
Applying to University

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Your Options post-school

Work

Apprenticeship

College

University





Things to think about

- What job do you want?
- What level of qualifications do you hold?
- What qualifications do you need?
- What are the different ways to get that qualification?





Why Higher Education?

- Expand career opportunities
- Gain valuable transferable skills
- Try lots new things
- Make new friends
- Move somewhere new?
- Improve earning potential
- Graduates have an overall higher level of physical and mental health (science fact!*)

* Department for Business Innovation & Skills research paper no. 146



What course is right for me?

- It could be you want to study...
 - A subject you already enjoy at school
e.g. Physics, Maths, Geography
 - A subject that relates to a career idea
e.g. Accounting, Engineering, Law
 - A brand new subject
e.g. Robotics, Chinese, Philosophy
- Over 30,000 different courses in the UK





Where do I start?



Research similar courses and compare:

- Look at the course content – not just the title
- Entry requirements
 - ✓ One aspirational choice, slightly above predicted grades
 - ✓ Three choices at predicted grades
 - ✓ One insurance choice at lower than predicted grades

What else should I consider?

- Subject level rankings
- Professional accreditations
- Study abroad or work placement opportunities
- Graduate prospects

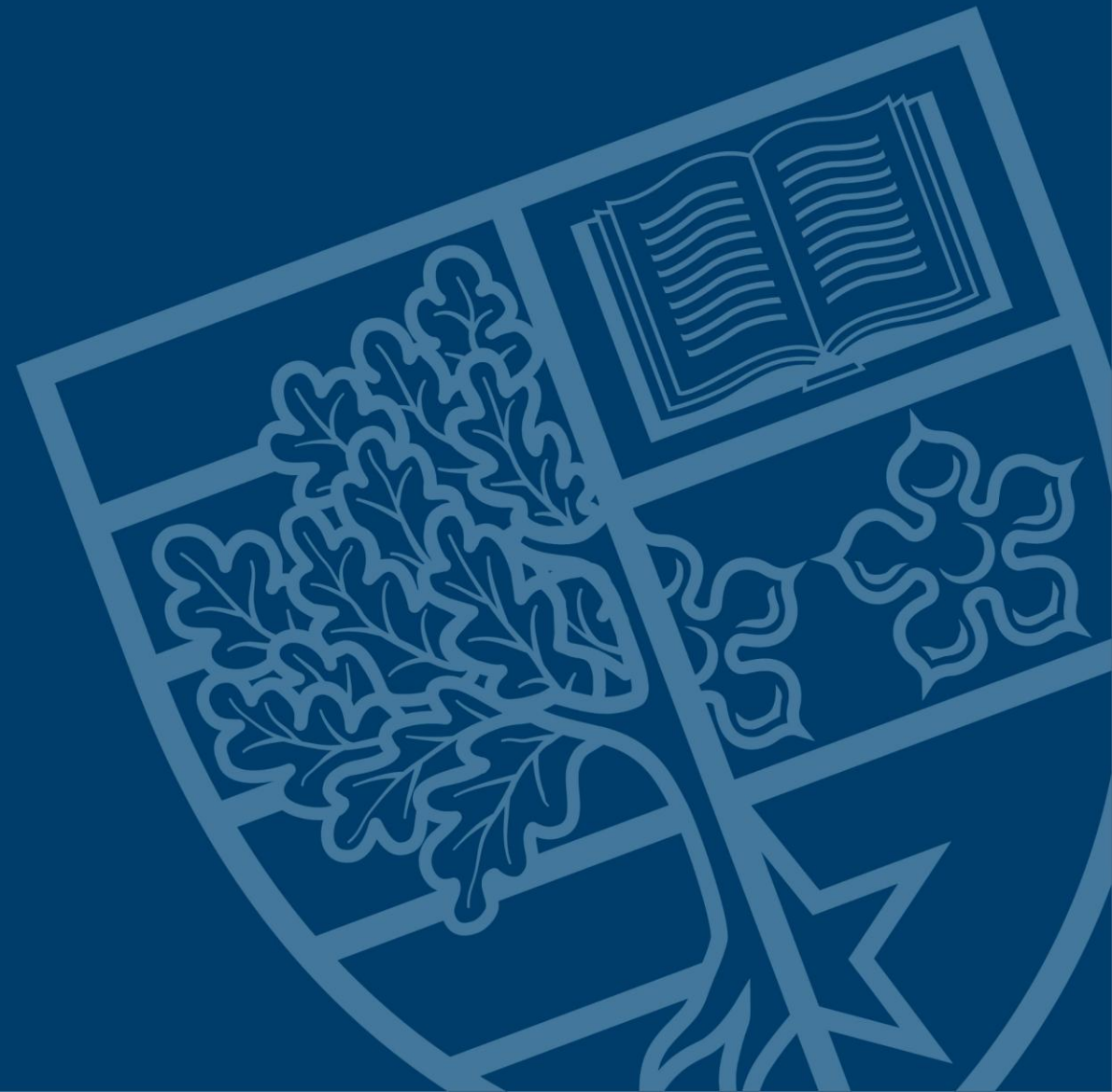




Find out more

- Careers Fairs and Higher Education Events
- Attend an open day
- Request university / college prospectus
- Look online at university or college websites
- Student reviews e.g. WhatUni or The Student Room
- UCAS website
- Chat to friends who're already at university

Personal Statements



What is the Personal Statement and how has it changed?

- This is your opportunity to 'sell' yourself and tell the universities why you would make a good student
- You have to answer 3 questions
- 4000 characters total (minimum of 350 per question)
- You write **ONE** personal statement which goes to **ALL** the institutions you have applied to





What are the three questions?

- **Why do you want to study this course or subject?**
 - What to include: inspiration, showing an understanding of the degree and future plans
- **How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?**
 - What to include: extra reading, project work and development of academic skills
- **What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?**
 - What to include: work experience, clubs & hobbies and positions of responsibility

