

# St. Mary's Sixth Form Parents and Carers Information Session:



**UCAS** 



Wednesday April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2025



### **Session Overview**

This 'Sixth Form Parents and Carers Information Session' will consist of three main areas:

- Introduction to UCAS.
- How To Apply Through UCAS.
- How Parents/Carers Can Support Through This Process.

The aim of this session is to help parents/carers to understand UCAS and how their child can apply for post-18 courses through UCAS.

This session is aimed at students who wish to enter university in 2026.



### **UCAS Information**

UCAS is an independent charity providing information, advice and admissions services. There are there to help people figure out what the next step in education might be.

#### **UCAS** does:

Provide information, advice, and support

**Process applications** 

Complete fraud and verification checks

Take part in education sector engagement

#### **UCAS** does not:

Make decisions or offers

Set entry requirements

Advise on finance

Advise on immigration or visas for individuals

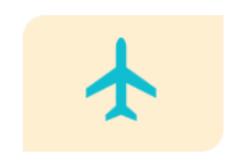
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UCAS Discover (<a href="https://www.ucas.com/discover">https://www.ucas.com/discover</a>) contains lots of information on:











HIGHER EDUCATION

**APPRENTICESHIPS** 

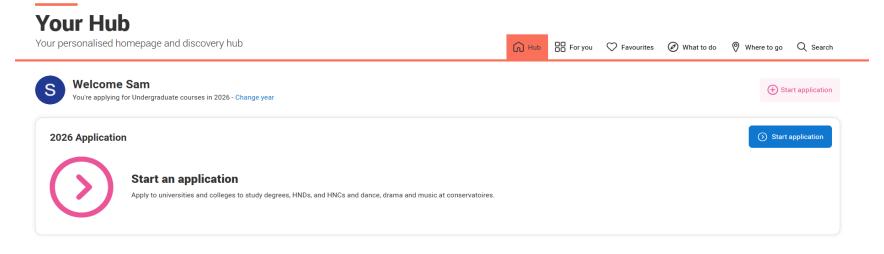
STUDYING ABROAD

**GAP YEAR** 

**GETTING A JOB** 

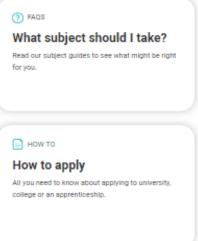
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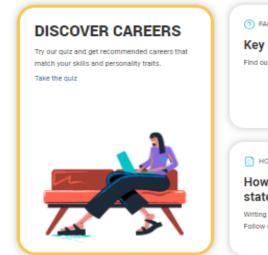


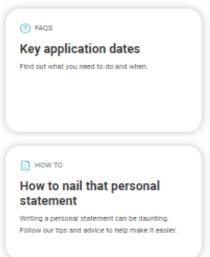
#### Your next steps | Open legacy to do list

