



**YOUR
FUTURE**

YOUR CHOICES!

HOW TO MAKE GREAT CHOICES

LEARN ABOUT UNIVERSITY LIFE

PREPARE FOR YOUR DREAM JOB

**PACKED WITH
TIPS & ADVICE**

**ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT
UNIVERSITY-LEVEL STUDY**

YOUR FUTURE

WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR FUTURE TO LOOK LIKE?

YOU'VE MADE THE LEAP TO STUDYING AT SIXTH FORM OR COLLEGE AND SOON YOU'LL NEED TO THINK ABOUT WHAT'S NEXT.

Once you've nailed your current studies, one option is to continue on to higher education. For most people this means studying at a university or college.

Lots of possibilities lie ahead and we know that can feel confusing. This booklet contains ideas and advice to help you to think about your future and plan ahead. You'll get a better understanding of what higher education is and why it could be the right option for you.

We'll be asking you to think about what you want your future to look like. We'll also be showing you options for getting there.

WHENEVER YOU SEE THIS SYMBOL...

...you'll also see some questions to reflect on. Make a note of your answers: they will help you think about what you want to do and assist you in making considered choices.

TO START, ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- DO I KNOW WHICH CAREER PATH I WANT TO TAKE OR AM I STILL UNSURE?
- WHAT DO I ENJOY AND WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO ME?
- HOW DO I WANT MY FUTURE TO LOOK? HOW WILL I GET THERE?

YOUR OPTIONS ONCE YOU REACH 18...

There are different options available when you complete your current qualifications and some will suit you better than others.

- + HIGHER EDUCATION** this is known as a degree-level qualification. Commonly known as university. Study is usually full time but can also be part time.
- + ADVANCED, HIGHER OR DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP** these allow you to learn on the job while getting a qualification.
- + WORK** get a job or start your own business.
- + TAKE SOME TIME OUT AND TRAVEL** you can use this time to figure out what you want to do next. Make it count by gaining cultural insights, volunteering or teaching. These are all valuable experiences you can add to your UCAS application or CV.

Whatever you decide, it's important that you know how to gather the advice and support you need to work out the best route for you. Make the most of opportunities to help you gather key information such as UCAS HE fairs, open days, school/college careers fairs, taster sessions and employer talks.

WISE UP...

THINKING ABOUT A GAP YEAR?
APPLY FOR UNIVERSITY AND DEFER YOUR PLACE - THAT WAY YOU CAN ENJOY YOUR YEAR OUT TO THE FULL.

GOING TO UNIVERSITY

WHAT IS HIGHER EDUCATION?

YOU MIGHT HEAR UNIVERSITY REFERRED TO AS 'HIGHER EDUCATION', WHICH IS OFTEN SIMPLY CALLED HE. STUDYING AT UNIVERSITY GIVES YOU VALUABLE SKILLS AND A QUALIFICATION THAT CAN HELP YOU MAKE YOUR WAY INTO A CAREER.

There are a wide range of courses and qualifications, including degrees, Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) and foundation degrees. These are also known as Level 4-6 qualifications.

The majority of courses are taught at universities, but you can also study them at colleges and specialist course providers, such as business schools and agricultural institutions. You can study full-time or part-time, on campus or distance learning, locally or far away. You can also choose an accelerated degree programme to earn your degree in a shorter time.

University-level study is an option as long as you have the right qualifications. You'll need level 3 qualifications such as A-Levels, a BTEC or an NVQ (or a mixture of these). You might need certain GCSEs (particularly maths and English), depending on which course you want to study. When you apply to university, your predicted grades will affect which universities and courses you are able to choose.

TYPES OF UNIVERSITY QUALIFICATIONS

+ BACHELORS/UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE

This is a first degree and a level 6 qualification, you can study part-time or full-time, usually over three years. Some take four years and include a year-long placement.

+ FOUNDATION DEGREE

A flexible vocational qualification that combines university level study with workplace learning. Can be the same as a first and second year of a degree.

