



# What **next?**

If you have already applied or are thinking about applying to university or college this year, you have an opportunity to research your options. Here is a guide to help you.



**Discover  
Uni**

# Doing your research

Here are some things you can look at when deciding what and where to study. It's a good idea to first think about what matters to you and find information related to that.

- Choose a subject or subject combination that interests you.
  - Look at the details of courses you're considering, such as the modules on offer.
  - Think about what you want to get out of your course. Is it to gain new skills, to study a subject you love, or something else?
  - Consider if you want to study at home or move away. Also think through the type of place you want to live, and whether you want to study full-time or part-time.
  - Check the entry requirements for courses you're keen on. Universities and colleges set their own requirements, so these may be different depending on the institution you're applying to.
  - Research how the course is delivered in terms of lectures, seminars, practical learning, independent work and group projects.
  - Think about whether you want to do a course with a practical element, such as placements or an internship. Is this important to you?
- Think about other options such as higher or degree apprenticeships or Higher Technical Qualifications. You can find information about other options in [higher education](#) on Discover Uni. Remember you can also apply for other options at the same time as applying for an undergraduate degree.



# How to research options

It's important that you research your options for university or college thoroughly this year, and you'll need to look at a range of factors. You could use a table like this one to help you see which university or course can offer the things that are most important to you.

	Option 1	Option 2	etc.
<p><b>Entry requirements</b></p> <p>Do they fit with your actual or predicted grades? Remember to consider different options – why not include some courses that are above your grades, some that match and one that is lower as a backup.</p>	BBB – match	AAB – higher than predicted	
<p><b>Course content</b></p> <p>Does the course subject and content match your interests and potential career aspirations?</p>			
<p><b>Work experience</b></p> <p>Does the university or college offer placements or internship opportunities? How will these opportunities be affected by the pandemic?</p>		Sandwich years on hold	
<p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>How will the course be assessed? Think about whether you prefer exams or coursework and check how modules are assessed.</p>	No exams	Mix of exams and coursework	

	Option 1	Option 2	etc.
<p><b>Delivery methods</b></p> <p>How is the course being taught? Is it online, face to face or a mixture? What teaching methods would suit your preferred learning style best?</p>	All online		
<p><b>Location</b></p> <p>Where is the course based? Consider whether you want to be closer to home or further away, and what kind of campus you would like to attend.</p>	3 hour train ride		
<p><b>Fees and costs</b></p> <p>Are there any additional costs you may have to pay for the course, such as for materials or field trips?</p>		£200 field trip in first year	
<p><b>Financial support</b></p> <p>Are there any scholarships or bursaries available for the course?</p>			
<p><b>Additional support</b></p> <p>Does the university or college provide any additional support that you may need? For example, if you have a disability, how will the university make sure the course is fully accessible to you? Or if you are a care leaver or estranged from your family, is the university able to offer year-round accommodation?</p>	Guaranteed accessible accommodation in first year		
<p><b>Student life</b></p> <p>Does the course, university or college offer the societies, clubs, and social opportunities that would suit you?</p>			

# Shortlisting courses



Once you have thought about some courses that you are interested in, you can search for them on Discover Uni and explore the data and information available. You can save courses and select up to seven to compare the data side by side. You can find out information such as:

- student views of the course — including how students rated the quality of the teaching on the course, learning opportunities, assessment and feedback, academic support, organisation and management, learning resources, learning community and student voice
- how many students have continued into their second year
- what jobs graduates have gone into after completing their degree
- graduate earnings at 15 months, 3 years and 5 years after the course
- graduate perceptions which show if graduates feel that their course is positively impacting their work after graduating
- qualifications and UCAS tariff points students had when they were accepted onto the course.

# Applying

For most undergraduate higher education courses in the UK, you should apply through UCAS. The key dates for this year's application process are listed on its website.

## **Find key dates at UCAS**

If you're applying for a place on a practice-based musical theatre, music, dance or drama course at one of the UK's conservatoires, you should apply through the UCAS conservatoire route.

If you miss the UCAS application deadline, you can still apply for many courses until clearing opens in the summer, but you should check with the university or college that if they have spaces first.

Before you apply, remember to look carefully at the course information and entry requirements on university and college websites. These may highlight key things they are looking for in your application and personal statement.

## **After you apply**

Universities and colleges will reply to your application. This may include an invite to interview or an offer of a place. Each university and college will make their decisions at different times, meaning you might hear back before or after your friends do.

You can withdraw or make changes to your application either on the UCAS Track Tool or by contacting the university or college directly.

