

Higher Education - Completing the UCAS Form

All students will be issued with guidance notes showing how the UCAS form should be completed. Careful completion of this is obviously very important and you will be given much advice by your tutor and the Mrs Jones, Director of Post-16 Transition. You will be issued with photocopied template forms in order to prepare a draft copy, but you can also simply draft your personal statement in Word from scratch. This will subsequently be refined in consultation with your tutor, with a view to being able to complete the actual online form at the end of the Summer term or by the beginning of the Autumn term.

It is a fact that early applicants are at a significant advantage in terms of the offers they receive from the universities.

Here are some points for guidance:

- a All UCAS forms must be done on-line;
- b What are Admissions Tutors looking for?
 - Intellectual ability - can you cope with the academic demands of the course?
 - Motivation - are you aware, purposeful and realistic about yourself and have you thought about the reasons for applying?
 - Competitive applicants - how well do you compare with others?
 - A willingness to accept an offer;
 - Students who will make a contribution to the life of the university as well as to seminars and tutorials - what do you have to offer?
 - Applicants who are likely to get the grades required. This is extremely important.
- c The UCAS handbook, which is issued to all students, gives details of university and course code names. These should be used on the application form. It is very important to check that the code names that have been entered are the correct ones. A surprising number of students apply for courses which do not exist!
- d Universities are not listed in preference order but in the order in which they appear in the handbook;
- e **Up to five choices may be made this year, four for Medicine;**
- f It is, perhaps, an advantage to present a consistent choice of courses - ones that have a common theme e.g. engineering-based or languages-based. Admissions Tutors tend to be impressed by this since it gives some indication of your aims and motivation;

Consistency is especially important if you are applying for Law or Medicine. In Medicine, for example, the first **four** choices should be medical schools (however, you may make a further application for one other course without prejudice to your application for Medicine);

- g Given the importance of predicted grades, it is vital to check entry grades in 'University Entrance' and 'Degree Course offers'. Applying to five popular universities which all demand high grades should be avoided. **In order to have the best chance of obtaining a university place, it is wise to select courses with grade requirements ranging from you best predicted grades, to substantially lower grades.**

The 'Personal Statement' Section is extremely important because it is the part of the application form where you can select and emphasise points about yourself. This is your chance to set the agenda for an interview. In completing this section, you should:

Think about the impression you want to give:

- Organise the material carefully;
- Write very clearly and avoid the temptation of trying to include too much material. You should insert only those things about which you are prepared to talk at interview;
- Check the spelling!
- Do get your parents or guardian to help you!

UCAS application flowchart

