

# Maximising ucas resources for 2025 discovery events and beyond

Aimee Okafor – Head of Events, UCAS

Samantha Sykes – Lead for Schools and Colleges, UCAS

Kathryn Mead – Senior Event Sales Manager, UCAS





# IN THE NEXT HOUR

1. Hear the latest findings from UCAS showing insight on what physical engagement strategies students remember and find useful
2. Signpost to all UCAS's useful resources to support you to train your ambassadors
3. 2026 cycle support

Three things from you;

1. One thing you didn't know
2. One thing you will try differently
3. One thing UCAS can do to support you prepare your ambassadors





# 2024 Ucas events in numbers

**Over 140k attendees**

at our last full round of  
2024 UCAS Discovery  
events

**Over 40 events**

Took place across various  
regions throughout the  
UK

**Over 3,720 schools**

attended our UCAS  
Discovery events

**Over 260 Universities and  
Colleges**

showcasing their course  
portfolio

**Over 178 average  
connections**

On average over 435 leads  
were generated per  
exhibitor at premium  
events +12% overall

**77% application  
conversion**

attendees go on to apply  
after attending a UCAS  
Discovery event



# RESEARCHING A BENCHMARK FOR ENGAGEMENT AT UCAS EVENTS AND BEYOND

UCAS

- Explore the effectiveness of university prospectuses, focusing on formats and audience impact.
- Evaluate physical engagement strategies at UCAS Discovery events, including stands, campaigns, and staff interactions.
- Aim to establish best practices for universities to enhance recruitment event presence.



Prospectus<sup>+</sup>

UCAS





**The Power of  
UNIVERSITY AMBASSADORS**



**The Impact of  
Meaningful**



**The Value of  
Personalisation**



# UCAS The Power of UNIVERSITY AMBASSADOR S





# Empowering UNIVERSITY Advisers with Relevant Tools

A high proportion of respondents (27%) had not yet committed to going to university.

Students value personal insights from knowledgeable advisers over flashy marketing materials. Almost all (96%) described their interactions with university ambassadors at the Discovery Days as excellent or good. 90% felt the information they were provided with was clear and useful.

While University advisers provide personalised information, in many cases, they must refer students back to university websites, an approach that can be frustrating for attendees seeking immediate, in-depth answers on specific programs or facilities.









# UICAS The Impact of Meaningful Meaningful Giveaways





# STAND-OUT GIVEAWAYS ARE THE INFORMATION RECEIVED

Three-quarters said that attending the discovery event had influenced which universities they were considering.

64% said the information and giveaways received had influenced which university to attend.

While freebies are a conversation starter, the real value to prospective students is the information they receive about courses, universities or the application process.

Prospectuses or brochures (86%) were the most common giveaways and for the majority (65%) these were considered the most valuable type of giveaway.

Results in the post event survey were lower (82% satisfied, including just 26% very satisfied). This may suggest that when respondents had time to review materials in detail, they have not met initial expectations.





UCAS

# The Value of Personalisation





# STUDENTS WANT PERSONALISED CONTENT

- Prospective students expect a tailored experience, and personalisation is increasingly central to effective recruitment.
- 93% of students expressed a preference for personalised content
- Email is the preferred delivery although there are high expectations of what and how much personalised content will be received in return for providing their email address.
- Student will follow up with you - post event, 93% had followed up with at least one organisation or university they spoke to at UCAS discovery 99% of these follow-ups were visits to the website
- Implement a structured follow-up campaign, capitalising on the 93% follow-up rate.









