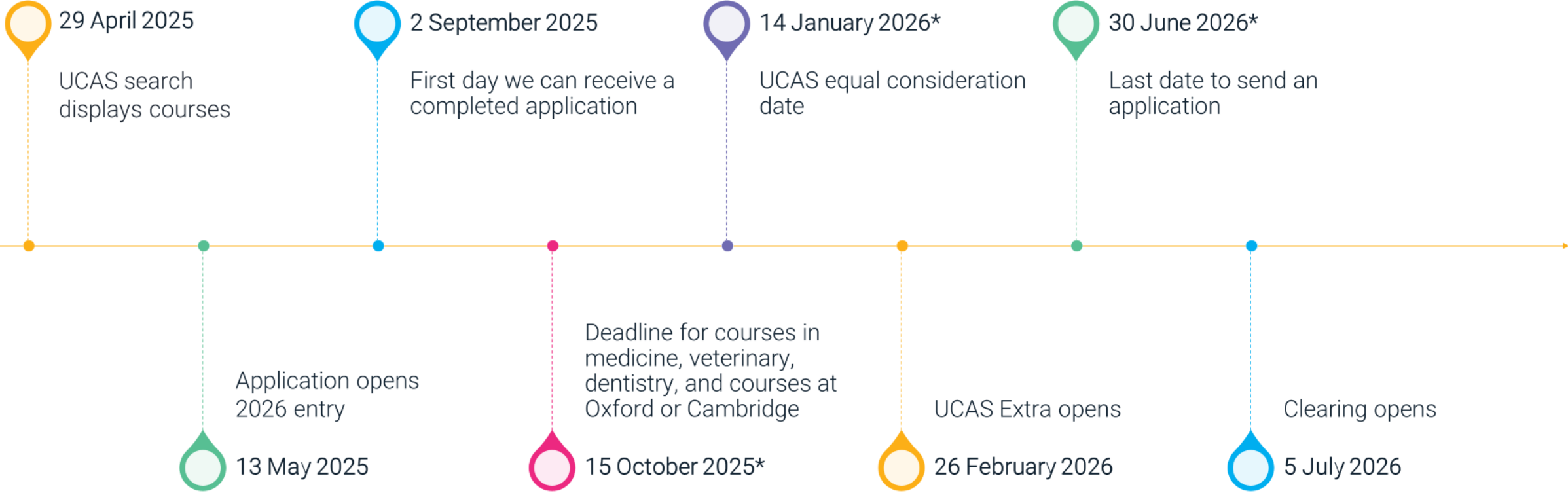


# YEAR 12 FUTURES EVENT 2025 – SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS TO MAKE THE BEST CHOICES

- Introduction – outline
- The UCAS process
- Making informed decisions
- What is a personal statement?
- The reference process
- Entrance exams
- Student Finance (Mr Lloyd)
- Post-18 options (Mrs Poppleton)
- Degree Apprenticeships

# KEY DATES FOR 2026



\* 18:00 UK time

# Completing the UCAS application



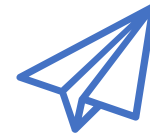
Student registers for a UCAS Hub account to carry out research and start application.



Student completes all sections of the application and sends it to their school/college.



Teacher or adviser reviews the application and adds reference and predicted grades.



Applications are sent to UCAS by the school or college on behalf of the student.



Universities and colleges make their decisions on the application.

# APPLICATION KEY FACTS



Invisibility - Universities and colleges can't see your other choices



Apply by the relevant equal consideration date.



Five choices, with some restrictions (medicine, veterinary, dentistry, Oxford and Cambridge).