+ HNC/HND

These provide work-related study at higher and further education colleges and are designed to give you the skills for a particular job. HNC is a one-year course and HND is a two-year course.

+ DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP

This combines full-time paid work and part-time study and is designed in partnership with an employer.

STAYING IN STUDY

WHY GO TO UNIVERSITY?



WISE UP...

26% OF ALL JOBS IN THE UK REQUIRE A UNIVERSITY-LEVEL QUALIFICATION, 36% IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE ***

THERE ARE PLENTY OF GREAT REASONS TO GO TO UNIVERSITY. IT CAN FEEL LIKE A BIG STEP, BUT IT CAN REALLY PAY OFF IF YOU DO YOUR PLANNING. HERE ARE JUST SOME OF THE REASONS WHY STUDYING AT UNIVERSITY MIGHT BE A GREAT OPTION.

+ EARN MORE

With a degree you will be likely to have a higher salary. In the future there will be a greater demand for people with higher qualifications. Graduates earn an estimated £170,000 - £250,000 more over their lifetime* and earn on average £9,500** a year more than non-graduates.

+ BAG YOUR DREAM JOB

A university-level qualification is essential for certain professions such as; nursing, vet, solicitor, teacher to name a few. Some employers only take graduates even if they don't specify which subject they hold a degree in.

+ GET THE SKILLS EMPLOYERS WANT

The university experience teaches you how to manage your time and money. You'll also gain important skills in areas such as research, IT, presentation and group work. These are all things employers look for.

+ MAKE FRIENDS FOR LIFE

You'll meet loads of new people — housemates, fellow students on your course and those who share your interests. When you start university, everyone is in the same boat and looking to make friends.

+ SHOW THE WORLD WHO YOU ARE

Gaining independence and building confidence are important parts of the experience. By volunteering and working part time you can build skills outside the classroom. All universities have a wide range of clubs and societies so it's easy to take up new hobbies and meet people who share your passions.

+ GET READY FOR THE FUTURE

As technology changes our lives, some jobs that exist now will disappear. While other job roles will remain, the skills needed for those roles will change. It is likely that in the future there will be more professional jobs that require higher qualifications. It's really important you're not left behind.

*The Skills and Employment Survey 2012

** Graduates Labour Market Statistics Report 2016

STAYING IN STUDY

HOW IS
UNIVERSITY
DIFFERENT?

COMPARED WITH SCHOOL
OR COLLEGE, SOME THINGS
ARE DONE DIFFERENTLY
AT UNIVERSITY.

IT'S AN EXCITING NEW WORLD
AND THERE'S LOTS OF SUPPORT
TO HELP YOU ADJUST.

+ YOU REALLY GET TO KNOW YOUR STUFF

You will only study one subject (possibly two) so you'll learn in much more depth. Lessons are taught by experts in that area/subject.

+ YOU'RE IN CHARGE

At university you're in control of your own learning. You will be expected to do your own research, supported by lecturers and tutors.

+ SELF-MOTIVATION IS KEY

Being driven and prepared to work hard is part of the university experience. There won't be anyone there to prompt you or tell you what to do.

+ INDEPENDENT LEARNING

You should be prepared to study in your own time using a variety of resources. Much of your learning will take place outside of the classroom.

+ DIFFERENT WAYS TO STUDY

There are lots of ways to learn, such as in a lecture theatre with hundreds of people or in a seminar with a handful of students. You will have the chance to develop different learning methods such as group work. Some courses offer field trips or placements.

It's different to school but there's plenty of advice and support to help you with your studies and for anything else you need too.

WISE UP...

THERE ARE OVER 300
INSTITUTIONS IN THE UK
WHERE YOU CAN STUDY
HE COURSES



STAYING IN STUDY

HOW IS UNIVERSITY DIFFERENT?



HOW DO HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS DIFFER?

Not all higher education (HE) providers are the same. They offer different types of courses and subjects, can be modern or traditional, and differ in other ways. Often universities will mention their ranking, which is assessed by third parties who look at a range of criteria. It's helpful to decide what's important to you when taking these rankings into account.