UCAS

# MAXIMISING UCAS RESOURCES

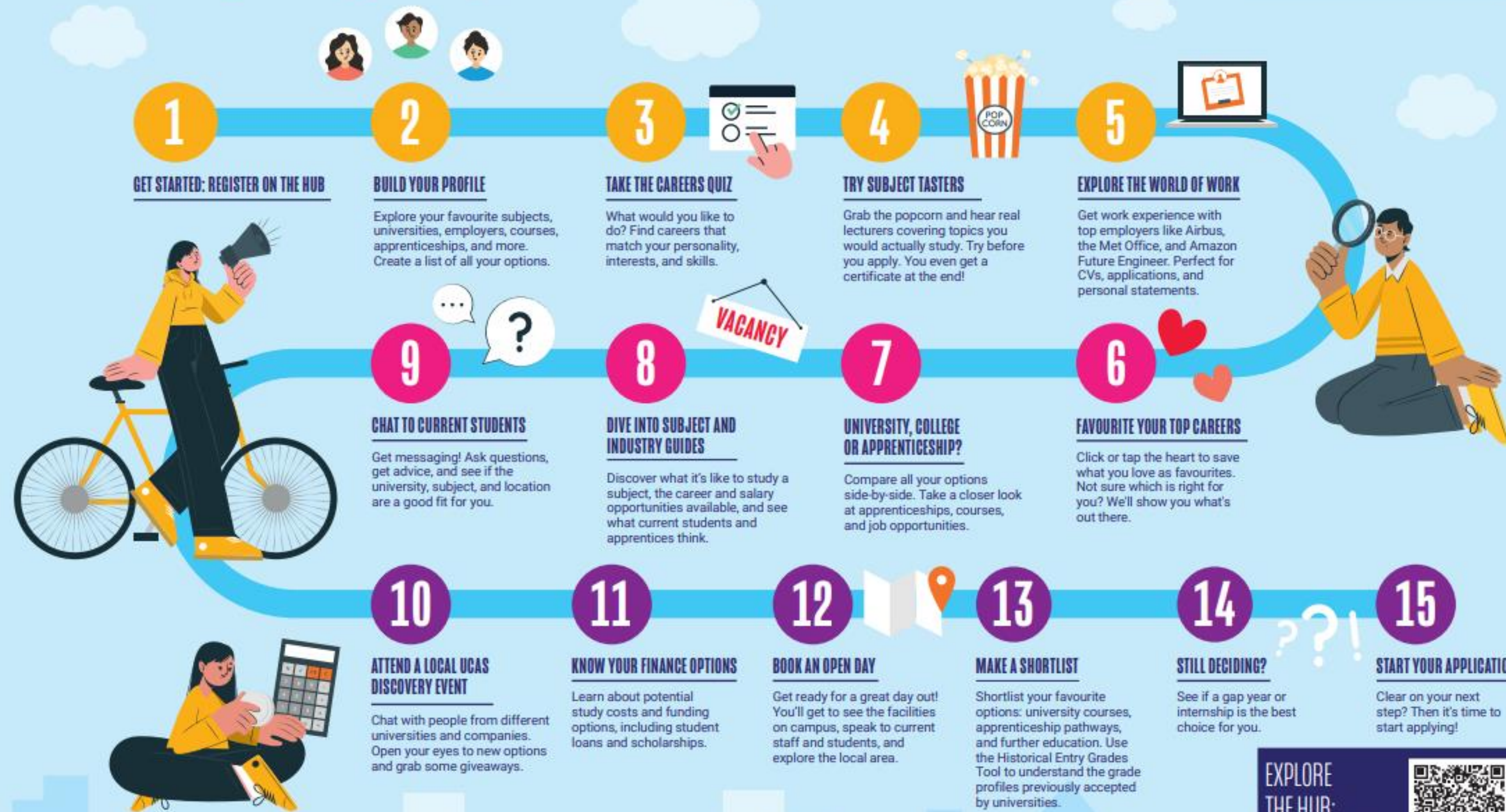




# YOUR HUB JOURNEY



UCAS



EXPLORE  
THE HUB:  
[UCAS.COM/HUB](https://ucas.com/hub)





# Your Hub

Explore your options

 Hub  For you  Favourites  What to do  Where to go  Search



 **Welcome back Sam**  
You're applying for Undergraduate courses in 2025 - [Change year](#)

 [Start application](#)

2025 Application



## Start an application

Apply to universities and colleges to study degrees, HNDs, and HNCs and dance, drama and music at conservatoires.

[Start application](#) 

### DISCOVER WHAT TO DO

Browse subjects and careers with related courses and apprenticeships.

[Discover more](#)



 FAQS

#### What subject should I take?

Read our subject guides to see what might be right for you.

 HOW TO

#### How to apply

All you need to know about applying to university, college or an apprenticeship.

### FOUND A COURSE YOU LIKE?

[Find out more >](#)

UCAS

### FIND AN APPRENTICESHIP

[Learn more >](#)

### DISCOVER CAREERS

Try our quiz and get recommended careers that match your skills and personality traits.

[Take the quiz](#)



 FAQS

#### Key application dates

Find out what you need to do and when.

 HOW TO

#### How to nail that personal statement

Writing a personal statement can be daunting. Follow our tips and advice to help make it easier.

### DISCOVER WHERE TO GO

Browse universities, colleges and employers and learn more about cities and regions in the UK.

[Find out more](#)



## What's happening

### Replying to your offers - your questions answered

Getting ready to reply to your offers? We've got all your questions answered.