# Withdrawing or deferring

If you do not want to apply to higher education anymore, you can cancel your application via [Track](#). You should remember that you can't get an application refund unless your application has been cancelled within 14 days of being submitted to UCAS.

If you want to defer your place or had originally applied for deferred entry and no longer want to defer, you will need to check with your chosen university or college for information about their deferral process. Make sure you are certain about your course, as you won't be able to apply elsewhere whilst holding a deferred place, and will only be released if the course provider agrees.

You can also withdraw your application completely and apply for university or college next year, but please keep in mind there is no guarantee you will get an offer or place then.

It is important for you to think carefully before you decide to defer. Consider the pros and cons of deferring your place – for example, you may be able to spend the intervening year gaining practical skills or experience that will benefit your studies, but remember that will also mean taking a further year to graduate and enter the job market.

I'm not 100% sure on which course is right for me.

If you're not sure which course you want to study, you could defer to spend some time to think about this to make sure you make the right decision for you.

I'm worried about having enough money while at university.

Before you go, research what all of your costs will be and how much money you will receive through student loans. There may be additional financial support available so look into your options.

I could use the year to work.

If you decide to defer, you could work to save some money and go to university or college when you are ready.

I have considered all of my options and have decided to defer this year.

If you have considered all of your options and your university or college will allow you to defer, that's fine!

I was rejected from the course that I wanted to do, what should I do?

You could see if the course becomes available through Clearing and if not, have some other options ready which you could apply for.

I can't decide if I want to stay close to home or move away.

You can research your options, go to open days and speak to other students to help you to decide which location is right for you.

I could use this year to do some work experience to see which career I might want to do in future.

If you would like to travel, you could use the year to go to new places, meet new people and get some life experience.

I could use the year to travel

I'm worried about moving away from home.

It's natural to feel worried about moving to a new place. There are lots of ways to meet new people which will help you to make friends and settle in.

Work experience can support you to see what you enjoy doing and help you to decide on the course you want to study at university or college.

Will I have the support I need when I'm at university or college?

When applying for university, you can include details on your UCAS application form to help you to get any support that you may need when at university or college.



# While you are waiting for your results

## 1. Apply for student finance

If you are a new student, you can apply for funding even if you do not yet have a confirmed place on a course.

[Find information about student finance on Discover Uni](#)

## 2. Look into accommodation

There are usually different types of accommodation available, which can include university or college owned accommodation, student accommodation owned by private companies, and private accommodation.

You may prefer to live on campus, it may be important for you to have a short commute to uni or college, or to be in an area with lots on your doorstep. It's worth researching the accommodation available at your chosen universities or colleges early so that you are ready to get arrangements in place.

[Find useful information about accommodation on Discover Uni](#)

## 3. Get prepared for clearing

Many universities and colleges have virtual campus tours available on their websites. You can also sign up for virtual open days and online discussions. UCAS keeps a list of virtual events on [its website](#).

## 4. Make sure support is in place

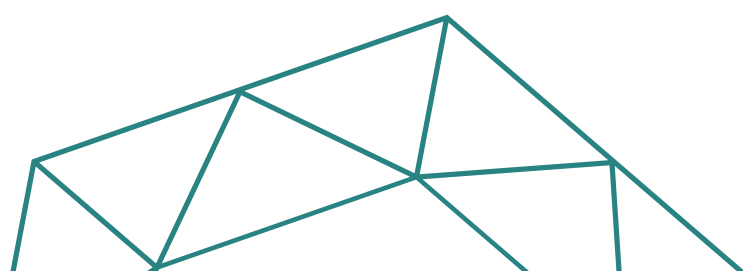
If you have particular requirements, inform the universities or colleges you've applied to. For example, if you are a care leaver or you have a disability, look for support on their websites and ask what they can offer you.

## 5. Research opportunities and talk to other students

There will be many opportunities to join societies and clubs, play sports, engage in student representative or union roles, volunteering or opportunities to engage with the local community as a student. Joining clubs and societies can help you to meet others and support you to settle into university and the local area if you have moved away from home.

While you are waiting for your results, you can research the type of opportunities you want to get involved in as a student. This may also help you to make a final decision about which course, university or college might be right for you. Look at the university or college website and their social media channels to find out more.

You can also talk to current students to understand what university life is really like. Sign up to [Unibuddy](#) and [The Student Room](#) to hear from other students.



Look at the course information on Discover Uni – it includes survey responses from students who have done the course and information on what they have gone on to do. Check out our [short video](#) to help you to understand the statistics that are available through Discover Uni.

See our [Preparing for University | Discover Uni](#) page for further support.

