



Trinity Catholic
High School

UCAS

PARENTS' GUIDE TO HIGHER EDUCATION

2024 - 2025





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Dear Parents,

This booklet will be of great assistance in your son/daughter making one of the most important decisions of their lives. I ask you to read it carefully and reflect prudently on the advice it contains. I know you will find it of great help. I wish you and yours every success in reaching the right decision. We at Trinity will do everything we can to assist you.

Best wishes.

Yours faithfully,

Dr P C Doherty OBE
Headmaster





Dear Parents,

This booklet has been written specifically for you as parents/guardians/careers. We hope it helps you help your child with the higher education application process.

The booklet is intended to address five key questions:

- i. What are the main reasons for choosing to go to university?
- ii. Which criteria should be borne in mind when thinking about which subject to study and which course to choose?
- iii. Which criteria should be borne in mind when thinking about which university to apply to?
- iv. What are the main technical aspects of applying to university (e.g. Personal Statements/UCAS application/entry requirements)?
- v. What are the financial considerations You need to be aware of?

Please remember that my colleagues and I are here to help you as well as your child. Please get in touch if you need anything.

Yours,

Mr P. McGrory
Assistant Headteacher
Acting Director of Sixth Form





1. Reasons for Choosing Higher Education

Enjoyment

One reason your son/daughter might want to choose Higher Education is the pure enjoyment of study or the simple enjoyment of a subject.

Necessity

Certain careers are now 'graduate only. For some students, then, the reason for choosing Higher Education is based on necessity: without a degree (and sometimes without a degree in a particular subject) certain careers will be closed to them.

Pragmatism

There are career advantages to consider. Graduates usually have a much wider range of career choice. The vacancy picture is usually better as are graduate salaries. There may be better overall prospects and a reduced risk of long-term unemployment. (Recent research indicates that most students place greatest value on the boost to their career that a degree gives.)

Low unemployment rates

You are almost twice as likely to be unemployed if you do not have a degree. Graduates are far more likely to be in senior positions and earn more.





Graduate Starting Salaries in 2024

High Fliers' research suggests that the average starting salary for graduates in the UK is £33,500. However, given their research only covers the 100 largest and best-known graduate employers in the UK, this figure will only apply to a small minority of graduates. Leading graduate job board, graduate-jobs.com, estimates the average starting salary for graduates in 2024 is £25,856. This is based on the hundreds of graduate roles that they see being advertised on their site over the past year.

There are many factors that affect how big your graduate starting salary will be. The four factors to consider are : the employer, the industry, the location, and job market competition.

Employers always look for graduates from specific degree subjects

It is true to say that some jobs demand a specific degree subject, especially in the fields of science and engineering. However, 60% of vacancies ask for graduates from any degree subject, which means they will have lots of career options whatever they decide to study.

A Levels matter

Many graduate recruiters are very interested in A Levels. Some employers in areas such as finance, accounting and management consultancy even go so far as to state the minimum number of A Level points that are needed in addition to the degree. The obvious advice here is for the student to work hard now and to get the best A Level results that they can. Not only will A Level grades impact on their university place they may well influence their future career.

Uncertain about whether to go to university?

There is an award-winning website that offers advice on alternatives to the traditional university route. Please visit:

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk





2. Which Subject and Which Course?

Going to University is a great opportunity to expand your knowledge, but choosing the right subject to study can be difficult.

UK Course Finder(<https://coursefindr.co.uk>) is helpful and easy to use and so is the UCAS website itself (www.ucas.com). There are a number of ways to search and there are a number of very helpful websites to visit. The best advice here will be to think carefully and with an open mind.

It's a good idea to separate out the ideas of **'subject'** and **'course'**. When studying post-16 level qualifications (for us at Trinity this is A Levels), students will usually study a number of subjects, such as Mathematics, English, Chemistry, Art, Geography. At higher education level these core subjects branch out into more creative and varied courses. For example, if a student enjoys Chemistry at A Level, they may want to look into studying a wider choice of related subjects, such as Chemical Engineering, Environmental Chemistry, Forensic Science, Pharmacy and Toxicology-the list goes on! At degree level, subjects can also be studied in combination. It is possible, for example, to study for a **'joint'** honours degree in History and English (where 50% of the time is spent on each subject over the duration of the degree) but it is also possible to study for a **'single'** honours degree in History and spend time studying a number of options from other courses across each of the three years of the course. Looking at options and researching carefully is time well spent.

Which course?

Choosing a course to study even when you know which subject(s) you want to study can be difficult and there are a number of reasons for this. An English degree, for example, is not the same across all the universities. The content and structure of the course, how it is taught and assessed are all likely to be different and will need to be researched and thought about carefully: to assume that English courses are somehow all the same just because they are called English is to assume wrongly - and the same can be said for lots of other courses.