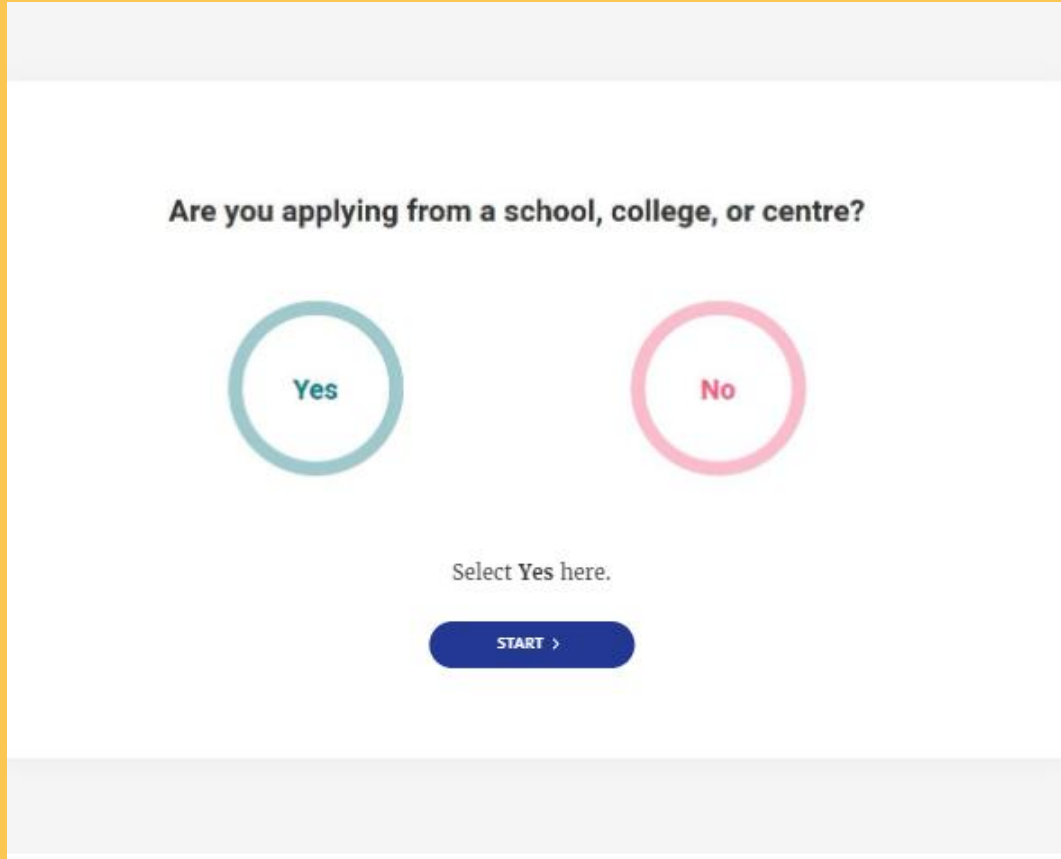
Research is key to a successful application.



Applying costs £28.95.

# Linking to a centre

- If you're applying with the help of a school, college or centre you should enter their 'buzzword' to link your application to them.
- The buzzword is a unique code set by your school, college or centre.
- By linking your application you're giving your school, college or centre permission to view and track your application.
- It also means they'll provide you with a reference and send your application to UCAS on your behalf.



Are you applying from a school, college, or centre?

Yes No

Select Yes here.

START >

# Choosing the right **place** for you

- **Style** – from traditional, with a focus on subject-based courses and research, to modern universities/colleges, with a greater focus on vocational courses.
- **Location** – some are in large cities, others in small towns, by the coast or in the countryside – it's all a major influence on the environment and lifestyle.
- **Size** – larger universities can have more than 20,000 students, whereas some of the smallest have only a few thousand.
- **Culture and facilities** – influenced by a range of factors, including the diversity of students who attend.
- **What graduates do** – all universities collect destination statistics; it can be useful to find out what jobs or further study students go on to.
- **Tuition fees** – can vary between universities and colleges; check if there are scholarships or bursaries available.
- **Living costs** – accommodation, transport, and food can vary enormously.

# Choosing the right **course** for you

- What does the course cover?
- Courses with the same title may be very different.
- Look carefully at the core course content, and the range of optional studies/modules available.
- Which modules are the most interesting and relevant to your career aspirations?
- See if the course or university/college offers any internship, placement, or study abroad opportunities.
- How is the course taught – structured teaching, or more independent research? How many lectures are there, and how much group work will be done in seminars?
- How is the course assessed?