[More info](#)



### Chat to students

Chat with UK and international students who are already studying the courses you've applied for at universities and colleges across the UK, on Unibuddy.

[More info](#)



### University course tasters

Experience what a university course would be like with Springpod's Subject Spotlights. These interactive, virtual university course tasters feature real-life lectures, seminars, and academics.

[More info](#)



### Live now: Studying in the UK

There's a lot to consider when moving to a new country. We explore accommodation, visas, scholarships and everything in between.

[More info](#)





TARIFF POINT CALCULATOR

0

Q

|    |            |   |            |
|----|------------|---|------------|
| A* | A          | B | CLEAR      |
| C  | D          | E | DELETE     |
| -  | -          | - | SAVE       |
| -  | VIEW SAVED |   | LOAD SAVED |

YOUR EVENTS

Q Search events

BOOKED ON

**! UCAS Test Event QR (Attended)**  
12 Sep - 14 Sep 2022 | Attended 12 Sep 2022


AT YOUR FAVOURITE UNIS

Cardiff Metropolitan University -  
'Not too late to apply' event  
(Llandaff)  
12 Jan 2023, 12:00 | Cardiff

Cardiff Metropolitan University -  
'Not too late to apply' event  
(Cyncoed)  
12 Jan 2023, 12:00 | Cardiff

CV BUILDER

Need help structuring your CV?  
Try our CV builder.



Go to CV builder

PERSONAL STATEMENT BUILDER

4000 characters of 4000 remaining



View personal statement guides

CONTINUE WRITING

WHAT TO STUDY NEXT?

Art and design 31.95%

Business, management, and administrative studies 27.22%

Publishing, media, and information management 19.05%

Marketing 15.39%

Architecture, building, and planning 7.4%

CHANGE SUBJECTS

YOUR CAREERS QUIZ

View my matches

BROWSE CAREERS

SUBJECT SPOTLIGHTS



POWERED BY Springpod

VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCES



POWERED BY Springpod







# INDUSTRY GUIDES SUBJECT &



Fashion, textiles and jewellery



Dance



Drama and performing arts



Food science



Materials science and engineering



Criminology



Anthropology



Optometry



Geology



Radiography and medical technology



Molecular biology, biophysics, and biochemistry



Film, cinematography, and photography




# Subject spotlights

All filters

Subject


University or College

★ Promoted




**Teaching: A Profession And A Passion**  
with Damien Maguire from Liverpool Hope University

★ Promoted




**Cancer, Brain Tumours & Rogue Cells: The Science Behind The Killer Disease**  
with Dr Shafiq Ahmed from University of Sunderland

★ Promoted




**Computer Science: Is Generative AI The Problem Or The Solution?**  
with Dr Aminu Usman from the University of Sunderland

★ Promoted




**And Breathe: The Respiratory System Explained**  
with Charlotte Anderson from the University of Sunderland

★ Promoted




**Computer Science: Space Exploration And Beyond**  
with Dr Paul Sant from The University of Law

★ Promoted



**Biotechnology: The Rise Of Radical Healthcare**  
with Prof. M. Safwan Akram from Teesside University

★ Promoted



**Covid: The Law And You**  
with Mike Meehan from University of Law

☐ Anglia Ruskin University (20)  
☐ Canterbury Christ Church University (4)  
☐ City St George's, University of London (3)  
☐ Coventry University (4)  
☐ Coventry University London (2)  
☐ Durham University (1)  
☐ Leeds Arts University (3)  
☐ Leeds Beckett University (4)  
☐ Liverpool Hope University (3)  
☐ Manchester Metropolitan University (3)  
☐ Middlesex University London (1)  
☐ Queen's University Belfast (1)  
☐ Teesside University (5)  
☐ The University of Law (8)  
☐ UCL (4)  
[Show more](#)

Reset filters

POWERED BY Springpod

UCAS Media Service

Your support on [Subject Spotlights](#).