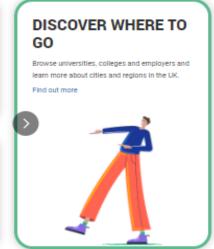






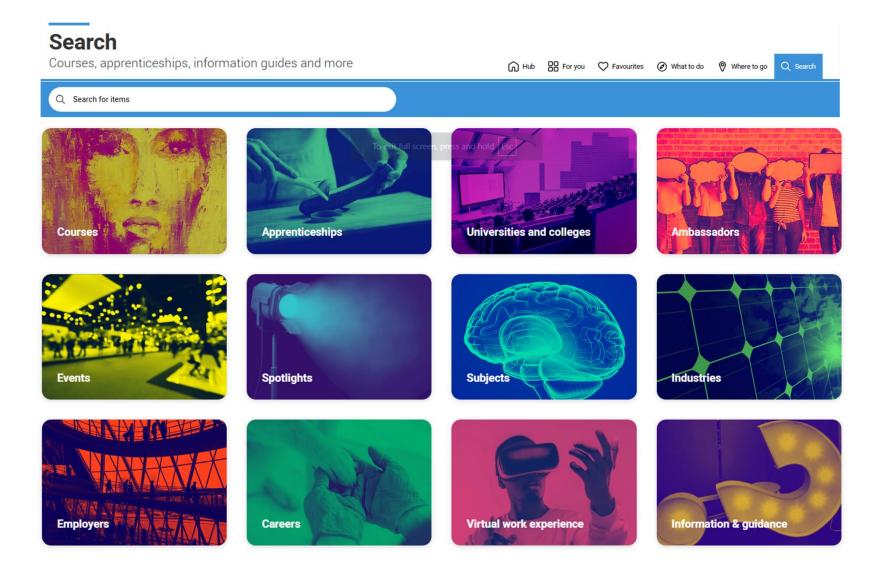




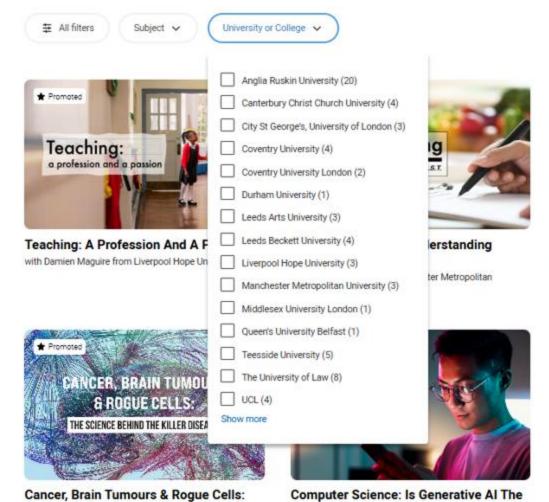


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Problem Or The Solution?

with Dr Aminu Usman from the University of Sunderland



And Breathe: The Respiratory System Explained

with Charlotte Anderson from the University of Sunderland



POWERED BY Springpod 7

UCAS Media Service

Biotechnology: The Rise Of Radical Healthcare

with Prof. M. Safwan Akram from Teesside University



Computer Science: Space Exploration And Beyond

with Dr Paul Sant from The University of Law



Covid: The Law And You with Mike Meehan from University of Law

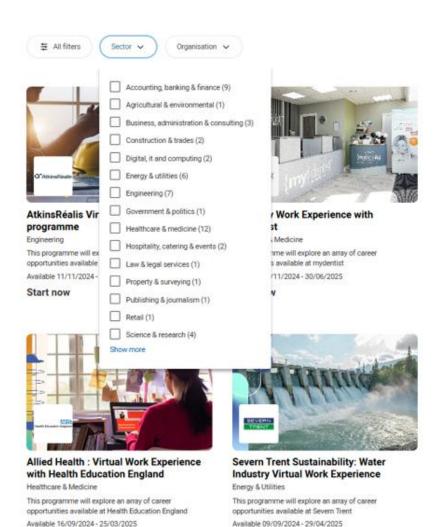
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The Science Behind The Killer Disease

with Dr Shafiq Ahmed from University of Sunderland





Start now



#### HR Career Insights: Virtual Work Experience with CIPD and Springpod

Business, Administration & Consulting

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

Available 13/11/2023 - 31/10/2025

Start now



10 Reset filters

#### Skills for Success: Forvis Mazars Work Experience

POWERED BY Springpod

UCAS Media Service

Accounting, Banking & Finance

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at Forvis Mazars

Available 28/10/2024 - 15/06/2025

Start now



#### Engineering a Sustainable World - Work Experience with IChemE

Engineering

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at Institution of Chemical Engineers Available 30/09/2024 - 30/04/2026

Start now



#### Legal Realities Unveiled: Virtual Law Careers with TLT and Springpod

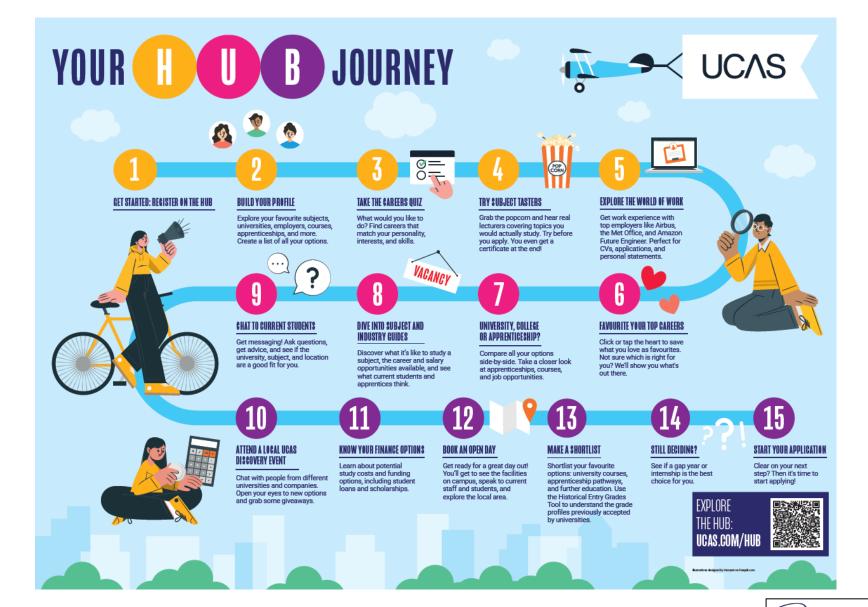
Law & Legal Services

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at TLT LLP Available 01/09/2024 - 31/08/2025

Start now

Start now







### Apprenticeships

It's a real job where you learn, gain experience, study for a qualification and get paid.