# INFORMED DECISIONS — ASTON UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

- Statistics: Teaching Quality, National Student Survey (NSS), Unistats, REF (Research), TEF
- Contact time/teaching methods
- Professional accreditation
- Likelihood of offer: offer levels, entry requirements, pre requisite subjects
- “Reputation” -applicants per place/competition, league tables, reputation of specific courses or departments -useful but treat with caution...
- Encourage applicants to visit as many of their five choices as possible (open days, taster days, residential, etc)

# INFORMED DECISIONS

- Encourage tariff points/grades spread on UCAS choices e.g.  
1 aspirational 3 on or close to realistic predictions 1 good fall-back choice with lower grades
- Ensure that applicants are clear on their predicted grades
- Applications per place often quoted –don't forget students are making 4 other applications
- Contact the University direct if you are unsure of suitability

# INFORMED DECISIONS

- Firm choice needs to be the “best” fit for the individual NOT just the highest grade offer/most prestigious
- Check carefully offer conditions -some may be tied to choosing an institution as firm choice e.g. unconditional offers, contextual offer schemes
- Consider in more depth the course structure, modules and assessment methods
- Visit Firm and Insurance choices again before accepting
- No rush to make decisions –most applicants have until May - June
- Ensure that the firm choice offer is achievable and/or discuss with the University whether there is likely flexibility at confirmation of results

# Application **profile**

- Personal details
- Nationality details
- Where you live
- Contact details
- Supporting information
- Finance and funding
- Diversity and inclusion\*
- More about you

\* (for students with a UK home address)

<b>Personal details</b> Name, age, title and gender Start this section	<b>Nationality details</b> Birthplace and nationalities Start this section	<b>Where you live</b> Tell us about your address history Section in progress
<b>Contact details</b> Address, email, and telephone Section in progress	<b>Supporting information</b> So that providers know how to support you during your studies Start this section	<b>Finance &amp; funding</b> Tell us how you'll fund your study Start this section
<b>Diversity &amp; inclusion</b> Additional equality information Start this section	<b>More about you</b> Tell us about any circumstances that you might need support for during your studies. Start this section	

# Your experiences

- Education
- Employment
- Extra activities\*
- Personal statement
- Reference\*\*

\*(for students with a UK home address)

\*\* (not visible if linked to your school/college)

## Experience

<p><b>Education</b></p> <p>Qualifications and periods of study</p> <p>🕒 Section in progress</p>	<p><b>Employment</b></p> <p>Paid employment</p> <p>✓ Section complete</p>	<p><b>Extra activities</b></p> <p>Taken part in any activities to prepare you for higher education?</p> <p>Start this section</p>
---	---	---

## Your personal statement


**Personal statement**

Why do you want to study this subject?

Start this section

# THE PERSONAL STATEMENT

 Your chance to show your passion, curiosity, interest.


 Three separate sections with question prompts.

 A maximum of 4,000 characters, minimum of 350 characters per section.

 The same for all your choices.

 There isn't a spelling or grammar check.

 No formatting allowed.

 Every personal statement is run through similarity detection software.

## Why do you want to study this course or subject? \*

This is your opportunity to showcase your passion and knowledge of your chosen subject area and to demonstrate to universities and colleges why they are a good fit for you and your future ambitions.

Please use a minimum of 350 characters in this section (350 needed)

## How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject? \*

This is your chance to shout about the relevant or transferable skills you've gained from your education and highlight your understanding of how they will help you succeed in this subject area.

Please use a minimum of 350 characters in this section (350 needed)

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

This is your chance to reflect on any other activities you have undertaken outside of your education, or personal experiences which further demonstrate your suitability for the course. This section is likely to be deeply personal to you, so anything you include should be meaningful and relevant to you.

Please use a minimum of 350 characters in this section (350 needed)

# WHAT ARE THE QUESTIONS?



Why do you want to study this course or subject?



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



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

# PERSONAL STATEMENT SUPPORT

**PERSONAL STATEMENT BUILDER**

4000 characters of 4000 remaining



[View personal statement guides](#)

CONTINUE WRITING



What to include in your architecture, planning or building personal statement



What to include in your animal science personal statement



What to include in your art and design personal statement



What to include in your biology personal statement



What to include in your business management personal statement



What to include in your chemistry personal statement



What to include in your computer science personal statement



What to include in your dance personal statement



What to include in your dentistry personal statement



What to include in your drama personal statement



What to include in your economics personal statement



What to include in your engineering personal statement

# Start early

Include:

- academic achievements, past and present
- interest in the course area
- knowledge of the subject area
- enthusiasm to go beyond the syllabus
- details of independent study skills



# Consider...

Universities and colleges will consider:

- Have you chosen the course for the right reasons?
- Can you achieve in a new learning environment?
- Do you have a range of interests and aptitudes?
- Do you have a depth of interest in the subject?
- Have you studied independently?
- Do you appear motivated and committed?
- Do you have good numeracy and literacy skills?