## AtkinsRéalis Virtual Work Experience programme

Engineering

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at AtkinsRéalis

Available 11/11/2024 - 30/06/2025

[Start now](#)

- ☐ Accounting, banking & finance (9)
- ☐ Agricultural & environmental (1)
- ☐ Business, administration & consulting (3)
- ☐ Construction & trades (2)
- ☐ Digital, it and computing (2)
- ☐ Energy & utilities (6)
- ☐ Engineering (7)
- ☐ Government & politics (1)
- ☐ Healthcare & medicine (12)
- ☐ Hospitality, catering & events (2)
- ☐ Law & legal services (1)
- ☐ Property & surveying (1)
- ☐ Publishing & journalism (1)
- ☐ Retail (1)
- ☐ Science & research (4)

[Show more](#)



## mydentist Virtual Work Experience programme

Healthcare & Medicine

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at mydentist

Available 11/11/2024 - 30/06/2025

[Start now](#)



## HR Career Insights: Virtual Work Experience with CIPD and Springpod

Business, Administration & Consulting

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

Available 13/11/2023 - 31/10/2025

[Start now](#)



## Skills for Success: Forvis Mazars Work Experience

Accounting, Banking & Finance

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at Forvis Mazars

Available 28/10/2024 - 15/06/2025

[Start now](#)



## Allied Health : Virtual Work Experience with Health Education England

Healthcare & Medicine

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at Health Education England

Available 16/09/2024 - 25/03/2025

[Start now](#)



## Severn Trent Sustainability: Water Industry Virtual Work Experience

Energy & Utilities

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at Severn Trent

Available 09/09/2024 - 29/04/2025

[Start now](#)



## Engineering a Sustainable World - Work Experience with IChemE

Engineering

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at Institution of Chemical Engineers

Available 30/09/2024 - 30/04/2026

[Start now](#)



## Legal Realities Unveiled: Virtual Law Careers with TLT and Springpod

Law & Legal Services

This programme will explore an array of career opportunities available at TLT LLP

Available 01/09/2024 - 31/08/2025

[Start now](#)






# Build your profile. Favourite as you go. UCAS

## Favourites

[Manage favourites](#) >


[Shortlist](#) [Courses](#) [Uni & colleges](#) [Locations](#) [Subjects](#) [Pages](#)



### Build your shortlist

Save courses, universities, colleges, subjects, careers, apprenticeships, and more to your favourites.

[Choose some favourites](#)






# Build your profile. Favourite as you


### Favourites

[Shortlist](#)[Courses](#)[Uni & colleges](#)[Locations](#)[Subjects](#)[Pages](#)




#### Agricultural Business Management with Foundation

University of Reading  
10/2025 • 4 Years • BSc (Hons) • Full-time  
Tariff points: N/A




#### Animal Science (Zoo and Wildlife Conservation)

Anglia Ruskin University  
15/09/2025 • 3 Years • BSc (Hons) • Full-time  
Tariff points: 96/96



#### Animal Bioscience and Management

University Centre Askham Bryan  
08/09/2025 • 3 Years • BSc (Hons) • Full-time  
Tariff points: 84/84




#### Animal Behaviour with Foundation Year

Liverpool John Moores University  
08/09/2025 • 4 Years • BSc (Hons) • Full-time  
Tariff points: 96/96

+

-



Leaflet | © OpenStreetMap contributors




# Build your RESOURCES. Favourite as you go


### Favourites

[Shortlist](#) [Courses](#) [Uni & colleges](#) [Locations](#) [Subjects](#) [Pages](#)


[Manage favourites](#) >




**Adviser lives**  
Information & advice




**Subject tasters**  
Information & advice




**Virtual Work Experiences**  
Information & advice



**Your guide to the UCAS Hub**  
Information & advice



**Personal statements for 2026 entry onwards**  
Information & advice



**Personal statement for 2026 entry: Classroom resources**  
Information & advice



# What support is available in event?

1

Career quiz and Careers Adviser at every event on the UCAS stand

2

Access virtual work experience and university course tasters at the UCAS stand or Springpod stand (Manchester, London & Birmingham)

3

Live and on demand talk programme running through the day covering Careers advice with all their options explained, a guide to apprenticeship opportunities, UCAS application and personal statement tips





UCAS

# Individual needs pages

[Link to the individual  
needs pages](#)

## Students from Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater (GTRSB) communities

Students from GTRSB communities who are considering higher education might find it useful to find out more about how they can be supported to apply to university, and to understand more about the support they may be able to receive on campus.

The GTRSB into Higher Education Pledge<sup>(1)</sup> is a firm commitment by a university or college to support GTRSB students into and within higher education, and to ensure a welcoming and inclusive environment.

More information and support can be found from:

- The Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and other Travellers (ACERT) website<sup>(2)</sup>
- The Friends, Families and Travellers website<sup>(3)</sup>
- The Traveller Movement website<sup>(4)</sup>

## Homeless students

People who are homeless and want to progress to higher education may find there are a number of challenges to overcome – such as qualifications, financial issues, and access to expert information, advice, and guidance.