What to avoid?

- Poor wording and grammar
- Quotes from other people
- Over-use of clichés and the word “passionate”
- Negative comments or excuses
- Trying to be funny
- Irrelevant personal facts – use the ‘so what?’ rule
- Plagiarism, lies or exaggeration
- ChatGPT software?





Five top tips

- Remember the 'ABC' rule (Action - Benefit - Course)
- Give examples of your own experiences
- Avoid starting every sentence with 'I'
- Proofread – don't rely on spellcheck!
- Leave yourself enough time to get everything done





So ... which would be better?

1. 'Interests and Achievements in School: Participated in television programme made for schools; Gold Certificate in UK Maths Challenge; completed Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award; represented school in athletics and hockey; participated in Sports Days; regular member of Debating Society and Languages Club; ongoing community service.'

Versus...

2. 'I started DJ-ing when I was 14 and continued it for three years. It was a great responsibility and I really enjoyed the music. I also did three sessions of casual stage crew work which involved setting up and monitoring sound systems for concerts and festivals. Again, this was a position of responsibility and we had to work under pressure and to a deadline.'





A few good examples

Mathematics Student:

I had the opportunity to attend a university mathematics lecture, which explored mathematical research that has assisted the police in the placing of speed cameras. Being able to use mathematics in such a significant way is something that I would like to pursue in a future career. Completing a Massive Open Online Course by the University of London on probability and statistics taught me new statistical concepts such as confidence intervals and linear programming. The MOOC has not only strengthened my subject knowledge, but it intrigued me and subsequently has become a factor that has led me to decide to study mathematics at degree level.

Economics Student:

As a defender in my football team I work to reduce chances for the opposition to score, whilst contributing to my own team's attacks. I enjoy identifying solutions to threats and creating opportunities and communicating these to my team-mates. I would love to apply such skills to higher education and to my eventual career. I also have a genuine interest in working with numbers and problem solving and I have been drawn to the role of an Actuary or Accountant for some time, so I wish to study a related course at university.

Thank you

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