen course is no longer running or you have exceptional circumstances. To change a choice due to exceptional circumstances, we will need a letter of support from your referee, detailing the change you want and your reasons for requesting the change.

If you wish to change the course details at your chosen university or college, you should contact the university or college direct. In this situation, you do not need to contact UCAS. If they are happy to change your course, they will inform UCAS who will display the change on Track.

### **I did not use all my five choices. Can I use the others now?**

You can add further choices to your application using Track up to 30 June as long as you have not replied to any offers that you have received. If you are unable to use Track, you can add choices by phoning UCAS Customer Service Unit.

If you only had a single choice and paid the single application fee, you will also have to pay a further £13, which can be done in Track.

### **An offer I received direct from a university or college is not displayed in Track. What shall I do?**

This means your university or college has not told UCAS about your offer. As soon as they receive it, you will be able to see it in Track. If two or three weeks have passed since you were given the offer, you should contact the university or college to discuss it.

### **When will my universities and colleges make a decision about my application?**

Universities and colleges can take different lengths of time to make a decision. UCAS gives them a deadline by which to send them their decision. Often universities and colleges are much quicker than this, but if UCAS received your application:

**on or before 15 January**, we ask universities and colleges to send us their decision by the **end of March**. Some of them do not always achieve this, especially on popular courses, so the **latest you could receive their decision is early May**

**after 15 January**, your universities or colleges **could take as long as July** to make their decisions.

### **My course has been discontinued. What can I do?**

The university or college should offer you another course. If nothing is available that you want, you can apply to another university or college in its place. Your university or college should have sent you a form offering these options. If this has not happened, contact them immediately for further advice.

### **How do I reply to my offers?**

You reply to your offers in Track. You do not need to reply to your offers until you have received decisions from all your universities or colleges. Miss Cieciora normally does an assembly in March to advise on when to make final choices. When the universities have all sent their decisions to UCAS, UCAS automatically ask you to reply to offers.

If you are waiting for decisions but you are no longer interested in these choices, you can cancel them in Track and then reply to the offers you have already received. It may sound obvious, but check you have received the offers you wish to accept from UCAS before doing this.

### **I want to reply to my offers but there is no reply button in Track. What can I do?**

The reply button only appears in Track when you have received decisions from all the universities and colleges to which you have applied.

If you have not received decisions from all your choices, but wish to accept an offer, you can cancel any outstanding choices in Track. The option to reply will then be available. Please check that you have received the offers you wish to accept before cancelling any choices.

If Track shows decisions from all your choices, but there is no reply button, please call UCAS Customer Service Unit.