+ CAMPUS-BASED UNIVERSITIES

This is where facilities, accommodation and teaching are all in one place, usually outside a city centre. Some institutions can be multi-campus and spread over one or more town or city.

+ NEW OR MODERN UNIVERSITIES

Generally in existence for 50-100 years, these universities tend to offer a wide range of subjects, including more practical and vocational courses.

+ SPECIALIST UNIVERSITIES

These institutions are dedicated to a particular area of study, eg music, art or agriculture.

+ RUSSELL GROUP UNIVERSITIES

The Russell Group consists of 24 universities that are generally ranked highly in league tables. They have higher-than-average entry requirements, a focus on research and a reputation for academic achievement. They are sometimes referred to as selective because they will select the highest achieving students.

+ OXBRIDGE

The University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge are often referred to as Oxbridge. They are the two most prestigious and highest ranked universities in the UK and offer traditional, academic courses. They have higher entry requirements.

+ FURTHER EDUCATION (FE) COLLEGES

Some FE colleges offer courses at higher education level, usually with lower entry requirements than other HE institutions.

SEE FOR YOURSELF

Open days are the best way to help you decide where you want to go. You can get a feel for the university, have a tour of the facilities, view the accommodation options, meet the lecturers, find out more about your course and check out the location. www.opendays.com is a good place to look for upcoming open days and provides useful tips for making the most of your visit.

WISE UP...

SOME UNIVERSITIES WILL COVER YOUR TRAVEL COSTS TO AN OPEN DAY, ESPECIALLY IF YOUR FAMILY INCOME IS BELOW A CERTAIN AMOUNT. IT IS USUALLY FOR THOSE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS. CONTACT THE UNIVERSITY DIRECTLY TO ASK.

THERE IS NO TRIP ADVISOR FOR UNIVERSITIES, HOWEVER THERE ARE LOTS OF PLACES TO HEAR ABOUT PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES...

The Student Room, Facebook pages, YouTube and WhatUni all have reviews and comments. However, the best way to get a feel for a place is to go and see it, ask lots of questions and speak to current students.

ASK YOURSELF

- DO I WANT TO GO TO A HIGH-RANKING UNIVERSITY AND STUDY A MORE TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC SUBJECT?
- WOULD I LIKE TO GO TO A MORE MODERN UNIVERSITY WITH GREAT FACILITIES AND/OR STUDY A VOCATIONAL COURSE THAT COULD LEAD STRAIGHT INTO A SPECIFIC JOB?
- DO I WANT TO BE IN A CITY? STAY CLOSE TO HOME OR MOVE FAR AWAY?



GETTING FOCUSED

DECIDING
WHAT TO
STUDY



**WHAT JOB DO YOU WANT
TO DO IN THE FUTURE?**

**IT'S A BIG QUESTION BUT
IT'S ALSO A HELPFUL ONE
WHEN CONSIDERING WHAT
YOU WANT TO STUDY.**

If you're not sure, that's okay. Reflect on what you're studying now and think about which elements you enjoy. Consider what you like to do in your spare time and whether those passions could help to fuel your future career.

FROM ANIMATION TO ZOOLOGY – FIND YOUR IDEAL COURSE

Remember, with over 50,000 courses on offer in the UK you might be surprised by what you can study. Look at the UCAS course search at www.ucas.com which lists them all.

You can also search for a course at www.university.which.co.uk to get a better idea of your options.

WISE UP...

IF YOU NEED SOME HELP...