## Where to find information

- Check your university or college's website for information. They are the first point of call for information about everything from course content to accommodation.
- You can search for, save and compare courses on the Discover Uni website.
- Visit the websites below for further support on deciding your next steps in higher education:

England - The [Get the Jump campaign](#) from the National Careers Service

[Scotland](#)

[Wales](#)

[Northern Ireland](#)

# When you get your results

## 1. Your results

UCAS will receive grades from the awarding bodies and will match them to your applications and send them on to the universities or colleges. After considering the grades, they will update your application status on UCAS Track.

If you meet the conditions of an offer, the university or college will confirm your place in your application.

If you do not get the grades you need, universities or colleges may still confirm your place or make an alternative offer: this will show as a 'changed offer' against your application.

If you narrowly miss getting the grades you need, it is worth contacting the university or college to discuss your situation.

Information about what to do next will be shown in UCAS Track.

## 2. If you haven't yet applied or are unplaced

If you haven't applied or have not received any offers, you can apply through Clearing.

This is where any research you've done will help, as you may have some universities, colleges and courses in mind you'd like to apply to.

## 3. If you change your mind

If you change your mind about the courses you've applied for or accepted places for, you can [find information on UCAS website](#) about what you can do.

## 4. If you did better than expected

You will have an opportunity to reconsider your options if you achieve better grades than you were predicted.

You can register for Adjustment through your Track account. Make sure to discuss Adjustment with any universities you are interested in to see if there is sufficient space for you on the course.

## 5. If you have changed your mind

If you have an offer but you have changed your mind, you can release yourself from this choice to be automatically placed into Clearing. Think carefully before you do this and make sure you have done plenty of research, as you will lose the place once you release yourself into Clearing. See our pages on [Exam results and Clearing](#) for further guidance.

# Your rights

To help you make an informed decision about accepting an offer of a place on a course, universities and colleges are obliged under [consumer protection legislation](#) to make certain information available to you. This includes information about costs, complaints, terms and conditions and your right to cancel the contract you hold with the university or college.

If you are applying to a university or college in England, the Office for Students has [released guidance](#) which states that your university or college should:

- tell you about any changes to your course, for example, whether you will be taught online or on-campus
- let you know whether the teaching on courses could change due to public health advice
- provide you with their terms and conditions
- ensure that their complaints procedure is accessible, clear and fair, and let you know where you can find it.

They should give you all of this information before places are confirmed in August.

If you are applying to a university or college in Wales, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales expects universities to make sure that students have access to clear and up-to-date information, based on what is known at the time. Where universities have made decisions about the delivery of part of the academic year, but not the whole year, they should provide information on the decisions

made to date, and the timescales in which information on the remainder of the academic year will be made available. Complaints processes must continue to remain accessible, transparent and fair, and universities must provide clear information on how students can escalate any issues, including through contacting the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

If you don't think your university or college has given you the information you need to make an informed choice, there are a few steps you can take:

- Complain to the university or college through their complaints procedure.
- If you are in England, you can notify the [Office for Students](#). Bear in mind that this information will only be used to search for patterns of behaviour in universities, not to take further action on your individual case.
- If you are in England or Wales, you may be able to complain to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator](#).
- If you are in Northern Ireland, you may be able to complain to the [NI Ombudsman](#).
- If you are in Scotland, you may be able to complain to the [Scottish Public Services Ombudsman](#).
- If you think the university or college has breached consumer protection law, you can report their behaviour to the [Competition and Markets Authority](#).

# A-Z of resources

## Researching options:

BBC Bitesize: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/careers>

Discover Uni: <https://discoveruni.gov.uk/>

Get Career Confident: <https://www.getcareerconfident.co.uk/>

Prospects: <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/>

The Student Room: <https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/>

UCAS: <https://www.ucas.com/>

Unibuddy: <https://www.ucas.com/chat-to-students>

What Uni: <https://www.whatuni.com/>

## Qualifications information:

Discover Uni: <https://discoveruni.gov.uk/is-uni-for-me/about-higher-education/>

## Consumer protection:

Competition and Markets Authority: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/competition-and-markets-authority>

Consumer protection law advice for higher education providers and students: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-guide-to-consumer-rights-for-students>

Office of the Independent Adjudicator: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

Submit a notification to the Office for Students: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-students/notifications/>

NI Ombudsman: <https://nipso.org.uk/>

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: <https://www.spsso.org.uk/>

## Next steps and careers support:

England - The Get the Jump campaign: <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-your-education-and-training-choices>

Scotland: <https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/pupils>

Wales: <https://careerswales.gov.wales/>

Northern Ireland: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/careers-guidance-application-young-people>