An apprentice is an employee, with a contract of employment and holiday leave.

Over 600 different apprenticeships available, from Nuclear Engineer to Architect to Digital Marketer.

Check out <u>ucas.com/apprenticeships</u> to find out more, including:

What apprenticeships are?

Degree apprenticeships.

How to find and apply for apprenticeships.

Preparing for application and interview.

Browse industry guides.



### **Apprenticeships**

The UCAS apprenticeship search tools has a range of apprenticeships in the local area:

★ Promoted

#### **Audit Assistant (AAT)**

Newcastle Upon Tyne

Apprenticeship level Salarv England - Advanced Undisclosed

Apprenticeship - Level 3

Industry Apply by | Start date Finance and accounting 30/04/2025 |

01/09/2025

\* Promoted

#### Tax Assistant

Rsm

Newcastle Upon Tyne

Apprenticeship level Salarv England - Advanced Undisclosed

Apprenticeship - Level 3

Apply by | Start date Industry 30/04/2025 | Finance and accounting 01/09/2025

#### **AAT Accountant Apprentice**

Glen C Rodger Limited

%

Apprenticeship level Salarv 15,000 a year England - Intermediate

Apprenticeship - Level 2

Apply by | Start date Industry Finance and accounting 01/05/2025 05/05/2025

#### **Accountancy Apprentice**

Ultra Tax Ltd

Martlepool

Apprenticeship level Salary

England - Advanced 12,563.20 a year

Apprenticeship - Level 3

Apply by | Start date Industry

Finance and accounting 16/04/2025 29/05/2025

#### **Accounts Assistant Apprentice**

Middlesbrough Football Club



Apprenticeship level England - Intermediate 13,741 a year

Apprenticeship - Level 2

Industry Apply by | Start date Finance and accounting 02/04/2025

21/04/2025

#### **Administration Apprentice**

Vox Ignis Limited

Sunderland Enterprise Park

Apprenticeship level Salary England - Advanced 14,722.50 a year

Apprenticeship - Level 3

01/04/2025 | administration 14/04/2025

#### Administration Assistant **Apprenticeship**

Access Training Ltd



Apprenticeship level Salary England - Advanced 16,133 a year Apprenticeship - Level 3

Industry

Apply by | Start date 05/04/2025 | Business and administration 07/04/2025

#### **Administration Officer Apprentice**

Howarth Litchfield Partnership Ltd



Apprenticeship level Salary England - Advanced 14,722.50 a year

Apprenticeship - Level 3

Apply by | Start date Industry 01/05/2025 | Business and administration 01/05/2025

Industry Apply by | Start date Business and

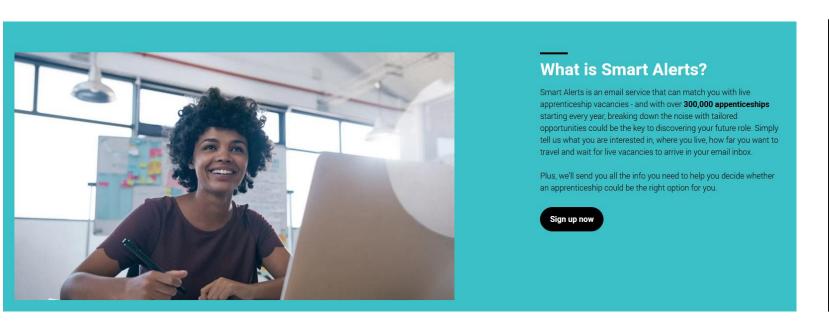
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### **Apprenticeships**

When students register on the UCAS Hub to set up their profile they can sign up to smart alerts in the preference section of their account settings.

This will enable them to be matched to apprenticeship opportunities in their area.



#### Interested in apprenticeships?

We can match you to employers looking for people like you.

Sign up for Smart Alerts to receive email alerts about apprenticeship opportunities you're matched to. Just answer a few questions about what you're looking for and we'll do the rest.