# Decisions

Universities and colleges will review the:



personal statement



qualifications



reference

They may also ask for:



admissions test



interview



portfolio/audition

# Tracking your application



## Waiting for decisions

Universities or colleges are considering your application.

**Providers have until dd-mm-yyyy to respond to your choices.**



## All decisions received

You've received a decision from all of your choices. You can now reply to your offers at any time.

**Reply by dd-mm-yyyy**



## Waiting for confirmation

You're waiting for confirmation of your choices. If you meet the offer conditions, the university/college will confirm your place. Send them your results if requested.

Follow your application 24/7:

- see your choices
- keep contact information up to date
- view and reply to your offers

You'll receive one of three decisions from your choices:

- unconditional offer
- conditional offer
- Unsuccessful

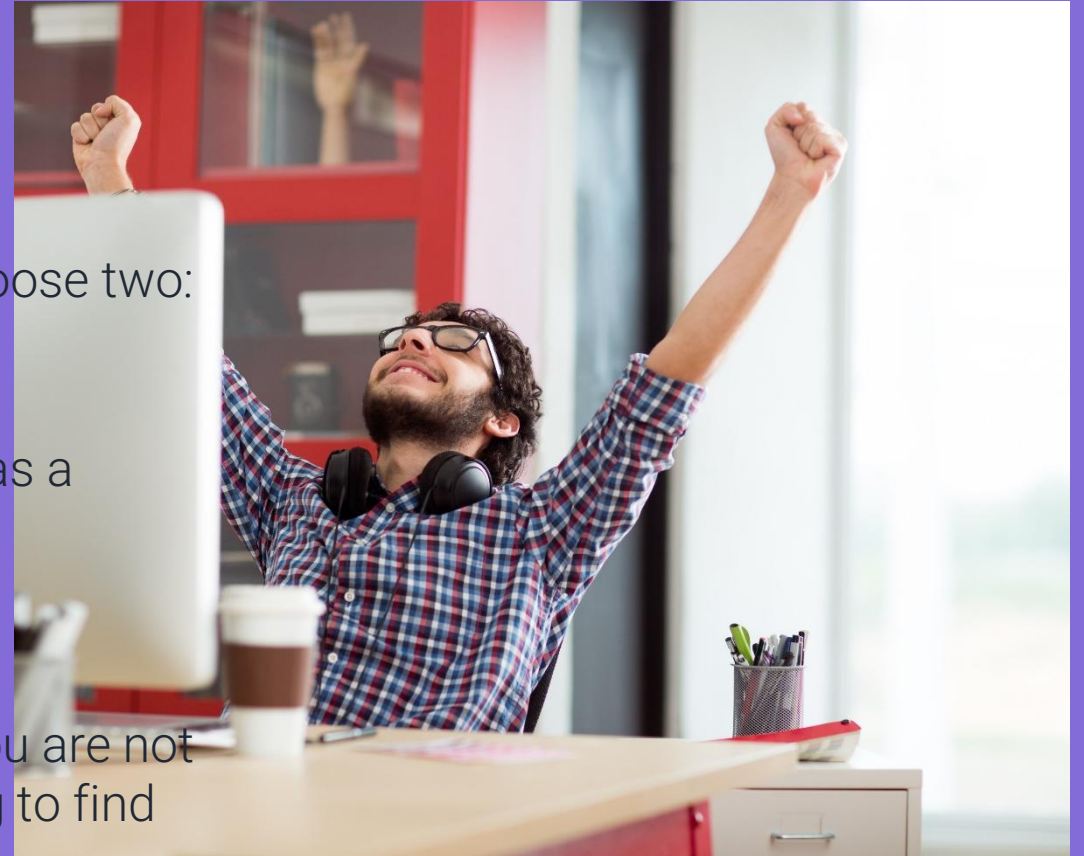
# Replies to offers

Once you have decisions on all your choices, you can choose two:

- One as a 'firm' acceptance – your first choice.
- The other as an 'insurance' acceptance. This acts as a back-up if you do not get into your 'firm' choice.

Any remaining offers must be declined.