TRY THE CAREER QUIZ AT
WWW.GROWS.AC.UK/SACU

OR TAKE THE BUZZ QUIZ AT
WWW.UCAS.COM/CAREERS/BUZZ-QUIZ

**IT'S A BIG DECISION AND WILL
BE VERY PERSONAL TO YOU.
TO HELP YOU, HAVE A GO AT
THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.**

-  DO I WANT TO KEEP MY CAREER OPTIONS OPEN?
.....
-  DO I KNOW WHAT KIND OF CAREER I WANT
OR WHAT MY FUTURE JOB LOOKS LIKE?
.....
-  AM I INTERESTED IN CONTINUING MY
EDUCATION BUT STILL UNSURE ABOUT WHAT
EXACTLY TO STUDY?
.....
-  IS MY INTEREST IN A BROAD TOPIC OR SEVERAL
DIFFERENT TOPICS WHICH CAN MAKE IT
DIFFICULT TO CHOOSE A COURSE?
.....
-  WOULD I PREFER A DEGREE THAT INVOLVES
PLACEMENTS AND IS MORE PRACTICAL?
.....
-  DO I GENERALLY DO BETTER IN COURSE WORK
OR WHEN I TAKE EXAMS?

WRITE IT DOWN...

Make lots of notes on the different universities and courses, but keep them tabulated, that way you can see what each has to offer or lacks, it doesn't have to be a negative, if it doesn't matter to you. Keep thinking about what's important for you.

Think about the entry requirements of each university, and your predicted grades, you might want to think about having a range of universities or one university with slightly lower entry requirements in your five choices. You still have choices if you receive no offers from the five you apply for or your results were not what you hoped for.

GETTING PRACTICAL

APPLYING FOR UNIVERSITY

ONCE YOU'VE FOUND YOUR DREAM COURSE, HOW DO YOU SECURE A PLACE ON IT?

There are plenty of ways to give yourself the best chance of getting on the course you want. Check the entry requirements before you apply and note any additional criteria, such as relevant work experience.

UCAS is the centralised admissions service for students applying to higher education in the UK. This online portal is where you submit your applications but it's also a source of useful information. See www.ucas.com

The UCAS form is made up of 6 parts...

1. PERSONAL DETAILS
2. CHOICES (up to 5 courses)
3. EDUCATION (you will need to dig out your GCSE certificates)
4. EMPLOYMENT
5. PERSONAL STATEMENT
6. REFERENCE

IN FOCUS: your personal statement

This is an opportunity to sell yourself and demonstrate why you want a place. You have up to 4,000 characters of text and no more than 47 lines (roughly one A4 page). If you don't have to attend an interview to get on the course, this may be your only chance to show that you have lots of potential. It's really important to make your personal statement count.

USE THESE QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU PLAN YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

- WHY AM I APPLYING? IS IT BECAUSE I LOVE THE SUBJECT? ARE THERE SPECIFIC ASPECTS I'M EXTREMELY PASSIONATE ABOUT?
.....
- WILL STUDYING THIS SUBJECT HELP ME ACHIEVE MY CAREER ASPIRATIONS OR, IF I'M NOT SURE WHAT I WANT TO DO, WILL IT HELP ME KEEP MY OPTIONS OPEN?
.....
- WHY AM I SUITABLE FOR THE COURSE?
.....
- WHAT SKILLS HAVE I GAINED FROM SCHOOL/COLLEGE THAT WILL HELP ME ON THE COURSE?
.....
- WHAT ABILITIES HAVE I DEVELOPED FROM MY HOBBIES, EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, WORK EXPERIENCE, VOLUNTEERING AND PART-TIME JOBS?
.....

MAIN UCAS DEADLINES

15 OCTOBER

Courses at Oxford and Cambridge, and for most courses in medicine, veterinary medicine/science and dentistry.

15 JANUARY

For the majority of courses

Applications received **after 30 June** are entered into Clearing

Find all dates at www.ucas.com



GETTING PRACTICAL

APPLYING FOR UNIVERSITY



WISE UP...

UCAS HAS SPECIAL SOFTWARE TO IDENTIFY ANY 'BORROWED' OR PLAGIARISED TEXT SO MAKE SURE YOUR WORDS REALLY ARE YOUR OWN!

THERE IS NO PERFECT FORMULA FOR WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT BUT IF YOU'RE PREPARED YOU SHOULD HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO ENSURE YOU'RE HAPPY WITH THE FINAL VERSION.