By signing up, you understand any personal data you share will only be used for Smart Alerts to match against criteria set by employers. We will never share your details with the employer, and you decide whether you want to apply for any opportunity you are matched to. You can opt-out of alerts at any time, by clicking 'unsubscribe' in our emails or updating your preferences in the hub.

We won't match you with every job on our platform, just the ones where employers are looking for specific candidates and are using our matching service. To view all our apprenticeship vacancies visit our Apprenticeship Search page.

I would like to opt-in to receive Smart Alerts





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### University

Essential for some career paths.

Develop new transferable skills and subject knowledge.

Increase confidence and independence.

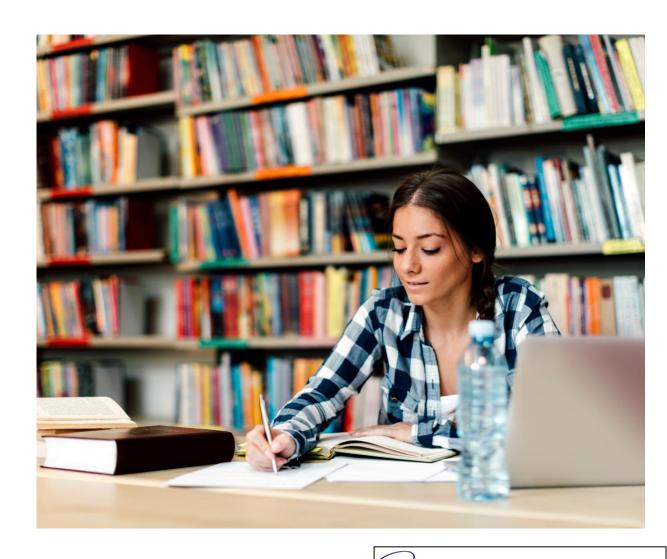
Broaden experiences.

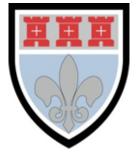
Meet new people.

Investment in the future.

Increased job prospects.

Higher earning potential.





### The University

#### **Style & focus**

From research-intensive to practical, career-orientated learning.

#### **Location & size**

Ranges from small campuses to large city-based universities with over 20,000 students.

#### **Culture & facilities**

Environment, resources, student life.

#### **Graduate outcomes**

Careers recent graduates have gone on to.

#### Cost

Include living costs, accommodation and transport.



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#### The Course

#### **Teaching & learning**

Teaching hours, self-study, lectures, and group work.

#### **Assessment & structure**

Coursework, exams, practical work, and module choices.

#### **Entry requirements**

Grades, skills, interviews, or auditions.

#### **Career links**

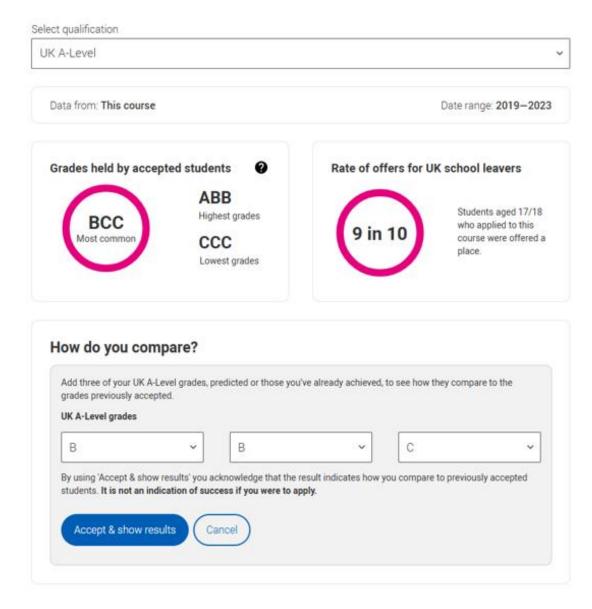
Placements, internships and study abroad.

#### Class size & experience

Student numbers and learning environment



#### The Course





### The Application











Student registers for a UCAS Hub account to carry out research and start application.

Student completes all sections of the application and sends it to their school/college.