- The Foyer Federation<sup>(5)</sup> provides housing to young people aged 16-25, along with help to reconnect with learning and increase employability. If you've spent time in a foyer, you may be able to access funding to help you go to university.
- Crisis Skylight centres<sup>(6)</sup> across the UK can offer careers information, advice and guidance – including access to courses and qualifications.

If you're homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, the CentrePoint helpline<sup>(7)</sup> is there for anyone aged 16-25 in England to get advice. They also offer careers support and training programmes<sup>(8)</sup> to help you get to where you want to be.

## Sharing your individual needs in the UCAS application

When you apply through UCAS, you will have the opportunity to share any individual needs or circumstances, including many of those listed above. Sharing this information helps the university connect you to the right support – they may send you more information or contact you to discuss what would help you succeed.

Universities are diverse and inclusive environments, and people from all backgrounds are welcomed – the support is available because they recognise some people may have different challenges and priorities, so this is in place to make sure you can make the most of your time. Visit the pages above to find out more about what may be available.

The information you share will always be treated sensitively, and only used by those responsible for arranging support and helping you with your application (e.g. the student support team). It is never used when universities decide whether to offer you a place, but it might be used to make you an offer that looks at your achievements in context.

We recommend that you read the relevant pages above and research what help the university can offer before making an application – it is important that you make a decision that is right for you.

► [England](#)

► [Wales](#)

► [Scotland](#)

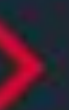
► [Northern Ireland](#)

► [Channel Islands and the Isle of Man](#)



## Contextual admissions

Some students face additional challenges during their education which may impact their results. Universities recognise these challenges, and can make adjustments through 'contextual admissions'. Find out more about what this is, who is eligible, and how you qualify.



Refugees, asylum seekers or those with limited leave to remain who are considering applying to higher education, should always speak to the relevant UK government department for more information.

### Armed Forces

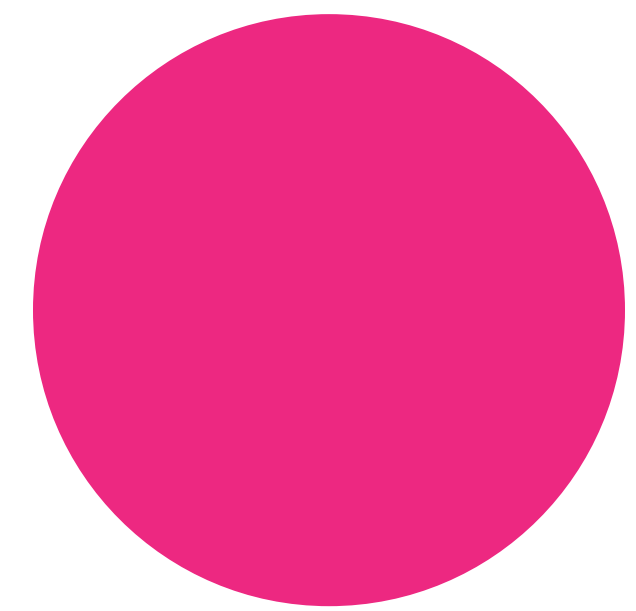
Young people with one, or both, parents serving in the UK Armed Forces, should let the university or college know about their circumstances and check that you qualify with the relevant criteria.

### Transition

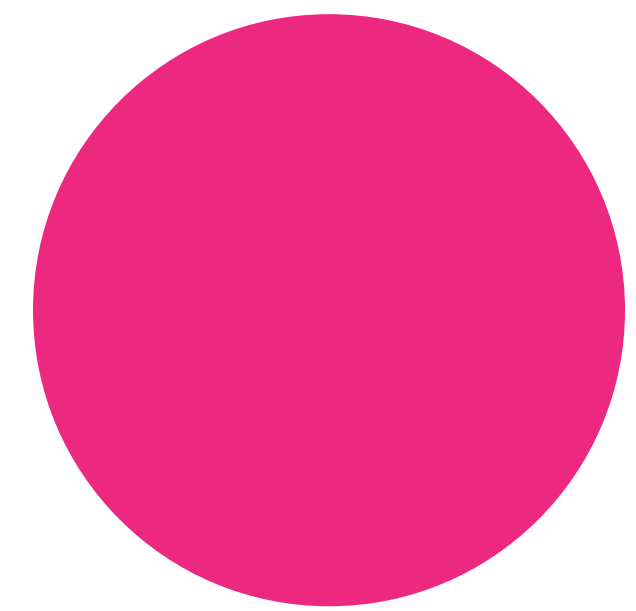
When you leave school or college to progress to higher education, or when you transition into civilian life, there are a number of resources and initiatives available to help with applying for a higher education course.