Degree 'titles'

A Bachelor's, or Honours, degree is the most common type of **undergraduate** degree. It's what most employers mean when they're looking for an '**undergraduate**' or '**first**' degree on a job posting. You know you're looking at a Bachelor's degree when you see titles such as Bachelor of Arts – BA (Hons), Bachelor of Science – BSc (Hons), Bachelor of Engineering – BEng (Hons) and Bachelor of Laws – LLB (Hons). The (Hons) bit stands for Honours. This generally means you study for 3 years, or 4 if the course is offered with an optional sandwich-placement year. You study 360 credits, including a major project or dissertation in your final year.

Courses and qualifications other than degrees

When people consider higher education, they tend to think of degree courses, but there are other qualifications to be gained at university or college. These include:

- **Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE):** the CertHE is awarded after one year of full-time study (or equivalent) in a range of subjects.
- **Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE):** the DipHE is a two-year course. It is normally equivalent to the first two years of a degree and can often be used for entry to the third year of a related degree course. DipHEs are mainly linked to vocational areas (for example Nursing, Social Work, Food and Nutrition or Music Production).
- **Higher National Diploma (HND):** the HND is a work-related higher education qualification, there are 190 courses from 37 providers. If completed with high grades a HND can lead to the third year of a degree.
- **Foundation Degree:** the equivalent of the first two years of a Bachelor's Degree, a Foundation Degree may be studied full-time or part-time. It consists of academic study integrated with relevant work-based learning undertaken with an employer. It may be taken as a stand-alone qualification or upon completion the student can choose to progress to the final year of a Bachelor's Degree.





Subject combinations

If your son/daughter wishes to study more than one subject s/he may be able to combine the subjects into one qualification. It does depend upon where s/he chooses to study, though, so this will need careful checking - not all combinations are available everywhere.

Sandwich courses ('thick' and 'thin')

Certain vocational courses (for example Architecture, Engineering, Surveying) will allow the student to spend a year in industry as part of the course. The word '**sandwich**' is used to describe placements because they are sandwiched in between the penultimate and final year of a degree course or HND, and depending on the employer, will be full-time paid employment. The purpose of this is to introduce students to the world of work, whilst gaining valuable experience in a profession they might consider after completing their higher education course. A '**thick**' sandwich course is a four-year undergraduate course as part of a Bachelor's degree or HND. A '**thin**' sandwich course is normally part of a three-year undergraduate degree or HND where you study and undertake work experience throughout, for example with two six-month placements slotted around your study - one in year two, one in year three.

Language courses

With some four-year language courses, students study abroad in their third year. The focus of the year abroad is to learn the language of another country in that country. The year is usually spent working in a school, teaching English. The student is assigned to a teacher who would help throughout the year. If studying two languages, it may be possible to spend six months in each of the two different countries.

UCAS course search

A list of available courses can be found on the UCAS website (www.ucas.com). Students can choose to search by subject, qualification, location, institution, course code and other specific options. This search tool provides entry profiles for some courses, which include general information about the course and institution, with links to the institution's website





Unifrog

Unifrog is a web-based platform we buy for our students, which brings into one place every undergraduate university course, apprenticeship, and college course in the UK. It also provides insights into different programs such as School Leaver Programmes, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and includes every college at Oxford and Cambridge. This makes it easy for students to compare and choose the best university courses, apprenticeships or further education courses for them. They can also explore exciting opportunities further afield by looking at English taught undergraduate programmes available in Europe and the USA.

Additionally, the platform helps students successfully apply for these opportunities by writing their personal statement, applications and CVs and guiding them through the process, allowing teachers to give live feedback.

www.unifrog.org





3. Which University?

“The first principle of choosing a university is to take on board that there is no overall best university, but there may be a very good one for you”.

The Virgin Guide to British Universities

With close to 400 UCAS-affiliated higher education institutions offering tens of thousands of courses, the choice of what to study and where is not an easy one. University league tables, although they do need to be treated with some caution, do offer some very useful information and help in making an informed choice. In addition to ranking universities and courses, many of them also offer useful profiles of individual institutions.

What are league tables?

UK university rankings and league tables are highly competitive. There are over 160 higher education institutions to choose from in the UK, and it is important you have all the information on where to go and what to study before applying.

Whether you wish to study at a young university or an established Russell Group institution, university league tables allow you to get an overview of how the institution is performing on a national scale.

Choosing a UK University

University rankings are an ideal starting point for you to begin your research fully. Important factors to consider when choosing a UK university include:

University ranking

Subject ranking

Location

Cost of living

Student satisfaction

Research ranking

Percentage of international students

Location





Rankings, however, won't tell you everything you need to know. Further research will allow you to get a fuller picture of what each university excels in, including full course lists, services for international students and accommodation information.