+ PLAN IT

Think about the structure of your statement, this will ensure you don't waste space or repeat yourself.

+ SHOW, DON'T TELL

Supply plenty of evidence. Talk about when, where and how you demonstrated certain skills.

+ STRIKE THE RIGHT TONE

This is a formal application however you want it to be interesting. Make sure your text doesn't sound robotic; on the other hand, don't be too wacky.

+ BE DIFFERENT

Stand out from the crowd for the right reasons. Don't be tempted to 'borrow' information.

+ BE REAL

'Passion' is one of the most overused words in personal statements. Don't just say you're passionate, show it by giving detailed examples of what you love and how this enthusiasm has developed.

+ ASK FOR HELP

As well as proof reading the statement yourself, ask parents, teachers and friends to read it. Different people will pick up different things so expect to write a few drafts before it's ready.

IN FOCUS: YOUR REFERENCE

Ideally your reference should be written by someone who knows you academically, this will most likely be your tutor or teacher if you're a student. The reference provides an outline of your work ethic, interaction with fellow students and your suitability for higher education or a future career

+ BE PREPARED

Request your reference well before the deadline so your referee has plenty of time to complete it.

INTERVIEWS

IN THE SPOT LIGHT

DEPENDING ON THE COURSE YOU APPLY FOR, YOU MIGHT BE INVITED TO AN INTERVIEW.

It's a great opportunity to get a feel for the university and see if it's the right place for you. It can be a really enjoyable experience so do your preparation and get as much out of it as you can.

You won't be grilled; university interviews tend to be supportive and relaxed. The tutor's aim is to meet you, find out what you're passionate about and see whether you will be a good fit for the course.

BEFORE YOU GO, THINK ABOUT THE KINDS OF QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT BE ASKED AND PREPARE SOME ANSWERS.

- WHY AM I PASSIONATE ABOUT THIS COURSE?
.....
- WHY DO I FEEL THE COURSE IS RIGHT FOR ME?
.....
- WHAT ARE MY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?
.....
- WHAT NEW SKILLS WOULD I LIKE TO LEARN?
.....
- HAS ANYONE INFLUENCED MY WORK IN THE LAST YEAR AND HOW?

WISE UP...

SHOW THAT YOU'RE KEEN BY PREPARING SOME QUESTIONS

THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO THE INSTITUTION AND THE COURSE. FOR EXAMPLE, ASK FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT A PARTICULAR MODULE.

SHOW AND TELL

Some course interviews ask you to bring along a portfolio or examples of work. You will be notified in advance if this is the case.

Organise your work and do some prep ahead of the interview. Practice talking about your work, your influences and how you have reached the end result. If you have work that's too big to carry, take photos and add it to your portfolio.

To show ideas/practical development, ideally take a range of the following

- + FINISHED WORK
- + EXPERIMENTAL WORK
- + DEVELOPMENTAL WORK
- + SELF-INITIATED WORK
- + WORKSHEETS
- + SKETCHBOOKS

To show written and contextual work, take

- + RESEARCH
- + OTHER FORMS OF INTEREST / INFLUENCE
- + KEY THEMES AND IDEAS

ACCOMMODATION

WHERE WILL YOU LIVE?

Moving away from home is an exciting step and there is plenty of support when you need it. There are lots of options whether you're looking for a little freedom or complete independence. Your own tastes and budget can also help determine where and how you live. Often, the earlier you apply the more likely you are to get your preferred accommodation choice, so do your research.

HALLS OF RESIDENCE

These are the preferred option for most first-year students and can provide a great start to university life. The halls could be situated right next to where you study or a short bus ride away – good to know if you prefer that extra 15 minutes in bed every morning!

The cost will vary but in 2017 the average cost was £125 per week*. Rent normally covers a fixed term of 40 weeks and usually includes utility bills, internet costs, contents insurance and, if you're lucky, cleaning of the kitchen once a week. Costs can be higher or lower depending on the location. Cheaper options often have a shared bathroom and shared communal areas. Halls can be self-catered, part-catered or fully catered.