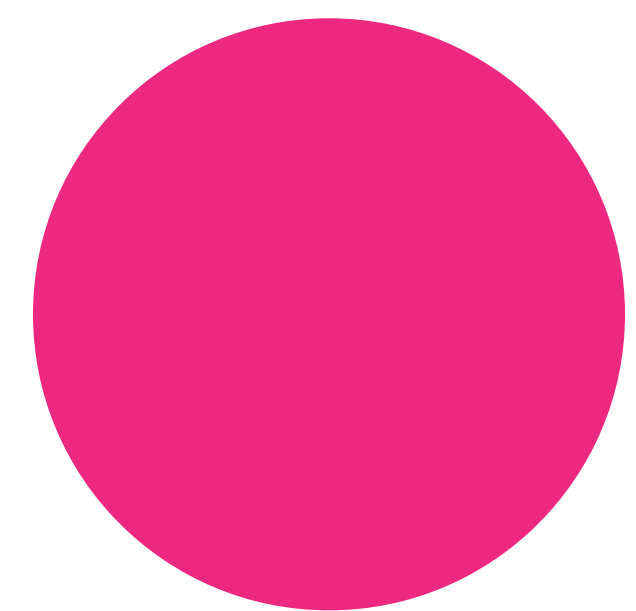
# 3 actions for you



Register and explore UCAS Hub



Download our resources



Identify 3 tools to signpost students to







# KEY CHANGES for 2026

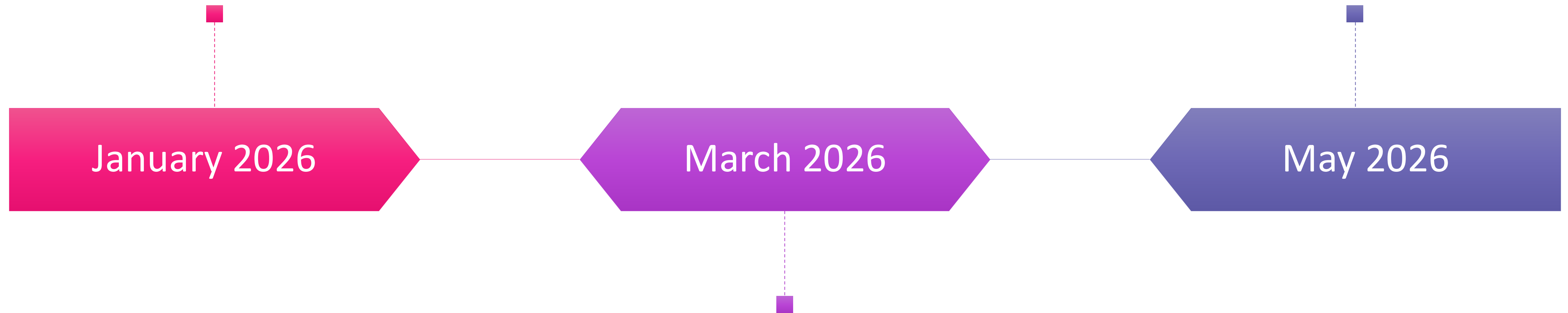
Are you ready?





# 2026 Cycle

Equal Consideration Deadline will be Wednesday 14 January 2026.



The reject-by-default deadline is set for 13 May 2026.

UCAS is reintroducing the end-of-March advisory deadline.

Updates apply only from the 2026 cycle; deadlines for the 2025 entry dates remain unchanged.





# Personal Statement for 2026

1

Why do you want to study this course or subject?

2

How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject

3

What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?



# PERSONAL STATEMENT – THE purpose remains clear

It's their opportunity to:

- **show** passion, curiosity and knowledge.
- **evidence** relevant skills and potential.
- **communicate** genuine interest and a desire to learn more.

Structure to encourage

- by providing a scaffold
- prompts to **link** academic, extra-curricular and other experiences to their **chosen area(s) of study**.

