

# Post-18 Applications: Frequently Asked Questions

## Part 1: Apprenticeship Applications

- **How long does an apprenticeship take to complete?**
  - An apprenticeship takes a minimum of 12 months to a maximum of 5 years depending on the level of apprenticeship and the industry/sector you're applying to. As a general rule:
    - Level 2 takes 12-18 months
    - Level 3 takes 24 months
    - Level 4 and higher takes up to 5 years
- **Would I be an employee during my apprenticeship?**
  - Yes – an apprentice has the same employment rights as any other member of staff. The only difference is that you will have a contractual end date to your employment/training programme.
- **How much will I be paid as an apprentice?**
  - In 2021, the current national minimum wage for an apprentice under the age of 19 or in your first year of an apprenticeship is £4.15 per hour. After the age of 19 this is likely to rise. From 1 April 2020, the rate per hour was set at:
    - £6.45 for 18 to 20-years
    - £8.20 for 21 to 24-years
    - £8.72 for 25 and over
- **Will I receive holidays when doing an apprenticeship?**
  - In short, yes. You will receive at least 20 days paid holiday per year plus national/public holidays.
- **Is there a minimum number of hours I must work?**
  - As an apprentice, you should be required to work a 30 hour minimum week and no more than 40 hours. Usually, four days is spent with the employer per week with the fifth day at College.
- **Can I get a degree from doing an apprenticeship?**
  - Yes – most apprenticeships will enable you to gain an NVQ, HNC or HND but higher apprenticeships give you the opportunity to train and study for a foundation degree or an honours degree. During your degree apprenticeship, you will be required to study part-time with a university.
- **Is there a permanent position available at the end of my apprenticeship?**
  - In many cases, the answer is yes. In 2021, 85% of apprentices remained within employment and 64% of these continued to work with the same employer.
- **Who pays for my degree in a degree-level apprenticeship?**
  - The employer will pay. The employer will be very thorough in selecting the 'right' person for these apprenticeships, as they are hugely investing into you. You will be expected to work hard while learning on the job and perform well academically at the same time with your university work.
- **When do I apply for an apprenticeship?**
  - Apprenticeships are advertised when the company chooses. Many companies advertise on the GOV.UK website and national search engines, while others choose to solely advertise on their own websites. Unlike with a UCAS application where deadlines are set for all applicants, students applying for an apprenticeship must be self-motivated and proactive in seeking out and applying for an apprenticeship. Students should prepare their CV and cover letter in advance, request their reference from their tutor and then seek additional support and guidance from their form tutor during the application process.

## **Part 2: UCAS Applications**

- **How do I ensure I get offered a place at university?**
  - Ensure your UCAS form is completed accurately and don't leave your personal statement until the last minute. Most importantly, apply for appropriate courses relative to the entry requirements so that you can realistically achieve the grades. Having a range of course choices with one aspirational and 1-2 'back up' options with lower entry requirements relative to recent tracking grades is strongly recommended.
- **What are the UCAS application deadlines?**
  - 15 October for Dentistry, Medicine, Veterinary Science and Veterinary Medicine and for all courses at the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge.
  - 15 January for all other courses.
  - 30 June is the final deadline. All applications received by this date are processed and sent to the universities and colleges.
    - Applications sent after 30 June will not be sent to the universities and colleges in the usual way. Instead, you will be automatically entered into clearing.
- **What help is available to students with a disability?**
  - Financially, the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) may be able to support your application as a direct result of your disability or specific learning difficulty. How much you get depends on your income or that of your household. Unlike student loans, this assistance does not have to be repaid. More information on this is accessible on the UCAS website and at: [Disabled UCAS Students | Studential.com](#)
- **Can I send off a second application?**
  - No – only one application per cycle. If you've sent fewer than 5 choices off, you can add additional courses through Track before 30 June. If you only applied for one course initially, you'll have to pay the additional £11 (as applying for only one course is cheaper!). UCAS Extra is also available to student who receive no offers or decline all offers.
- **Can I reapply if I already have a deferred place?**
  - No – if you decide you no longer wish to study the choice that you had accepted, they you'll need to speak with the university. If they agree to let you withdraw your application, and you had applied for the course in the previous application cycle, you may submit a new application.
- **Can I apply to both Cambridge and Oxford Universities?**
  - No – you may only apply for one. Remember that the deadline for applications is earlier (15 October).
- **How do I start using UCAS Apply?**
  - Go to the UCAS website to access the Apply system, clicking Register/Log In to Apply to get started. You don't need to complete it all at once so it's important that you complete it thoroughly and accurately.
- **How do I apply through/via my school?**
  - You will need to use the school Buzzword to link your application to the school. This means that your tutor can track your application and will have access to add your reference. The school will then be able to submit it to UCAS once it's completed.
- **How do I pay?**
  - Students will have a Pay and Send option once their form is completed. Students will need to pay via a debit card. Completing the Pay and Send function sends the form to the Sixth Form Team to be checked and processed, before the form is sent to UCAS.

- **Can I send my form directly to UCAS?**
  - No – as the form is being registered through the school, your application will be sent to us so that a reference can be attached. Once the reference is attached a member of the Sixth Form Team can send the completed application to UCAS.
- **Can I apply to more than one course at a particular university?**
  - Yes – the only exceptions are for Oxford and Cambridge where you can only apply to one of the universities and for only one course. The only drawback to applying for different courses (e.g. Business and Sport courses) at the same university is that your personal statement may not be able to showcase your preparation for both courses.
- **How many universities can I apply to?**
  - You can apply to a maximum of five courses, although there are some restrictions:
    - Four courses if applying for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine or Veterinary Science.
    - One course at either Oxford or Cambridge.
      - You can use your remaining choice(s) for any other subject. For example, if you have made four choices for Medicine, your fifth choice could be for Pharmaceutical Chemistry or Biomedical Genetics, for example.
- **Who will write my reference?**
  - Your form tutor will write your reference. If you have two tutors, they will discuss your reference and one tutor will lead on the writing of it. It is vital that you complete the Tutor Reference Form as early as possible, as this will let your tutor have more information about how you've prepared for your course and your extra-curricular activities.
- **How do I write my personal statement?**
  - The personal statement is up to 47 lines and must be of no more than 4000 characters. The personal statement demonstrates to admissions tutors why you've chosen to study the course in a clear and concise manner. We recommend you complete at least 3-4 drafts and seek feedback from your form tutor and a subject specialist (one of your teachers). Most importantly, don't leave this until the last minute. Unifrog is a great starting point!
- **What happens once I've sent off my UCAS form?**
  - UCAS will process your form and they will be in touch if they need to query anything. The UCAS form will be sent to your chosen universities and you will receive a welcome email from UCAS directing you to Track (where you can track any offers that are received). The universities will not know which one is your preference or where else you've applied to.
    - If you don't receive a welcome email within 14 days, you should contact UCAS customer services.
- **Am I likely to get an interview?**
  - An interview is likely for a number of courses at Russell Group universities. The same applies for competitive courses such as Medicine and Law. Some other subjects also have a reputation for interviewing, such as Teaching and Art and Design.
- **What do I do if I've not received any offers or I change my mind?**
  - UCAS Extra opens after 25 February. You are able to add one extra choice for consideration via Track. If you're unsuccessful again, you can repeat the process.
  - If you're unsuccessful or have changed your mind about what to study, you should ring the admissions office at the university you intend to apply to see if there are places available. Once you've done this, rewrite your personal statement to ensure it is specific to the new course. The university will request this and will be awaiting your application, increasing your chances of getting an offer.