League tables alone will not guarantee that the best or most suitable university is chosen. There is no satisfactory **'quick'** way to choose a course, a department and a university. To get it right, time and energy needs to be spent in finding out as much as possible from a range of sources.

What makes a good university?

Most parents want their child to go to a **'good university'** to do a **'good course'**. But what does this actually mean? The following section might help you support your son/daughter in making an informed choice about what to study and where.

University groupings/associations/affiliations

A useful way to help understand the UK university/HE sector is to look at the groupings/associations that they have formed themselves into. You can find a quick guide to university groups via the following link <https://ukstudyoptions.com/uk-university-groups-a-quick-guide/>. Please note that not all universities are in a grouping or an association. However, visiting these websites and reading about the groupings and what they **'stand for'** is an excellent way of helping decide whether a particular university may be right for your son/daughter.

Russell Group Universities

The Russell Group is so called because its original members used to meet informally in the Hotel Russell in Bloomsbury. They formally became The Russell Group in 1994 and took the name of the hotel they used to meet in as their own name. The Russell Group of universities is widely regarded - here and overseas - as comprising the 'leading' universities in the country. Whatever view you take of this it is certainly the case that Russell Group universities are amongst the most competitive/the most difficult to get a place at and it is certainly the case that they attract the most research funding. Today, there are twenty-four universities in the Russell Group. They are:





1. University of Birmingham
2. Queen Mary, University of London
3. University of Bristol
4. University of Manchester
5. Cardiff University
6. Newcastle University
7. University of Southampton
8. Durham University
9. University of Edinburgh
10. University of Exeter
11. Queen's University Belfast
12. London School of Economics & Political Science
13. University of Liverpool
14. University of Leeds
15. University of Nottingham
16. University of Oxford
17. University of Glasgow
18. University of Warwick
19. University of York
20. University of Cambridge
21. University of Sheffield
22. University College London
23. King's College London
24. Imperial College London

Key factors to consider when choosing a university and course

1. Quality

Institutions are reviewed periodically by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. Reports of these reviews can be found on the Quality Assurance website (www.qaa.ac.uk). You can also find information on teaching quality on the Unistats website (www.unistats.ac.uk) and on the UCAS website (www.ucas.com).

2. Employability of students: will my child get a job at the end of the course?

Each higher education institution is required to collect statistics of students' destinations six months after they graduate. Before 2003 this was known as the First Destination Survey (FDS) and is now known as the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey. This information is available from individual university departments and can also be found in reference books and online at www.hesa.ac.uk. As well as looking at the percentage of students in employment, it is also worth considering the range and level of jobs that students have gone into.





3. Course content: what does the course actually cover?

Not all degree courses are the same, even if their titles appear similar. Look carefully at course descriptions to find out about the content of the degree course. How is the course structured? Does it allow the study of subjects your child is interested in? Does it include work experience if relevant? How is the course assessed?

4. Accreditation

Some courses (in particular vocational ones) are accredited by professional bodies such as the Engineering Council or the British Psychological Society or the Broadcast Journalism Training Council. Where relevant, check with the individual institution to find out if the course is accredited or offers any exemption from professional exams.

5. Degree discipline: does degree discipline matter?

Some careers do require the study of a specific degree, e.g. medicine and architecture. If your son/daughter has a specific career in mind encourage him/her to research the most appropriate course of study. However, over 60% of graduate vacancies are for graduates from any degree discipline. For example, with a degree in Geography your son or daughter could go into a wide range of careers including management consultancy, market research analysis and business.

6. Social factors

It is easy to forget, faced with league tables and teaching quality reports, that non-academic and social factors such as the location of the institution as well as its size and facilities, are important considerations in making the right choice. No-one wants their child to spend three or four years living and studying in a place that is simply not right for them. Encourage your child to visit universities so that they can make a truly informed decision. Go with them!





4. Useful websites

University websites are full of useful information. Many offer excellent advice about making the best of an application - including what to write in a personal statement or how to impress at interview. Typing **'personal statement'** or **'interview'** (or anything else you're interested in) into the search engine on a university website can often yield very helpful results. I strongly encourage you to try this out for yourself. It's easy, it's fun and it's helpful.

Website	Web address
Complete University Guide	www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk
Course Finder	https://coursefindr.co.uk/
Year in Industry	http://www.etrust.org.uk
Discover Uni	www.discoveruni.gov.uk
Open Days	www.opendays.com
Taster days and events	www.unitasterdays.com www.mystudentevents.com
Student Finance	https://www.gov.uk www.moneysavingexpert.com
Save the Student	www.savethestudent.org
UCAS	www.ucas.com
Unifrog	www.unifrog.org





5. The Personal Statement

The personal statement is part of your UCAS application. It's how you show your chosen universities why you'll make a great student and why they should make you an offer. Your personal statement also helps you think about your choice of course and your reasons for applying.