Once all your decisions and replies have been made, if you are not holding an offer, you may be able to use Extra or Clearing to find available places.



# REFERENCES

Who writes them?

- Mr Giles
- Your Form tutor
  
- The reference will mirror and support your personal statement- your referee will be able to view this.
- However ensure that your tutor has seen (and supported you with) your personal statement before this point.

# REFERENCES



Enter a general statement about your school/college/centre.



If applicable, enter any information about extenuating circumstances which may have impacted the applicant's education and achievement.



Outline any other supportive information specific to the applicant and relevant to the course(s) applied for that you think universities/colleges should be aware of.



# REFERENCES

- Keep us informed!
- Something valuable that you can't fit into your personal statement? Let us know!
- Are you involved in anything outside of school that we don't know about?

# ENTRANCE EXAMS



**BMAT**  
BioMedical  
Admissions Test

**UK**  
Clinical  
Aptitude  
Test

# ENTRANCE EXAMS — REGISTRATION AND TIMESCALE

<https://lnat.ac.uk/registration/dates-and-deadlines/>

<https://www.ucat.ac.uk/about-ucat/ucat-test-cycle/>

# What can students be doing?

- research, research, research
- attend open days and events
- extracurricular and super curricular activities
- work experience
- volunteering
- independent learning outside the curriculum
- focus on this year's studies






# Student Finance 2025

Mr Lloyd  
Assistant Head of  
Sixth Form

---

The aim of this session is to identify the changes to student finance under 'Plan 5' and what it means for you and your future.



# Why do we need to know about Student Finance?

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- If you/your child is the first in your family to attend university, **the idea of how to fund it can be daunting.**
- If you did go to university, the Student Finance plans may have changed several times - we are now on **'Plan 5.'**
- You will need to understand the difference between **maintenance** and **tuition fee** loans for your application.
- I will also debunk common myths and misconceptions, as well as support you in physically applying for SF.

# What is Student Finance?

- One of the biggest fears for families when considering whether to go to university is money. **Whilst graduates statistically earn 40% more than non-graduates, the perceived initial investment can seem daunting.**
- Thankfully, **Student Finance England (SFE)** was set up by the **UK Government** to support with the costs of private education.
- SFE is a **UK Government subsidiary**, and therefore not a high-street/privately owned bank. This means that they are not actively seeking to profit from what you borrow - **they are investing in your future**. It is not recorded on your credit file.
- Specifically, the loan is linked to not how much you borrow (as you will all borrow roughly the same), but instead how much you earn after university - in essence, the **'graduate tax.'**
- To safeguard you, the loan is contractually tied to the Retail Price Index, and only starts accruing interest once **you begin paying off the loan (after you begin earning £30,000 per year) - "No win, no fee."**



# What costs are there at university, and how will I cover them?

- **The two main costs that you'll experience whilst studying are tuition fees and maintenance/living costs.**
- **There's optional packages to help you with both.**
- The first part of the loan you can opt into is the **Tuition Fee Loan**. This is to pay for your course and learning experience. **This is £9,250 per year** and is paid directly to your university in September of each year. (x3 years = £27,750).
- The second part of your loan you can opt into is the **Maintenance Loan**. This is to pay for your living costs as a student and is often used to supplement your bank balance alongside a part-time job. Compared to the Tuition Fee Loan which is fixed, **the Maintenance Loan VARIES depending on you/your parents household income.**