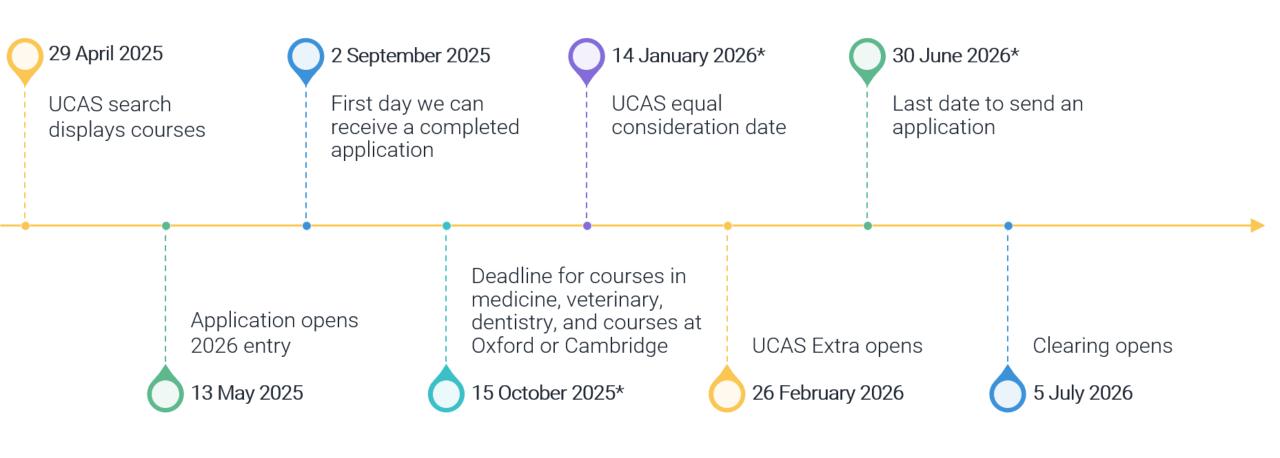
Teacher reviews the application and adds reference and predicted grades.

Applications are sent to UCAS by St. Mary's on behalf of the student.

Universities and colleges make their decisions on the application.



### The Application



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### The Application

Invisibility – universities and colleges can't see the other choices.

Apply by the relevant equal consideration date.

**Five choices**, with some restrictions (medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, Oxford / Cambridge).

**Research** is key to a successful application.

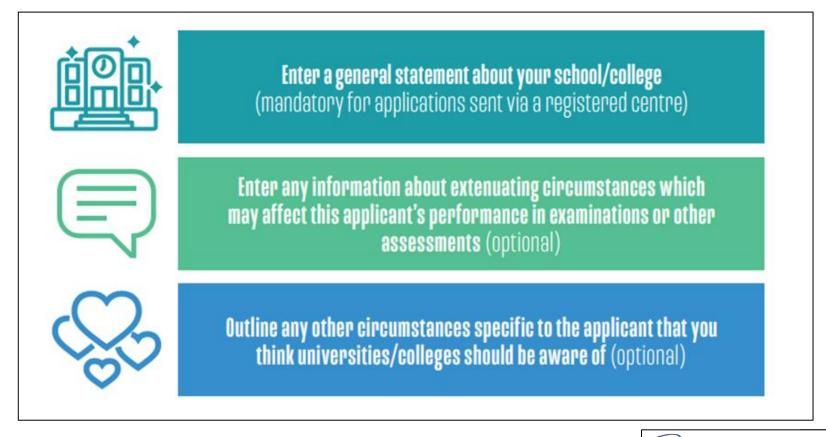
Application costs £28.95.



#### **Academic Reference**

UCAS changed the academic (school) reference for 2024 undergraduate entry to help schools focus their references on the areas providers want to know more about.

UCAS are replaced the free text approach with three structured sections.



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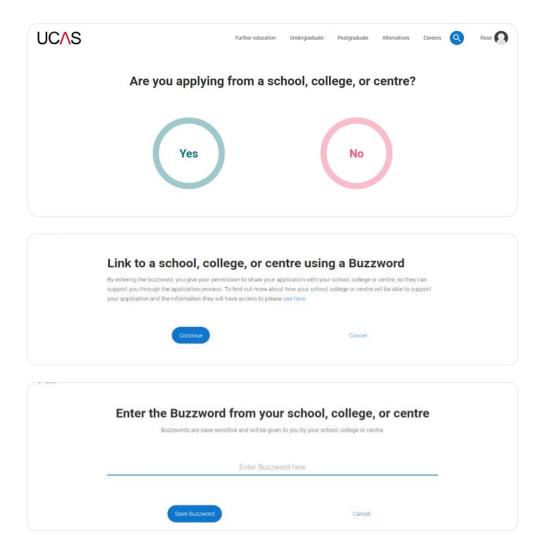
### Linking to St Mary's

As you child will be sending their application through St. Mary's they should enter their 'buzzword' to link your application to them.