Your personal statement length can be up to 4,000 characters long (including spaces). You need to keep it concise and make sure it's clear and easy to read.

Although you can apply for up to 5 courses on your UCAS application, you can only submit 1 personal statement. It needs to cover all your course choices.

Personal statement structure

- Reasons for choosing subject(s).
- Current studies and how these relate to your chosen subject(s).
- Experiences and how these relate to your chosen subject(s).
- Interests and responsibilities and how these relate to your chosen subject(s).
- Your future after university.
- Summary including why you'll make a great student.

Other tips for a good UCAS personal statement

- Use information on university websites and the UCAS website. This often includes the skills and qualities universities are looking for in applicants.
- Don't include lists in your application, like a list of all your hobbies. Focus on 1 or 2 points and talk about them in depth to show their relevance to your application.
- Explain and evidence everything. It's easy to say you have a skill, but it's better to demonstrate it with an example of when and how you've used it.
- Avoid clichéd lines such as 'I've always wanted to be a teacher' as it says nothing about your motivations or experiences.
- If you're applying for a joint degree or different subjects, give equal time to each area and try to find common aspects that show their similarities.
- Never lie or plagiarise another statement – you'll be caught and it could result in your application being automatically rejected.
- Proofread your personal statement by reading it out loud and ask friends, family or a teacher to check.





<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/writing-your-personal-statement>

6. Making an Application to University through UCAS

UCAS Guide for parents

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/ucas-undergraduate-parents-and-guardians>

It is worth downloading the UCAS guide for parents plus signing up for the monthly parents' newsletter.

Why does my child have to apply to university through UCAS?

UCAS (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) is the organisation through which almost everyone applies to a UK university or college. This is because almost all UK Higher Education Institutions are members. You cannot apply to most UK universities and colleges independently - you have to apply through UCAS.

UCAS also operates CUKAS (Conservatoires UK Admissions Service) in conjunction with Conservatoires UK. CUKAS manages applications for both undergraduate and postgraduate Music degrees at most (but not all) conservatoires. Those conservatoires that are not members of CUKAS handle their own admissions. A number of Trinity students apply through CUKAS every year.

How to make an application through UCAS

Applications are made electronically. Students need to register online and complete the application 'form' online. After that, students will need our 'BUZZWORD' to connect with us. They need to look for Trinity Catholic High School, Woodford Green, IG8 0TP. The Buzzword has been sent to students via their school email.

Up to five choices can be made (up to four for medicine, dentistry and veterinary science - although a fifth choice can be made for a different course if an applicant wants to).

All five choices are confidential to the applicant and no university or college can see the applicant's other choices. Choices are listed alphabetically so no applicant can attempt to indicate an order of preference. For 2025 UCAS will charge **£28.50**. This one-off payment must be made to UCAS on line and via credit or debit card.





For Cambridge University

After submitting your UCAS application, you will need to fill in an additional Cambridge specific application form, a link will be sent to you by email.

UCAS Application

The UCAS application have three structured sections, this will help Universities and Colleges to differentiate more clearly outstanding students.



Enter a general statement about your school/college/centre.



If applicable, enter any information about extenuating circumstances which may have impacted the applicant's education and achievement.



Outline any other supportive information specific to the applicant and relevant to the course(s) applied for that you think universities/colleges should be aware of.





Section 1 - General Statement

In this section the main focus is on the school. The school will write an overall statement here.

Section 2 - Extenuating circumstances for the student's educational journey

This section focusses on students extenuating circumstances. Here we let universities know about anything that has affected the student's education or academic achievement. It is optional on UCAS, and should only be filled in when there is relevant information to add.

For example:

The student missed a lot of classes due to an injury and is predicted a B in Math's, but their Math's teacher thinks that they would normally be an 'A' student.

Section 3 – Student Suitability

In this section all focus goes on to the student's suitability for the courses they are applying to and anything special about the student.





7. Specialist Exams

To get a place on any university course, you are going to have to meet the entry requirements.

These university entry requirements (sometimes referred to as Ucas entry requirements) are effectively a set of boxes that you need to be able to tick. If you meet the required level for each item on the list, you are in the running for a place on the course.

Each university will set these entry requirements for each of its courses; the general idea being that they are set at a level where the university can then feel confident, you will be able to cope with the demands of the course.

Why are entry requirements important?

The entry requirements should be pretty much the first thing you look at when you are researching university courses. You need to meet these requirements in order to get a place on the course, so there is not much point focusing on courses where the requirements are out of reach.

What could an entry requirement be?

