

UK UNIVERSITY APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All applications are made online through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service: UCAS. You do not apply to universities individually. Applications are made between September and January for the following year. Oxford and Cambridge applications, and applications for medicine, dentistry and veterinary science, have to be made by mid-October. [note: you cannot apply for Oxford and Cambridge]*

You need the school instructions to make an application.

Our deadlines at school are as follows:

September 30th for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science

December 1st for all other courses.

General information about what courses exist and where can be found by

- consulting the UCAS website at www.ucas.com This will give you information about all the courses, and links to the universities' own websites. It also has information about finance and much more, including the Stamford test, which is an interest questionnaire to help you decide on an area of study.
- reading the prospectuses of individual universities. You can read and order them online, and they can usually be found in Room 103. However, you should also send for your own. All the addresses are on the UCAS website.
- looking at the individual subject guides for specific subjects

How to apply

Applications are made by internet using the UCAS Apply system. You can use your own computer or one at school. There is an application fee of £21. You can register in June at the end of Year 6 during the Careers Seminar. The school will provide detailed instructions on how to fill in the online application form. It is essential that you collect these instructions and follow them as a lot of time can be wasted otherwise. Applications cannot be made until September of 7th year. In September I will give out teacher subject comment forms and application instructions.

The online application

You can choose up to five courses, including more than one course at the same university if you wish. There is no order of preference.

Every applicant must have a **personal referee** who will discuss your application with you and give advice. The referee should be a teacher in the English section who preferably teaches you at the moment, but does not have to teach the subject you are applying for.

The referee writes a **reference** based on the comments of your teachers, and has to predict the grades you are likely to get in your Bac subjects. Also on the form will be your **6th year end-of year grades**.

As part of the application, you will have to write a **personal statement** explaining why you have chosen your particular course(s) and why you think you deserve a place. Your referee will help you with this. Oxford and Cambridge may also ask you to send examples of written work, so save anything useful. The universities will use the reference, your personal statement and your 6th year grades to decide whether to offer you a place. They may also use **extra tests** – see below.

Extra tests

1. Subject tests

More and more universities/subjects are requiring extra tests. For Medicine and Law, in particular, you will probably be asked to take an extra test [BMAT, UKCAT, LNAT . . .] for which you will have to register as early as July in 6th year. Oxford and Cambridge also have their own tests for certain subjects. These tests are used to help assess your suitability for your chosen course. Some tests are done at school, but for others you may have to travel away from Munich. All necessary tests are indicated on the universities' course details, and there is a reminder on the UCAS application form. It is **your responsibility** to find out if a test is needed and to take any steps necessary.

2. English language tests

These tests are also increasingly required for non-native speakers. There is no standard policy; it depends on the university and the course. Sometimes a letter from the school can remove this requirement, but we cannot insist. L3 applicants are even more likely to be asked to provide a test result, typically Cambridge Advanced/Proficiency or IELTS., before taking up a place. The school can advise you where to take these tests, but we do not organise them.

What happens next

The universities receive your application from UCAS. **Note:** a university only sees your application to its course – not to anywhere else.

They may ask you to come to interview. Then they either

- make you an unconditional offer - only for people who already have their Bac!
- make you a conditional offer e.g. an overall grade 75% in the Bac with an 8.0 in one or more subjects
- reject you

Each time a university makes a decision about you, you are informed directly by them and through UCAS, until you have heard from all your choices. You can follow the progress of your application online. Then you have to decide which offers to keep and which to reject. You are allowed one Firm acceptance and one Insurance choice, and you have to let UCAS know by the end of June.

If you don't get any offers, or you have rejected any offers, you can use the 'UCAS Extra' system which sends your application to universities that still have places for the subject you've chosen.

You apply to one extra university at a time. This process starts in February of 7th year.

When you get your Bac results there are at least 3 possibilities:

1. You get the grades for your Firm choice, and confirm that you will be going there. You decline your Insurance choice.
2. You don't get the grades for your Firm choice, but you do get the grades for your Insurance choice, and confirm that you will be going there. You decline your Firm choice.
3. You don't get the grades for either choice, and decide to go through Clearing in August. This is when all the remaining places are advertised by the universities.

NOTE: In case 1, you don't have the option of declining your Firm acceptance and choosing your Insurance offer. If you really wanted to go there you would have put it first.

In case 2, if you have only missed the required grades by a small margin, you may be able to negotiate with your Firm choice to take you anyway. You will have to contact them directly.

Please note: the application process is quite complicated and time-consuming. Many people are involved. So do not begin it if you are not serious.

*Oxford and Cambridge: many students have a mistaken idea about these universities. They are famous, and parents in particular often think it is a good idea to apply to one of them. But they are **extremely** competitive and usually only one or two students per year from our school are accepted. If you apply you will have to make up your mind about all your other choices by the end of September; you may also have to take extra exams, and spend several days being interviewed. It is a lot of work. Unless you confidently expect a Bac average of at least 85%, with 9 in some subjects, and your teachers encourage you, it may not be worth it. There are many other excellent universities whose courses may suit you better.

What you should do now:

- think about career choices
- think about courses
- think about which universities or colleges have the best courses for you
- investigate www.ucas.com - there is a lot of useful information in addition to universities and courses
- decide who you will ask to be your referee. It must be someone from the English section who teaches you at the moment
- contact the universities you are interested in and ask for a prospectus (for entry in 2012)
- think about your personal statement
- **plan university visits in the UK. See separate document.**

Graham Johnstone
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