UNIVERSITY-APPROVED HOUSING

Some universities provide a list of available housing run by landlords. Properties will usually have been visited to ensure they meet certain health and safety criteria set by the university. The approximate cost is £60-90 per week* excluding bills and based on four people sharing. After the first year in halls, students tend to move to privately rented accommodation with friends.

UNIVERSITY-REGISTERED LODGINGS

Study bedrooms are available in houses where the owner lives in the same property and generally cost around £70-100 per week depending on whether you opt for self-catering, half board or breakfast only.

PRIVATE RENTALS

This option would be arranged directly with the landlord and not through university so it's important to understand the contract.

COMMUTING FROM HOME

If you are studying locally, you may choose to live at home and commute to university to save some money. You won't be the only one, and you can still get stuck in to university life like everyone else.

WISE UP...

UNIVERSITIES OFTEN SET UP SOCIAL MEDIA GROUPS FOR PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT HALLS OF RESIDENCE AND ON COURSES SO YOU CAN GET TO KNOW YOUR HOUSE/ CLASSMATES BEFORE YOU MOVE IN.

TOP TIPS FOR STUDENT LIVING, DON'T FORGET...

- + IDENTIFICATION - BRING A VALID FORM OF ID SUCH AS A PASSPORT OR DRIVING LICENCE
- + PASSPORT PHOTOS - YOU'D BE AMAZED HOW USEFUL THESE WILL BE WHEN SIGNING UP FOR SOCIETIES
- + THINGS FROM HOME TO DECORATE YOUR ROOM
- + FANCY DRESS!
- + CHARGERS, ELECTRICALS
- + BED COVERS - DUVET, PILLOWS AND SHEETS
- + TOWELS, TOILETRIES AND TOOTHBRUSH
- + KITCHEN EQUIPMENT SUCH AS POTS AND PANS
- + EXTENSION LEADS - YOU MIGHT ONLY HAVE ONE OR TWO PLUG SOCKETS IN YOUR ROOM

*The Times Higher Education Guide

WITH MANY OPTIONS, YOU'LL NEED TO NARROW DOWN WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU.

- DO I WANT AN ENSUITE BATHROOM OR AM I HAPPY TO SHARE?
- WOULD I PREFER NEWER HALLS OR OLDER HALLS?
- WOULD I PREFER TO LIVE WITH LOTS OF STUDENTS OR IN A SMALLER GROUP?
- DO I WANT TO BE BASED RIGHT ON CAMPUS OR LIVE NEARBY?

FINANCE

HOW MUCH DOES UNIVERSITY COST?



WISE UP...

FIND OUT HOW MUCH YOU CAN BORROW USING THE LINK TO THE FINANCE CALCULATOR: GOV.UK/STUDENT-FINANCE-CALCULATOR

YOU DO HAVE TO PAY FOR MOST HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES, BUT YOU CAN ACCESS STUDENT LOANS TO COVER MOST COSTS. THE COST OF GOING TO UNIVERSITY CAN BE SPLIT INTO TWO MAIN PARTS: TUITION FEES AND LIVING COSTS.

+ TUITION FEES

These cover the costs of your course. You can apply for the Tuition Fee Loan, which will be paid directly by the Student Loans Company to the university. It doesn't depend on your household income (how much your parents earn). UK universities can currently charge up to £9,250* a year, although this is currently being reviewed by the government.

+ LIVING COSTS

This means the cost of everything else, including accommodation, food, travel, socialising and any other expenditure. You can apply for a Maintenance Loan, which supports the cost of living, and is paid directly to your account at the start of each term. A large part of this is assessed on household income. There is a minimum amount, so everyone is entitled to something (the less the family income the more you could be entitled to).