The buzzword is a unique code set by St. Mary's.

By linking their application, they are giving St. Mary's permission to view and track their application.

It also means we will provide your child with a reference and send the application to UCAS on your behalf.



Our buzzword is StMarys2026.

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### **Application Profile**

#### **Profile:**

Personal details

Contact and residency details

Nationality details

Supporting information

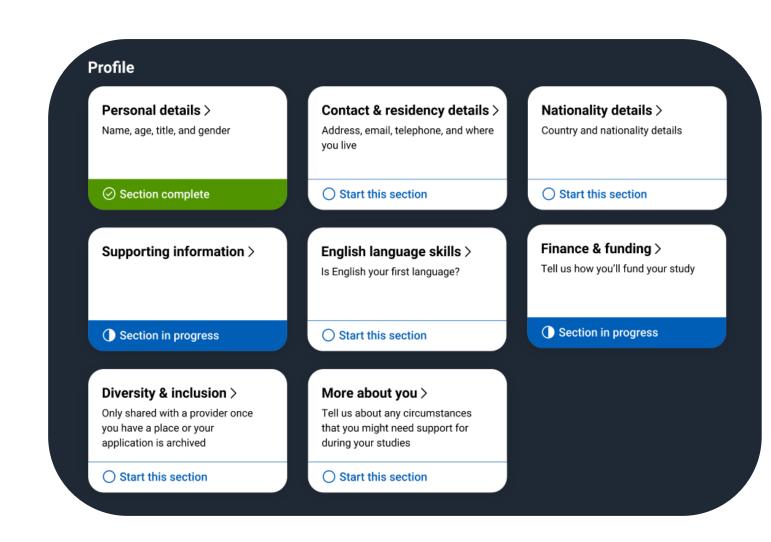
English language skills

Finance and funding

Diversity and inclusion\*

More about you

\* (for students with a UK home address)



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### **Application Profile**

#### **Experiences:**

Education

Employment

Extra activities\*

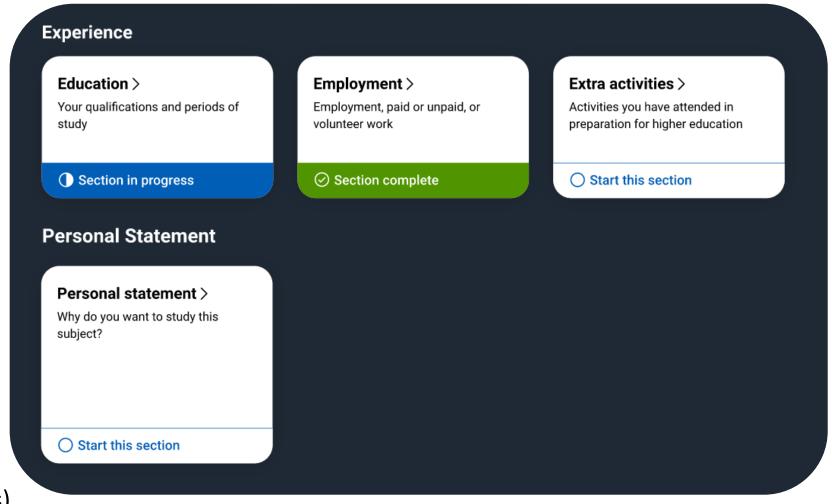
Personal statement

Reference\*\*

Add choices – up to five

\* (for students with a UK home address)

\*\*(not visible for students linked to their school/college)



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Three sections with question prompts



4,000-total character count split across sections



Minimum character count 350 characters per section



Don't waste characters listing grades and subjects

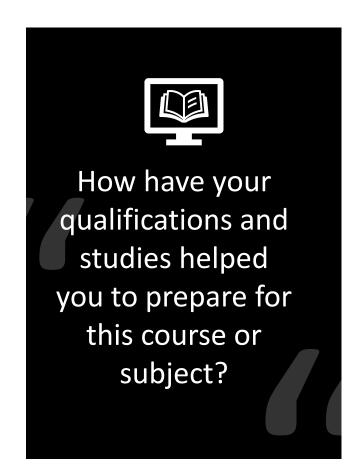


Don't repeat information across sections





Why do you want to study this course or subject?





What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?