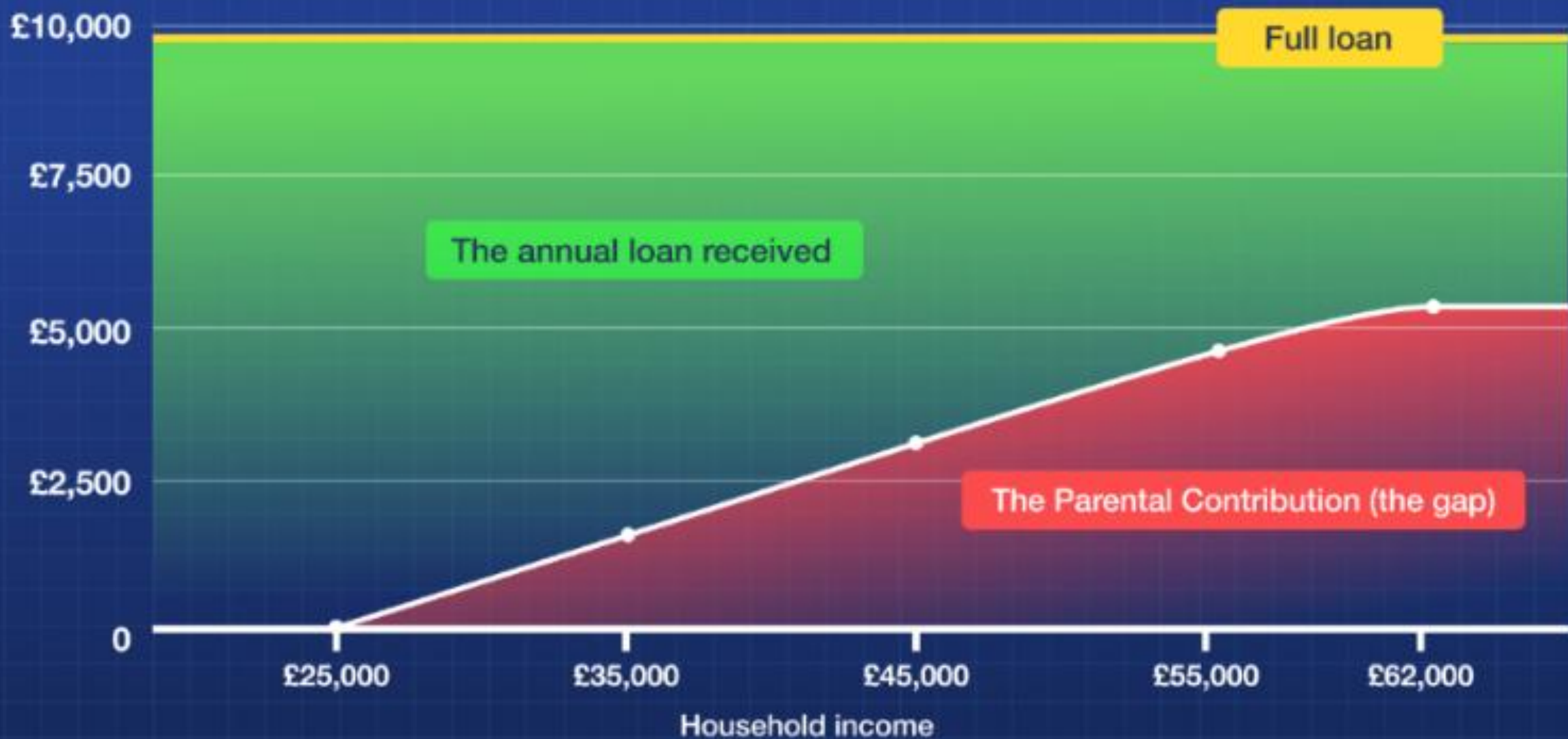
# Calculating the 'means-tested' Maintenance/Living Costs Loan:

- Student Finance & the University system do not tell you that if your parents/carers have a high income, they are expected to support you – start having conversations now about if you are able.

## MAINTENANCE LOAN ENTITLEMENT

Household income	Maintenance Loan – living away from parental home and studying outside London	Maintenance Loan – living away from parental home and studying in London	Maintenance Loan – living at parental home
£25,000	£9,706	£12,667	£8,171
£40,000	£7,623	£10,549	£6,108
£65,000	£4,524	£7,018	£3,597





Assumes the student is living away from home, and not in London

# **STUDENT FINANCE EXPLAINED**

**2023 TO 2024**

## Pro for Student Finance:

- ✓ SF makes achieving a degree possible for most working-class and middle-class families.
- ✓ You are protected financially - the loan does not accrue interest until your degree has become 'worth it' and you are earning over £30,000.
- ✓ Thereafter, you pay 9% on anything **over** £30,000.
- ✓ The payments are staggered, meaning that if you drop out of university part-way through, you only pay back what you used.
- ✓ The loan is wiped clean after 40 years, or if you move abroad and work there for 10 years.
- ✓ Accelerates career and earning potential. Graduates earn on average significantly more than non-graduates.

