
A Guide To Completing Your UCAS Application Form



June 2008

Charterhouse
Godalming
Surrey

UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS

UCAS (the University and Colleges Admissions Service) is a body that will organise all the applications to Universities and other Further Education Institutions including Art Schools, except for Foundation Courses. The academic staff in the Universities and colleges concerned makes the actual decisions about who will be made offers and accepted as students.

They will be looking for students who have the intellectual ability to cope with the course, have the right attitude and necessary motivation and who will contribute well to the life of the University or College. In particular they want students who will participate well in classes and tutorials, are likely to accept an offer if it is made, and are in line for the type of grades the course concerned generally commands.

Entry profiles (EP) on the UCAS Website often give a clear statement of the grade and other requirements universities are looking for from applicants. In some subjects, such as Medicine, non-academic qualities such as leadership, team-working skills and the ability to cope with a demanding lifestyle are particularly important.

NB: Just because your predicted grades are in line with the standard offer a university makes does not mean that you will automatically receive an offer. Many Departments/ Universities have far more good candidates than they have places to offer.

In some subjects the department or faculty will decide that its students need a particular qualification in order to cope with the course, but very often grade or point requirements are simply a means of rationing places. Higher grade requirements for a course may be an indication of popularity, not necessarily of quality.

You will need to think very carefully about any offers made to you before you make your firm and insurance decisions in March/April 2009. Make an appointment to see ABB/Mrs C. Portefaix for advice if you have any doubts about this decision.

COMPLETING THE UCAS FORM

GENERAL GUIDANCE

It is important that the school is able to dispatch your completed application form to UCAS as early as possible so you gain the advantage of having your application processed amongst the first by the admissions tutors at the institutions that receive it. Evidence suggests that early applications (**i.e. PROCESSED AND SUBMITTED TO UCAS BY THE OCTOBER HALF TERM**) are more successful, especially for competitive courses.

All applicants will complete their UCAS forms **electronically on the UCAS APPLY** web-based application system using any computers which have access to the Internet. Completing the form electronically should prevent you from making some basic errors. Make sure you follow the instructions on the UCASAPPLY programme carefully. Use the "Help" key for guidance.

You should print out your form from the computer once you have completed it up to the final declaration stage, or let your housemaster know that your form is ready for sending. He will have read access to it at all time whilst you are completing the form.

Once the form has been fully completed, including the final declaration, and you have sent it electronically to the administrator (ABB), you cannot amend it or add anything to it, so **DO NOT COMPLETE THIS FINAL STAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE CHECKED THROUGH YOUR FORM WITH YOUR HOUSEMASTER AND/OR ABB**. If necessary the form can be "returned" to you for alteration before it is finally submitted to UCAS. Once your form has been approved, your housemaster will write you a reference and then the form will be electronically submitted to UCAS by the administrator.

DEFERRED ENTRY

If you want to apply now for deferred entry in 2010 you should indicate this in the "courses" section by putting a tick in the box headed "defer" against all those courses for which you wish to defer entry. **Remember to check with the institutions and departments concerned that a deferred application**

will not place you at a disadvantage. This is essential and it is your personal responsibility. If you encounter any problems please see ABB.

Your personal statement enables you to explain why you want to defer entry. Remember what you write here might well provoke interview questions.

SECTIONS OF THE UCAS FORM

The UCAS Apply programme provides helpful instructions in each of the "Help" options.

After registering there are **5 sections** to complete on the form. You can do this in any order and it is not necessary to fill in the whole form at one time. **START TO FILL IN YOUR APPLICATION FORM NOW.** Some sections are self explanatory, but the following notes may help you complete those bits that are less straightforward.

Registering as an applicant and logging onto UCAS apply

Access UCAS apply via www.ucas.com web site.

Select the Apply option and then 'Register / Log in to use Apply 2009'. You may get a security alert, if you do click OK or Yes to continue. All the sections on the left contain help on the UCAS application process including how to fill in each section of the UCAS form.

Read the information on the screen and click **Next**. Before you can complete an application, you must register your details with UCAS, click on **Register**. You might want to maximise the screen. You will only have to register once. Do not enter anything within the log in boxes. You will not be able to register unless you accept the terms and conditions of using Apply. Scroll to the end of the page. Click on **accept**.