Examples can fit across sections

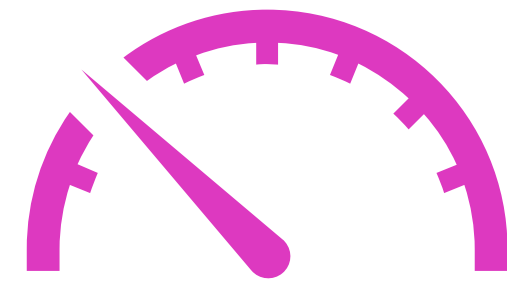
- the important thing is to **explain** why they're including it and what they've **learned** from it.
- the statement will still be reviewed as one piece.
- there's no right or wrong.



# What about character count?



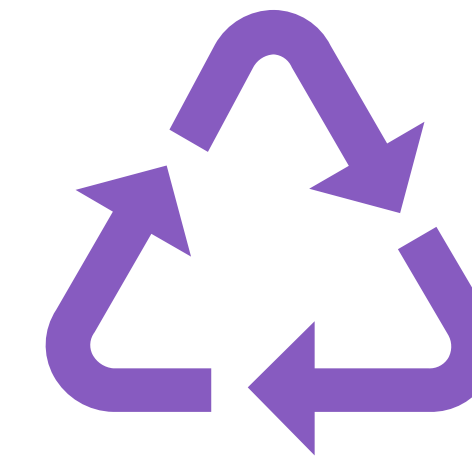
4,000-total character count split across sections.



Minimum character count 350 characters per section.



Character count will be clearly labelled on screen.



Don't waste characters listing grades and subjects.



Don't repeat information across sections.