There are various types of university entry requirements.

Qualifications

What grades have you got? What grades are you expecting? Universities will look at what you've been studying since your GCSEs (or equivalent), as this is going to be the most recent evidence of your academic performance before starting university.

Grades will be the main thing here - either grades you have already achieved or those that your teachers or tutors have predicted for you. But it's not just grades that matter. Depending on the course and university, there may be qualification preferences (eg A-levels vs Btecs). You might need to have studied a specific subject (or subjects), perhaps with minimum grades in these. Some unis might be less likely to consider grades achieved through retakes.





Common qualifications students apply with include:

- A-levels
- Btecs
- T levels
- Scottish Highers and Advanced Highers
- Welsh Baccalaureate / Baccalaureate Wales
- International Baccalaureate

What do universities look for other than grades?

The UCAS Tariff Point

It's really the same thing, but some universities will measure academic performance in terms of Ucas points rather than grades. These points are a way for university staff to measure scores and grades across qualifications, Every grade for every included qualification is worth a set number of points; higher grades get higher amounts of points and you need a defined number of points to get on the course.

The UCAS Tariff is a 'scoring' system for entry into Higher Education. It is meant to standardise university entry requirements and conditional offer arrangements across the UK to take account of the range of qualifications now on offer.

Instead of asking for grades, a university might express the offer as a number of points. To help understand how many points a qualification is worth, UCAS has a Tariff Calculator that you can use

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/tariff-calculator>





UCAS points tables

Below is a series of tables with UCAS tariff points associated with the most common qualifications and grades.

A LEVEL GRADE	UCAS TARIFF POINTS
A*	56
A	48
B	40
C	32
D	24
E	16

EXTENDED PROJECT GRADE(EPQ)	UCAS TARIFF POINTS
A*	28
A	24
B	20
C	16
D	12
E	8

CORE MATHS	UCAS TARIFF POINTS
A	20
B	16
C	12
D	10
E	6





GCSEs

It's common for GCSEs in English and maths to be asked for as part of a university's entry requirements. Most universities will look for at least a 4 (sometimes a 5) at GCSE in these subjects. Specific courses may also ask for minimum grades in certain relevant GCSE subjects, while competitive courses will look for strong GCSE results as an indicator of your academic ability.

Interviews

A few universities – including Oxford, Cambridge and Imperial College London – interview most or all of their applicants. Elsewhere, some subjects are more likely than others to interview applicants. This can vary from one university to another. Where a course receives a high number of eligible applicants, admissions tutors may call you in for an interview. This is so they can meet you and fill in the picture they've painted of you from your personal statement, to help them make their decision.

Auditions

If you're applying to a performing arts course like drama or music, you'll almost certainly need to audition once the university has considered your application. The university will provide some guidance on your audition piece and key things you should demonstrate on the day.

Portfolios

If you're applying to a creative arts course, like fine art or photography, you'll probably need to compile a portfolio of your work, either from work you've completed in school or in your free time. The university will tell you whether you need to simply submit this online, deliver it in person or even present this to a tutor. If you do go to the university, there may also be an interview element, either one-on-one or in a group.

Admissions tests

For more selective universities and competitive courses, you might be asked to sit a special exam to help admissions staff find the strongest candidates. If you're applying to Oxbridge or want to study a subject like law or medicine, this will likely apply to you. The score you obtain will be used when considering your application. These exams typically test your aptitude and other natural skills that would make you a suitable student for that university or course.





University Admission Tests

For certain courses at some universities, it is required from candidates to take a special admission test known as entry test on top of A Levels. Students should check the entry requirements for each course with the relevant university before booking a test.

It is very important to know exactly which university admissions tests you'll be required to take, so you don't miss registration and deadline. Some admissions tests are only available to take once a year.

[List of some common specialist entry exams:](#)

UKCAT (for certain Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Dentistry courses, for the Biomedical Sciences course.)

LNAT (for certain Law courses)

ESAT Engineering and Science Admissions Test

TMUA The Test of Mathematics for University Admission

Changes to University Admissions Tests in 2024

If you are thinking of applying to Cambridge or Oxford or a selective course at another top UK University, make sure you are aware of important changes to assessment test that will affect form 2024 (for 2025 entry).





Cambridge University

Cambridge Assessments Admissions Testing (CAAT) has recently announced that the following Admissions Tests will be **discontinued** from the 2024 university cycle:

BMAT, ENGAA and NSAA

The ENGAA and NSAT have been replaced by the ESAT. This will apply to Natural Sciences, Engineering, Veterinary Medicine, Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology at Cambridge.

Cambridge and Oxford have announced that the BMAT will be replaced with the UCAT.

TMUA The Test of Mathematics for University Admission will be used for Economics and Computer Science degrees. Cambridge will continue to use the LNAT test for Law admissions.