YOU MAY BE ASKED TO PAY A DEPOSIT FOR YOUR ACCOMMODATION BEFORE YOU MOVE IN

IN FOCUS: STUDENT LOANS

- + Student loans don't affect your credit file or your chances of being accepted for other loans, such as a mortgage
- + You will only start paying back your loan when your annual income is £25,000*. If it isn't, you won't begin to pay it back
- + To help you budget, you receive your loan in three installments, at the beginning of each term.
- + Some people see a student loan as a 'graduate tax' and an investment into their future
- + After 30* years any remaining debt is wiped (from the April after your graduation date)

It's important to consider the benefits you could gain from going to university and weigh them up against the costs.

REPAYMENTS EXAMPLE

Income per year from your job	Monthly repayments
£25,000	£7
£27,000	£29
£30,000	£67

*All figures are subject to Parliamentary review, for up to date figures please visit www.gov.uk/student-finance

FINANCE

SUPPORTING YOURSELF FINANCIALLY



WISE UP...

HEAD TO **WWW.MONEYSAVINGEXPERT.COM/STUDENTS** TO GET MORE INFO AND LOADS OF GREAT MONEY SAVING TIPS

IN FOCUS: EXTRA ASSISTANCE

Bursaries, grants, scholarships and funds that don't have to be paid back are available to students in specific circumstances. Each university or college will offer different financial support and will have their own qualifying criteria. These could depend on your skills (eg sport or music), your grades or your personal circumstances (eg low household income, care leaver or if you have a disability). Check the university website to see what is on offer.

Many universities have generous hardship/financial assistance funds available to support students who may be struggling financially at university. To access these, you must have taken your full entitlement of the Maintenance Loan and show how and why you are in hardship.

- + Check individual university websites to see what financial support packages they offer.
- + For all government grants visit gov.uk/browse/education/student-finance
- + When applying for student finance, tick the 'consent to share' box. Universities may identify you as someone who is eligible for extra money.

MAKING STUDENT LIFE ADD UP

Living on a student income can be a challenge but there are plenty of ways to make your money go further.

+ PART-TIME/HOLIDAY JOB

A part-time job is a great way to earn money to help with your living costs at university. A job will also enhance your CV. Many universities have employment schemes that can help you to find work.

+ STUDENT AMBASSADOR ROLE

Universities employ student ambassadors to help out at campus events such as open days and during Freshers' Week. The work is normally flexible, which makes it easy to fit around classes.

+ STUDENT DISCOUNTS

Many stores, companies and restaurants offer exclusive discounts for students. Apply for your NUS card to make sure you don't miss out. With bigger purchases, such as a laptop, a student discount could save you lots.

+ STUDENT BANK ACCOUNTS

Look for the best offer you can find. Many high street banks will want your business and will be offering great benefits, eg free railcard, free vouchers or an interest-free overdraft.

USEFUL INFO

JARGON BUSTER

THE FOLLOWING WORDS AND PHRASES ARE USED OFTEN WHEN DISCUSSING HIGHER EDUCATION; YOU'LL PROBABLY READ AND HEAR THEM A LOT OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

APPLICATIONS

+ UNDERGRADUATE

This is where higher education begins: you're an undergraduate student while you're studying on an undergraduate course.

+ CONDITIONAL OFFER

You have been provisionally accepted but you still need certain grades or to meet other conditions before you can start the course.

+ UNCONDITIONAL OFFER

You've met the requirements so you have a place on the course.

+ FIRM ACCEPTANCE

Your reply to the university that you definitely want to attend.

+ CONTEXTUAL OFFER

Some universities give a bespoke offer, usually based on the information in your UCAS form. Usually used to widen access to groups under-represented in HE.

+ INSURANCE ACCEPTANCE

You can opt for a backup if you don't get into your first choice.

+ DECLINE

To inform a university that you will not be accepting their offer.

+ UCAS EXTRA

If you don't get an offer from your first five choices you might be able to use Extra to reapply.

+ CLEARING

An opportunity to apply for alternative choices if you're unsuccessful or if you apply after 30 June.