## Cons for Student Finance:

- X The 9% 'graduate tax' repayment can cost a lot if you become a high earner. For example, if you earn £50,000 after university, you will pay 9% on anything from £30,000-to-£50,000 = £1800 per year in repayments.
- X The loan exists for 40 years before being wiped.
- X It is often not enough to fully fund your university experience - especially if you study in London. It may cover your rent and bills in Wales, or just your rent in England.

## New students who are from or normally live in England

Most full-time and part-time students who are from or normally live in England can [apply online](#) to Student Finance England.

- 1 Set up a student finance online account.
- 2 Log in and complete the online application.
- 3 Include your [household income](#) if needed. Your parent or partner will be asked to [confirm these details](#).
- 4 Send in [proof of identity](#), if needed.

**1 Check if you're eligible**

[Show](#)

**2 Find out how much loan you could get**

[Show](#)

**and Check if you can get extra help**

[Show](#)

**3 Prepare your application**

[Show](#)

**4 Apply**

[Show](#)

**5 Update your details if your circumstances change**

[Show](#)

**6 Make sure you can be paid**

[Show](#)

**7 Check what to do while you're studying**

[Show](#)

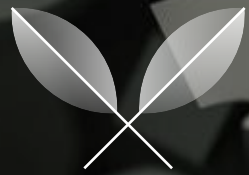
**8 Check what to do when you stop studying**

[Show](#)

**9 Repay your loan**


[Show](#)

Any questions?



M.Lloyd@  
chaseterraceacademy  
.co.uk





Director of Careers  
Mrs Poppleton  
Post 18 options

# Apprenticeships

<https://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships/degree-apprenticeships>

<https://notgoingtouni.co.uk/>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/apprenticeships/degree-apprenticeships>

<https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk/degree-apprenticeships>

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/higher-degree-listing/>

Intermediate

**Level  
2**

Equivalent to 5  
GCSE's Grade  
9-4 / A\*-C

Advanced

**Level  
3**

Equivalent to 2  
A-Levels

Higher

**Levels  
4 & 5**

Equivalent to a  
Foundation  
Degree

Degree

**Levels  
6 & 7**

Equivalent to a  
Bachelor's or  
Masters Degree

How to find  
and apply for  
an  
apprenticeship



Higher Technical  
Qualifications



**Higher Technical Qualifications-** HTQs are an alternative to apprenticeships or degrees. They may suit you if you want a more practical, employer-led study programme. They have been developed with employers/businesses due to current technical skills gaps. Started September 2022 starting with Digital, then Construction and Health and Science in 2023, with full roll-out over a four-year period. Student finance available

Available subjects

HTQ courses are currently being taught in a variety of digital occupations. By 2025, they will be available across a wide range of sectors.

**From September 2023, students will also be able to take HTQs in the following sectors:**

Construction

Health and science

**From September 2024, students will also be able to take HTQs in the following sectors:**

Business and administration

Education and childcare

Engineering and manufacturing

Legal, finance and accounting

**From September 2025, students will also be able to take HTQs in the following sectors:**

Agriculture, environmental and animal care

Catering and hospitality

Creative and design

Care services

Protective services

Sales, marketing and procurement



## Higher Education qualifications

Useful websites and local HE providers including University Technical Centres

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/what-and-where-study/study-options/higher-technical-qualifications>

<https://www.bmet.ac.uk/our-courses/university-level-courses-apprenticeships/higher-technical-qualifications/>

<https://www.utcolleges.org/find-a-utc>

<https://www.walsallcollege.ac.uk/modes-of-study/university-level/>

<https://www.southstaffs.ac.uk/higher-education/>

<https://nscg.ac.uk/course-type/higher-education>

<https://www.bsdc.ac.uk/university-centre>

Traditional Grading Name	Now Known As
Level 4 HNC	Certificate of higher education (CertHE) Higher Apprenticeship Level 4 award, certificate, diploma and or NVQ
Level 5 HND	Diploma of higher education (DipHE) Foundation Degree Level 5 award, certificate, diploma and or NVQ
Level 6 Degree	Degree Apprenticeship Degree with honours e.g. (BSc) honours Level 6 award, certificate, diploma, NVQ and or ordinary degree without honours
Level 7 Masters	Postgraduate Certificate Postgraduate Diploma Postgraduate Certificate in education (PGCE) Level 7 award, certificate, diploma and or NVQ
Level 8 Doctorate	Level 8 Doctorate e.g. PhD or DPhil Level 8 award, certificate and or diploma

Sourced at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

**School leaver scheme** Offered in sectors like Accountancy, Engineering, Finance, IT, Law, Leisure and Retail. Similar to graduate employment schemes run over a longer period of time.