Oxford University

Oxford has recently announced that the following Admissions Tests will be **discontinued** from the 2024 university cycle:

GAT and ELAT

All students applying to Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at Oxford will be affected by these changes. Oxford has confirmed that the UCAT will replace the BMAT for students applying to Medicine.

The following new tests have been announced:

BMSAT (Biomedical Sciences Admissions Test) – for applicants to Biomedical Sciences only. Details tbc by Oxford.

AHCAAT (Ancient History and Classical Archaeology Test) – details tbc by Oxford.

No changes to the CAT (Classics Admissions Test), HAT (History Aptitude Test), LNAT (National Admissions Test for Law), MAT (Mathematics Admissions Test), MLAT (Modern Languages Admissions Test), PAT (Physics Aptitude Test), Philosophy Test (for applicants to Philosophy and Theology only), or TSA (Thinking Skills Assessment) have been announced to date.





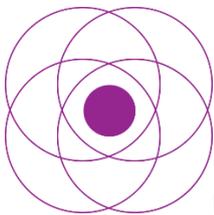
What is UAT UK



UAT-UK was established in 2023, as a joint venture between Imperial College London and the University of Cambridge, with the aim of improving the experience of students applying for highly competitive undergraduate courses. UAT-UK owns and delivers two computer-based undergraduate admissions tests: the Engineering and Science Admissions Test (ESAT) and the Test of Mathematics for University Admission (TMUA). Students self-register for the test via the Pearson Vue website.

Both UAT-UK tests are multiple choice, computer-based tests that run in two test sittings per year, October and January, thereby catering to both the UCAS equal consideration dates, the October UCAS deadline used by Cambridge, and the January UCAS deadline used by other universities.

The ESAT and the TMUA are used by a number of universities as part of their admissions processes for 2025 entry.



ESAT

The Engineering and Science Admissions Test (ESAT) is used for entry to a range of degrees from Chemical Engineering to Veterinary Medicine.

Test Sitting 1

15 and 16 October 2024 **Cambridge applicants**

Test Sitting 2

7 and 8 January 2025





TMUA

The Test of Mathematics for University Admission (TMUA) is used for entry to a range of degrees that require mathematical reasoning skills, from Mathematics and Statistics to Computer Science and Economics

Test Sitting 1

16 and 17 October 2024 **Cambridge applicants**

Test Sitting 2

8 and 9 January 2025

Scheduling Test

UAT-UK tests are delivered by Pearson VUE.

Both the TMUA and the ESAT are offered twice per year, in October and January. You are only permitted to sit the test once per admissions cycle. If you are applying to Cambridge, **you must register for the October sitting.**

Before sitting a UAT-UK test, you will need to complete a two-step registration:

1. First-time test takers must create a Pearson VUE web account. Please note that account activation may take up to 24 hours.
2. Book and pay for your test – once your online account registration is complete and you have created an UAT-UK Profile, you will receive an email with details enabling you to book and pay for the TMUA and/or the ESAT.

It is up to students to make sure they have booked and paid for a test sitting by the relevant deadline. UAT-UK is not be able to accommodate late bookings.

After student schedule the test, Pearson VUE will send a confirmation letter listing the test date, testing time, the address and phone number of the test centre, and directions to the test centre. The test cost £75.00





Your Responsibility

It is your responsibility to register for your test by the stated deadlines, to familiarise yourself with the test format and rules and to apply for any access arrangements or bursaries in good time.



Book Early

We advise you book your test sitting as early as possible so that you are able to sit at a time convenient to you, at your most local test centre. A test costs £75 for candidates in the UK and Republic of Ireland, and £130 for candidates sitting elsewhere.

Other specialist exams include the following:

UCAT

The University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT) is an admissions test, used by a consortium of UK and partner Universities to help select applicants to their medical and dental degree programmes.

The test is used alongside other selection criteria such as your academic qualifications and interviews.

The UCAT is a computer-based test, delivered in Pearson VUE test centres throughout the UK and worldwide.

Key UCAT Test Dates 2024 for 2025 Entry

The UCAT Exam runs from 8th July 2024 until 26th September 2024.





UCAT 2024 Exam Dates

Deadline	Date
UCAT Account Registration Bursary & Access Arrangement Applications Open	14th May 2024
UCAT Test Booking Opens	18th June 2024
UCAT 2024 Testing Begins	8th July 2024
Access Arrangement Application UCAT Deadline	15th September 2024
UCAT Booking Deadline (for 2025 entry)	19th September 2024
UCAT Testing - Last Exam Date	26th September 2024
Bursary Deadline	27th September 2024
UCAS Application Deadline	15th October 2024
UCAT Results Given To Universities	Early November 2024

Students register for the UCAT completely independently of school. The test must be taken at a private test centre Pearson VUE located throughout the UK and nationwide. It is the students responsibility to book and sit the test within the test window. It is advised that students get organised as these tests get booked up quickly. Students will need to use the test centre locator to find nearest centre.