#### Q1: Why do you want to study this course or subject?

You'll want to show evidence of passion, curiosity and interest, this might include:

#### Motivations for studying this course(s):

- Have you been inspired by a key role model or moment in your life?
- Is it a subject you love and want to pursue further?
- What is your drive?
- How has your path led you to this course or subject area?

#### Knowledge of this subject area and interests:

- Is there a particular subject area you've researched?
- Something you can't wait to learn more about?
- What about a book or subject expert doing great things that's sparked your interest?

Future plans; demonstrate why this course/subject is a good fit:

- Do you already have a particular profession in mind?
- How might you use your studies to launch your career?
- What's important to you and your future, and how might the knowledge gained from this course(s) help you achieve this?

Remember these are just some examples, you don't need to include it all. The key is to research the course(s) to find out what might be most relevant.



Q2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

Focus on what's most **recent** and **relevant** to your subject or course(s), examples could include:

How your studies or training relate to chosen course(s) or subject area:

- This could be your current or previous studies.
- This could be from any form of formal education

   think school, college, training, or short online courses.

What relevant or transferable skills have you got that make you a great candidate:

- Are there a couple of subjects that helped you develop a core set of relevant skills required for your chosen course(s).
- Maybe a particular module or project helped you understand where your interests and strengths lie.

#### Any relevant educational achievements

- Universities and colleges will see your grades on your application don't waste space talking about these.
- Focus on your other accomplishments like a competition, holding a position of responsibility or representing the school/college.

**Remember** these are just some examples, you don't need to include it all. The key is to research the course(s) to find out what might be most relevant.



Q3: what else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

Examples should be **reflective** and **demonstrate** further **suitability** for your subject or course(s), this could include:

### Work experience, employment, or volunteering

- In-person or virtual work experience.
- Paid for work or volunteering.
- The key thing is reflection on the experiences and the skills gained relevant to your chosen course(s).

### Personal life experiences or responsibilities

- Is there a situation you've personally overcome that has influenced your decision?
- Are there personal experiences that have helped you develop essential qualities for the course?

### Hobbies and any extracurricular or outreach activities:

- Think sports, reading, community work, summer schools.
- Any activities outside of core studies that help further showcase why you'd make a great student.

### Achievements outside of school or college

 This could be a position of responsibility for local clubs or groups, competitions, or qualifications you've attained outside of the classroom.

**Remember** these are just some examples, you don't need to include it all.

The key is to research the course(s) to find out what might be most relevant.



### **Tracking**

Universities and colleges will review the:

They may also ask for:

personal statement

admissions test

qualifications

interview

reference

portfolio/audition



### **Tracking**

Follow your application to:

Check progress

See your choices

Update contact information

View and reply to your offers

One of three decisions will be made:

**Unconditional offer** 

**Conditional offer** 

Unsuccessful



#### Submitted to your school or college

Your application has been sent to your school or college and is being checked by your adviser. Once they have approved it your application will be sent to UCAS.



#### Your application has been returned by your adviser

Your adviser has returned your application, go to your application to see what amendments they are recommending for you.



#### Waiting for decisions

Universities or colleges are considering your application.

Providers have until dd-mm-yyyy to respond to your choices.



#### All decisions received

You've received a decision from all of your choices. You can now reply to your offers at any time. Reply by dd-mm-yyyy



#### **Deadlines**

We have the following internal deadlines for the UCAS process.

Personal Statement – Early Entry

20th June 2025: First Draft (Submitted on Teams)

19th September 2025: Second Draft – Early Entry (Submitted on Teams)

3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025: Final Draft – Early Entry (Submitted on Teams)

**Personal Statement – Normal Entry** 

20th June 2025: First Draft (Submitted on Teams)

17<sup>th</sup> October 2025: Second Draft (Submitted on Teams)

7<sup>th</sup> November 2025: Final Draft (Submitted on Teams)



#### **Deadlines**

We have the following internal deadlines for the UCAS process.

**Submissions** 

10<sup>th</sup> October 2025: Early Entry

13th December 2025: All Other Entries



At St. Mary's Sixth Form, we have several ways to support students with their applications:

We have a dedicated set of form tutors who will work with our students to help with their applications.

The Heads of Year and the Head of Sixth Form will review every application before it is sent off to UCAS.

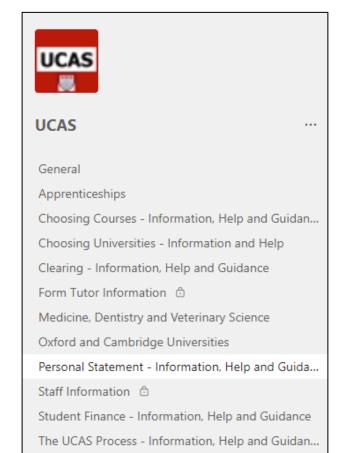
We have specialist members of staff who will provide bespoke UCAS workshops for students.