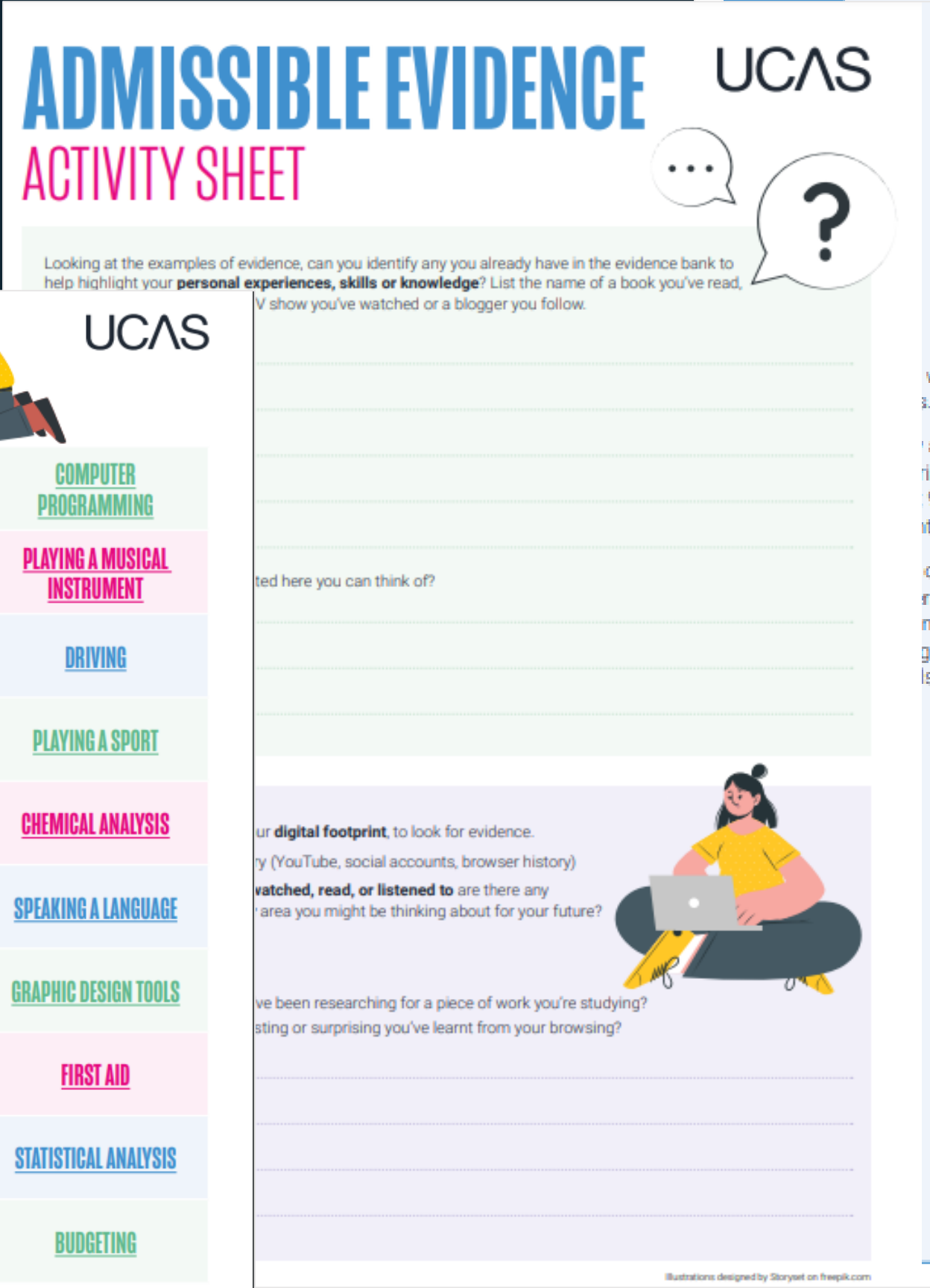
# Examples of evidence


|                           |               |                                |                    |                        |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| In person work experience | Blogs & vlogs | Positions of responsibility    | Projects or essays | Mentoring              |
| Virtual work experience   | Documentaries | Awards                         | Books              | Tutoring               |
| Work shadowing            | Podcasts      | Challenges                     | Influencers        | Online subject courses |
| Paid employment           | TED Talks     | Personal life experiences      | Hobbies            | Trips or visits        |
| Volunteering              | Articles      | Work based learning / training | Clubs              | Competitions           |



# Personal statement 2026 cycle support

- [Information, advice and guidance](#)
- [What you need to know video](#)
- [Resources for internal staff training](#)
- [Classroom resources](#)
- [Checklists](#)
- [Poster](#)
- [FAQs](#)



| Lesson | Learning Outcomes | Activity Summary  | Suggested time | Resources   |
|--------|-------------------|---|----------------|---|
|        |                   | <p><b>Activity 1: What is a skill?</b></p> <p>Ask students what they think a skill is. Show the dictionary definitions of the word skill. Do they agree with these definitions?</p> <p><b>In pairs or groups can they write their own definition of what a skill is?</b> Why do they think it's important to think about skills for their personal statement? Explain that it's important to think about skills when planning their personal statement as they will need to use lots of examples.</p>   | 20 mins        |   |
|        |                   | <p><b>Activity 2: Discuss the 3 types of skill categories.</b></p> <p>There are lots of different ways to categorise skills; for simplicity we are exploring it as follows:</p> <p><b>Transferable skills:</b> general skills that are important for many areas of life including our education or job. They are skills you can develop and be transferred across different areas.</p> <p><b>Personal skills:</b> abilities we are born with, our natural talents, or things we develop through our experiences.</p> <p><b>Knowledge based skills:</b> skills that are specific to a subject, areas or topics.</p> <p>Remind students that skills are gained through all experiences (personal, education, training etc).</p> <p><b>Paired or group discussion:</b> students to think of 3 examples of skills that might fall into each group. Feedback and share answers. Show slide with a range of other examples to support discussion if needed.</p> | 20 mins        | Bingo grid<br>Bingo example cut outs<br>Activity slides<br>Student activity worksheet |
|        |                   | <p><b>Activity 3: Skills bingo</b></p> <p>To help start student reflection on their experiences, skills and strengths use the bingo grid to play 'Skills bingo'. Students choose 9 skills off the list of 24 provided and write them on their blank grid. Cut up the skills provided and pull them out randomly. For each skill read out if the student chose to put it on their grid, they need to mark it off. Keep going until someone has 3 in a row, column, or diagonally.</p> <p><b>Extension:</b> for each skill they have on their grid, they must provide an example of when they have used this skill before it can be marked off. Keep going until someone has 3 in a row, column or diagonally.</p>  | 20 mins        |  |



[www.ucas.com/advisers](https://www.ucas.com/advisers)

- [Application Presentations](#)
- [Resources for parents](#)
- [Your guide to UCAS Hub](#)
- [The adviser guide](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Adviser lives webinars](#)
- [On demand online training](#)

# ADVISER GUIDE 2025

FOR ENTRY TO UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE IN 2025



[www.ucas.com/parents-signup](https://www.ucas.com/parents-signup)

- Key dates & application journey
- Parent, Guardian and Carer Guide
- Parents newsletter
- Clearing Guide
- Apprenticeship guide
- Student finance & accommodation

# PARENT, GUARDIAN AND CARER GUIDE 2025

Everything you need to support your child  
with their higher education choices



# we want to hear from you

1

One thing you didn't know

2

One thing you will try differently

3

One thing UCAS can do to support you to prepare your ambassadors