Registration for the UCAT is a two-step process of registering an account and booking a test, using the Pearson VUE registration system.

UCAT Test Fees : The test fee is payable at the time of booking by major debit/credit card. Tests taken in the UK cost **£70**.

UK candidates in financial need can apply for a **UCAT Bursary Voucher** to pay for their test.

Students with disabilities and/or with a special educational need (e.g. dyslexia) may be eligible to sit the UCATSEN. Please see the UCAT website for more information.

Please visit the UCAT website for more information www.ucat.ac.uk



3. LNAT

The LNAT (Law National Aptitude Test) is a compulsory exam for those applying to study a LLB at certain universities. The LLB is an abbreviation of the Latin 'Legum Baccalaureus' which translates to a Bachelor of Laws degree.

The LNAT is a computer-based exam required by 11 universities to differentiate candidates in their selection process for admission to their undergraduate law degree programmes.

- **August 2024:** UCAS registration will open. LNAT registration begins.
- **1 September 2024:** LNAT testing begins
- **Mid-September 2024:** UCAS applications can be submitted

2024 Deadlines for Cambridge and Oxford applicants

You must meet these deadlines in order to guarantee that your application to Cambridge or Oxford will be considered.

- **1 August -15 September 2024:** Register and book your LNAT test slot (in order to sit the test before or on, 16 October 2024)
- **15 October 2024:** Submit your UCAS form
- **15 October 2024:** Sit the LNAT before, or at the latest on, 15 October 2024.

Deadlines for other LNAT universities

You must meet these deadlines in order to guarantee that your application will be considered.

- **20 January 2025:** Register and book your LNAT test slot before this date
- **29 January 2025:** Submit your UCAS form by 6:00pm UK time.
- **31 January 2025:** Sit the LNAT before or on 31 January 2025.





LNAT Test Fee

Tests taken in the UK: **£75**

There is an **LNAT bursary scheme** available to candidates struggling to pay for their LNAT test. Test fees will be waived for UK/EU students in receipt of certain state benefits. Candidates must apply for their bursary before booking their LNAT.

Candidates with disabilities and/or with a special educational need (e.g. dyslexia) may be eligible for special arrangements: please see the LNAT website for further information.

<https://lnat.ac.uk/registration/dates-and-deadlines/>

As always, make sure you check each university's admissions policy and entry requirements for more details.





The application form

The UCAS application form can be summarised as follows:

- 1. Personal details:** Your name, contact details and other information
- 2. Choices:** What do you want to study and where do you want to study it?
- 3. Education:** What qualifications have you got? What are you currently studying? How did you do in your GCSE exams?
- 4. Personal Statement:** Your Personal Statement is your chance to tell universities and colleges why they should want you as a student. Admissions officers will want to know why you are interested in the courses that you have applied for and what have you done outside of your study/ school for the course/subject that are you interested in, be specific give examples : listening to podcast, joining open forums or lectures at universities etc. Please remember that most applicants are not interviewed and, in an increasingly competitive process, your Personal Statement will perhaps be your only chance to impress.
- 5. Reference and predicted grades:** What do other people think about you? What examination results are you likely to obtain?





8. Financial Matters

Paying Universities fees can be very expensive. In this section you will see a breakdown of the costs and what help you can get.

Costs fall into two areas: tuition fees; and living costs.

1. Tuition Fees

The Government announced that the maximum level of tuition fees for a standard full- time course will remain at £9,250 for the 2024/2025 academic year.

Bursaries and Scholarships

Scholarships and bursaries reward high achievement or support students with greater need. The money doesn't need to be paid back.

- University bursaries are usually awarded to students based on their personal circumstances or if they come from a low-income family. Bursaries can help students who may face more barriers to attending full-time education, enabling them to access university
- University scholarships usually reward students who are outstanding in their subject. They generally need to be applied for and are quite competitive.

Student Loan

Student Loan (Tuition Fee Loan) is available for all full-time UK students, and is designed to cover the full cost of the university tuition fee. It's important to note that not all tuition fees are the same in every region – these vary across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The maximum tuition fee loan currently stands at £9,250 a year. It's paid directly to the University you will be attending by the Student Loan Company. The loan is transferred directly to the institution that you are attending, so you never see the money.

For more information on Student Loan please visit





<https://www.gov.uk/student-finance>

Other useful websites

www.studentfinance.direct.gov.uk

www.moneysavingexpert.com Click on Students on the menu. You will find up-to-date facts, clear guidance, helpful tips, and lots of free brochures to download as well as links to other sites.