+ OPEN DAYS

Universities and colleges hold days when prospective students can come along and find out more about studying at the institution.

+ APPLICANT DAYS

Tailored days when applicants can gain a greater understanding of a university course.

+ CAMPUS

The buildings and grounds of a university or college.

+ ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The grades or qualifications needed to get on to a degree course. UCAS Tariff points – UCAS translate qualifications and grades into numbers which some universities use in their course entry requirements.

TYPES OF COURSES

Most of these courses are different options within a bachelors or undergraduate degree.

+ BACHELOR OF ARTS (BA)/ BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (BSC)

an undergraduate degree awarded to a student, typically after three years of studying.

+ SINGLE HONOURS

Study one subject for usually three years (sometimes more depending on the subject). This gives the opportunity to specialise in one subject in more depth.

+ JOINT HONOURS

Study two subjects equally. You would divide your time 50:50 between both subjects. This offers the chance to study two subjects in equal depth.

+ MAJOR/MINOR

Study two subjects, usually at a 75:25 ratio. This gives you the opportunity to study two subjects while specialising in one.

+ COMBINED HONOURS PROGRAMME

Study between two and four subjects, specialising in just two subjects in years two and three. This offers the chance to study a number of subjects at the beginning and eventually narrow down your specialist areas.

+ MODULAR COURSES

Build a personalised course by choosing modules covering the areas you are most interested in.

+ SANDWICH COURSES

Study a single or joint honours course including one year in industry or abroad. These generally take four years.

+ FOUNDATION YEAR

This lets students without the right qualifications prepare for and enter higher education. This can either be done as a standalone course or as part of a full bachelor's degree.

USEFUL INFO

USEFUL WEBSITES

ADVICE ON NEXT STEPS

WWW.GROWS.AC.UK

Discover resources and links about higher education and your post-18 options.

WWW.CAREERPILOT.ORG.UK

Your choices at 14, 16 and 18: explore different job sectors and how you can study and work at the same time.

WWW.UCAS.COM/CAREERS/BUZZ-QUIZ

An online quiz to help you profile your personality and identify your strengths.

WWW.SACU-STUDENT.COM

Online quizzes to help you find out your strengths and how they could guide your career/course choice.

CHOOSING A UNIVERSITY OR COURSE

WWW.UNISTATS.DIRECT.GOV.UK

Official data for undergraduate courses at each university. Useful stats on student satisfaction, study style and salaries after graduation.

WWW.UNIVERSITY.WHICH.CO.UK

Get independent advice on university and college courses.

WWW.THECOMPLETEUNIVERSITYGUIDE.CO.UK

An independent guide to university league tables and rankings by subject and university.

WWW.UCAS.COM

Use the course search to browse all UK HE courses and watch videos to understand the journey.

WWW.GOV.UK

Click on the Education and Learning tab for information on applying to HE, student finance, apprenticeships and more.

WWW.OPENDAYS.COM

A list of open days across UK universities; have a browse and sign up for some!

STUDENT SUPPORT AND ADVICE

WWW.GOV.UK/STUDENT-FINANCE OR WWW.SLC.CO.UK

Information on undergraduate student finance and extra assistance.

WWW.NUS.ORG.UK

The National Union of Students represents the interests of all students studying in the UK; find out about student news and of course all about the discounts on offer for students.

WWW.MONEYSAVINGEXPERT.COM/STUDENTS

Independent advice and guidance on student finance.

WWW.BRIGHTKNOWLEDGE.ORG

An essential guide to careers, education and student life.

WWW.THESTUDENTROOM.CO.UK

An online student community to support students from GCSEs to university including revision guides and a range of forums.



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**GROWS IS A NETWORK OF SIX
GLOUCESTERSHIRE UNIVERSITIES AND
COLLEGES THAT AIMS TO ENCOURAGE YOUNG
PEOPLE TO EXPLORE THE WORLD OF HIGHER
EDUCATION AND MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS
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We work with schools to help young people reach their potential, giving them access to information and fun activities that shed light on higher education.

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