**Internship**- short term spent with a company to learn new skills and gain experience in a particular industry or job role. This work experience gives you the opportunity to improve your understanding of a particular job or industry. Can be paid or unpaid and you can learn what a particular role is like and gain real life work experience.

**Start your own business** - Becoming an entrepreneur can be exciting, but needs careful thought about ideas, a solid business plan and likely start-up costs

**Gap Year** - offers an opportunity to gain skills and experiences, while giving you time to reflect and focus on what you want to do next. A productive gap year can be valuable on a CV which many employers and Universities value.

**Direct employment**- Not all careers require higher levels of qualifications, and you can be directly employed with level 3 qualifications



**Entrepreneur**  
[ˌɛnˌtrəˌp(r)ɪəˌnɜː]

An individual who creates a new business, bearing most of the risks and enjoying most of the rewards.

Investopedia



Walsall College

10:00AM - 1:30PM

WED 30TH JUNE (at The HUB)

SAT 3RD JULY (at Walsall Campus)

LITTLETON STREET WEST, WALSALL, WS2 8ES

**IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GET A DEGREE**



## Parent and student websites

<https://www.talkingfutures.org.uk/pathways-at-18/>

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/your-choices-at-18> <https://careerpilot.org.uk/parent-zone/all-questions/what-are-the-choices-at-18>

<https://targetcareers.co.uk>

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-your-education-and-training-choices/higher-technical>

<https://www.ucas.com/alternatives/alternatives-higher-education>

<https://www.ucas.com/careers-quiz>

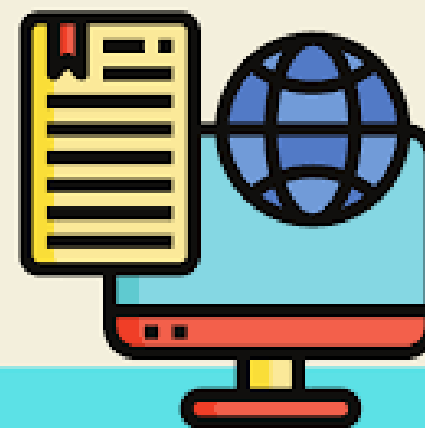
<http://www.open.ac.uk/courses>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/gap-year>



## MOST USEFUL WEBSITES



# HTTPS://WWW.UCAS.COM/APPRENTICESHIPS/PARENT-AND-GUARDIAN-GUIDE-APPRENTICESHIPS

UCAS are starting to pull it all together...

## Levels of apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are offered at different levels and the different levels equate to different qualifications. For example, a Level 2 is equivalent to GCSE and Level 7 is equivalent to a master's degree.

However, the level of the apprenticeship isn't the full story. Because apprenticeships are assessed against the knowledge, skills and behaviours the apprentice must demonstrate to be competent in their job role, it is common to engage in an apprenticeship at the same or even a lower level than you may have already achieved.

### Pros

- ✓ An apprentice is treated the same as an employee, gets a salary, and is entitled to a holiday allowance and sick pay.
- ✓ An apprentice doesn't pay any study costs, even if they are studying for a degree. The costs are funded by the employer and the Government.
- ✓ An apprenticeship is a great way to gain professional experience. Apprentices are very employable as they already have lots of industry experience.

### Considerations

- ✗ Apprentices need to get to work on time and keep up with what's expected of them. It takes organisation and dedication.
- ✗ Learning and studying on the job can be tough. Apprentices need to manage their time well to fit in working and studying.
- ✗ With an apprenticeship, life is very different to going to uni full-time. While there are plenty of opportunities to meet new people, it isn't like doing a traditional degree. You also can't access student accommodation.

415,000 finished their A-Levels/B-Tecs in 2023. 23,240 apprenticeships were available. Roughly 5% secured a role.

£19,319

Average salary of an apprentice in the UK

Glassdoor, correct as of October 2022

90%

of apprentices stay in employment after their apprenticeship

GOV.UK, correct as of October 2022



THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING TODAY

**Any Questions ?**