<https://www.savethestudent.org/student-finance/maintenance-loans.html>

2. Maintenance loan

A maintenance loan means you will receive funding for your day-to-day expenses directly into your bank account. This money will have to be paid back but only after you start earning above the repayment threshold.

Student Maintenance loans payments are released in three instalments. You should receive your maintenance loan at the start of each term. Typically, this means you will receive funds in:

- January
- April
- September (if you are starting a new term)

Everyone with a place at university is entitled to a maintenance loan. The amount each person is entitled to depends on four main factors:

- Where the person studies and lives (i.e. at home, in London, anywhere else in the UK).
- Household income.
- Family circumstances (certain circumstances attract more funding).
- What course is being studied (certain courses - for example certain medical, health, social work courses - attract different levels of funding).

You can use the student finance calculator to estimate your Maintenance Loan.

www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator



3. Non-repayable Grants

Maintenance Grant for living costs

You have to give details of your household income and your course start date.

The grant is paid into your bank account at the start of each term. **You don't have to pay it back**, but any funds you get will reduce the Maintenance Loan you can get.

Special Support Grant

You may get a Special Support Grant instead of a Maintenance Grant if you get or qualify for:

- Income Support
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Housing element of Universal Credit

The amount you get is the same as the Maintenance Grant, but it won't reduce the Maintenance Loan you can get.

You may get the Special Support Grant if, for example, you're a lone parent or have certain disabilities.

You'll be told if you can get the grant when you apply for student finance.

4. Repaying your loan

As with all loans, student loan needs to be paid back, and because it is a loan interest is added too. You'll only start making Student Loan repayments in the April **after** you've graduated. Even then you'll only have to start repaying if you're earning over the threshold. How much you need to pay back depends on what plan are you on.

Repayment plan 5 is a new repayment plan, being introduced for students starting undergraduate and Advanced Learner Loan courses on or after 1 August 2023. You won't be expected to make repayments to your plan 5 student loan until April 2026 at the earliest, even if you leave your course early.





You'll only start making repayments if your income is over the repayment threshold. The repayment threshold for the 2026-27 tax year will be £25,000 a year, £2,083 a month or £480 a week in the UK. If your income falls below the repayment threshold, your repayments will stop and only restart when your income is over the threshold again.

Plan type	Yearly threshold	Monthly threshold	Weekly threshold
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Plan 5	£25,000	£2,083	£480
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You'll repay 9% of your income over the repayment threshold, which is currently £25,000 a year, £2,083 a month or £480 a week in the UK. If your income changes, either rising or falling, your repayment amount will automatically change to reflect this.

Income each year before tax	Monthly income before tax	Approximate monthly repayment
£25,000	£2,083	£0
£28,000	£2,333	£22
£29,500	£2,458	£33
£31,000	£2,583	£45
£33,000	£2,750	£60

You can also make additional voluntary repayments to SLC at any time.





How much interest you will be charged?

You'll be charged interest on your loan from the day you will receive your first payment to you or to your university or college until it's been repaid in full or cancelled. SLC calculate the interest daily and apply it to your balance each month – this is known as 'compound interest'. The interest rate you'll be charged depends on which repayment plan you're on.

The interest rate is based on the Retail Price Index (RPI), which is a measure of inflation.

It measures changes to the cost of living in the UK.

You can find the most accurate and up-to-date information on interest rates at

www.gov.uk/repaying-your-student-loan

Repayment plan 5 -The interest rate will normally be set at RPI only.

You may use an online UK student loan calculator to see how much you will need to repay. This calculator uses the inputs about your student loan debt and a number of assumptions to calculate your repayments each year. The calculator adjusts for future increases in your income, changes to the thresholds and the interest that accrues on your loan.

<https://www.student-loan-calculator.co.uk/>





8. Deadlines for 2024/2025

An early application to UCAS usually means that offers are finalised early (although there are always some exceptions to this, notably applicants for Medicine who are amongst the first to apply and usually amongst the last to hear). At Trinity we set early deadlines - this is for the students' benefit. The deadlines this year are as follows:

All conservatoire applicants must have application ready by 22 September

All early applicants must have applications ready 29 September

All other applicants must have application ready by 27 October

For information only

UCAS deadline for early applicants:
applications to Oxbridge Universities
and applications for
Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science studies 15 October

UCAS deadline for the receipt of all other applications 29 January

Art Foundation application deadline (non-UCAS) Range of deadlines for individual colleges. Some UCAS course March

Applications for dance, drama, and musical theatre courses may have a different deadline – check conservatoires' websites for information.





Deadlines set by institutions can vary. Please check deadlines regularly and carefully with your Uni/chosen course