There is dedicated time in Personal Development lessons for students to be advised on the UCAS process.



We have a dedicated UCAS Teams channel which will include resources, information videos, guidance and much more to help the students through the process.

Students will be added to this Teams channel after the Easter.

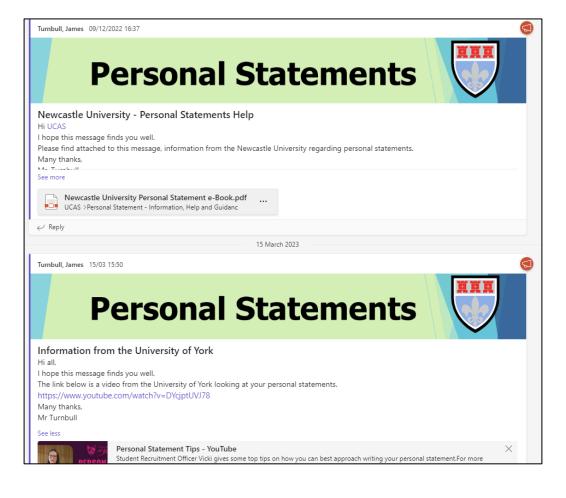


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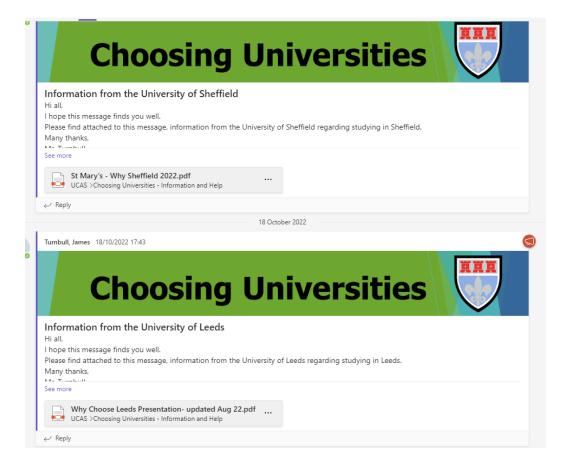
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This is updated regularly with new information regarding the application process.



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Students have a **free** subscription to Unifrog and SpringPod which they can use to help research opportunities and construct their applications.

## unifrog





We also have a series of workshops, seminars and talks run by different universities to help students with the UCAS process.

4<sup>th</sup> April: Bishop Bewick Trust 'Applying to Oxbridge' Conference

9<sup>th</sup> May: Writing Your Personal Statement by Newcastle University

23<sup>rd</sup> May: The Oxbridge Personal Statement by the University of Cambridge

18<sup>th</sup> June: Writing Personal Statements by Northumbria University

4<sup>th</sup> July: Bishop Bewick Trust 'Applying for Medicine and Dentistry' Conference

11<sup>th</sup> July: Personal Statement Workshop by Durham University



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There will be bespoke St Mary's Personal Statement Workshops taking place as well.



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There will be a parents information evening run by Newcastle University in October 2025 looking at applying for Student Finance.

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#### **Student Finance**

All applications for student finance for 2026-2027 are to be completed online from March 2026.

Students need to log-in via ww.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

They will receive a customer reference number and will be required to choose a password and secret answer.

Students (with help of parents) complete application with all the necessary information e.g. financial details.

This is carried out independently of the school.



### **Employment**

Support is provided for students not applying for university or apprenticeships.

Weekly Employer Experience sessions take place in the Sixth Form with different employers / professionals.

- Further opportunities for students advertised weekly on Teams and in Form Time.
- Regular meetings with staff to discuss future opportunities including our school careers advisor.
- Information is provided on the UCAS Teams Tile.
- Support provided to help write CVs/covering letters.



### What Can Students Do?

- Research, research.
- Attend open days and events including virtual events online.
- There is St. Mary's Higher Education Fair in October 2025.
- Extra-Curricular and Super-Curricular activities.
- Enrichment activities from various universities.
- Work Experience (taking place on July 15<sup>h</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 2025).
- Student Leadership Scheme.
- Volunteering (including the Mentoring and Volunteering Programme).
- Independent learning outside the curriculum.
- Focus on this year's studies.



#### What Can I Do?

