

What is UCAS?

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service is a central organisation that processes applications for almost every course in the UK. Their website www.ucas.com is easy to navigate and has detailed information about every course and institution in the UK.

There is an excellent parent section www.ucas.com/parents which we highly recommend. Parents can also sign up for the e-bulletins from UCAS, which provide news and information relevant to the time of the application cycle. They can also register to receive a copy of the Parent Guide or download it from the site, as well as join the UCAS parents' blog.

The first stage of any application is to choose a course. The Course Search section of the UCAS website will help to narrow the options. Students can make up to 5 choices or 4 if they are applying for Medicine/Dentistry/Veterinary Science. It is important to consider the requirements for each course; some will be given as grade requirements (such as BCC), and others as 'points' required by the UCAS tariff.

| AS Level Grade | A Level Grade | Tariff Points |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | A* | 140 |
| | A | 120 |
| | B | 100 |
| | C | 80 |
| A | D | 60 |
| B | | 50 |
| C | E | 40 |
| D | | 30 |
| E | | 20 |

The application process is completed entirely online with support from the Sixth Form team at DESC. Students will have to declare their AS results, complete a Personal Statement, and finally, a reference will be written by us to support their application. There is a fee of approximately £19 for registration.

Deadlines for completion are:

15th October: deadline for applications to Oxford or Cambridge universities and applications for medicine, dentistry and veterinary science.

15th January: deadline for applications to all other courses, except some design courses which is in March. We will endeavour to send off all applications prior to the Winter break. The process of their application can be checked online using UCAS Track, which is updated as decisions are made by universities. Students can then accept 2 offers, a 'firm' acceptance (their first choice), and an 'insurance' acceptance (second choice with lower grades required, in case first choice requirements are not met).

Once the exam results come out, providing they have achieved the necessary grades, their first choice is automatically confirmed. If students have not met the requirements for either of their offers, they may enter 'clearing' (a system where students who have not achieved the grades to get into their chosen university, contact individual universities who have published a list of their unallocated places) to pick up a place at an institution with vacancies.