Who are you?

Type in your details, this information will be recorded and form part of the **about you** section, it will also be used to create a username. If you miss out anything which is compulsory, you will be alerted by a red exclamation mark and a warning message to remind you to enter information in these fields. Click **next** when you have completed the information.

If you have applied to UCAS before i.e. you are an OC and know your personal ID number select the first option. If you have your UCAS Card with you select the second option otherwise select the third option. The first two options will take the information you have already entered to help you fill in the form but you can re-enter the information.

Where are you,

Enter your postal address.

Use your home address not your school address in this section unless there are exceptional circumstances such as mail is not collected from your home address. If you do use your school address as your postal address make sure you inform UCAS of your change of address IMMEDIATELY after you leave the school otherwise important communication will not reach you.

Telephones & email

Complete the contact details, these are optional fields but it is essential for Charterhouse students to enter their mobile number. Note the information on screen regarding UCAS contacting you through different media. You should also enter an e-mail address NOT your charterhouse e-mail address. This e-mail address will be seen by admission tutors and therefore should be sensible. Let UCAS know how you should receive information, by text, e-mail and/or post. It is useful if you allow information to be sent to you by e-mail.

You will need to verify your e-mail address before you can submit your form. This will be enabled once you have answered all initial questions..

Security details

Before you enter your password write it down below and on the template.

PASSWORD:

Must be between 6 and 14 characters and contain at least one number.
Confirm your password by entering it again.

Select four Security Questions that you are likely to always know the answer and type in the answer. These questions will then allow you to retrieve your username and password in case you have forgotten them.

Success

The system generates a username which will appear on the screen. **Write this down** below and on the template supplied to you. This, like the password, is needed each time you log on to UCAS APPLY. Click **login to UCAS APPLY** to continue with your application and to log in with your registration details.

USERNAME:

Select 'Through my school or college' as your method of application. Enter the buzzword as supplied to you. Select your House as your tutor/application group.

Please make a note of this number and keep it handy. You will need to quote this number if you call our Customer Service Unit.

Your Personal ID is:

Logging onto ucasapply

Enter the username generated by the system and your password and click **log in** to proceed on the UCAS Apply Log in screen. You will be taken to the main menu screen (as indicated on the title bar of the window) to complete your application.

If you have forgotten your username and/or password, click **lost password** and answer the security question, if answered correctly both your username and password will appear on the screen.

Completing the application (general information)

Sections of the application

The different sections of the UCAS application are listed on the left of the screen. Each section can be selected by clicking onto its name.

Sections to complete

The sections you need to complete are as follows:

- Personal Details
- Choices

- Education
- Employment
- Statement

The sections can be worked through in any order, but we recommend that you start with your **personal details**, as some of the details have already been recorded when you registered.

Moving to another section

To move to a different section, simply click on its name. You will only be able to pay/send your form once all sections are complete.

Missing information

If you miss out any essential information when you are completing your form you will be alerted by a red exclamation mark and a green message.

Completing a section

When you have completed a section, tick 'Section Completed' and save. The section will then be marked **Complete**.

If you make any changes after you marked the section as completed you will need to return to that section, make the changes, click **save** to record the changes, then mark it as completed again.

Help

You can access the help text at any time by clicking on the word **help** shown at top right of every screen and on the red ? beside each entry.

Personal Details

This section adds to the details already provided when you registered. If you want to make any changes, you should click on the details. You need to enter information in all sections that are relevant to you. If a section is not applicable leave it blank. You can obtain assistance in providing some of your personal details by clicking on the red question mark or on the See List box.

Is your permanent home in the UK

Your permanent home is NOT in the UK if you are living in the UK only for educational purposes. Enter your home address, birth place and nationality. You may enter more than one nationality. Your area of permanent residence if in the UK will be your Borough Council e.g. Surrey otherwise it will be the country you live in.

Date of first entry to live in the UK

If you were born outside the UK, but now live in the UK, you must give the date when you began living here permanently. Do not give a date if you are studying at a boarding school in the UK but you normally live outside the UK.

Residential Category

The level of tuition fees you pay (home/EU or overseas) depends on your residential category. In this section, you are asked to assess which category applies to you. Most of you will be category A. If uncertain use the ? option to assist you in determining your residential category.

The code you choose is provisional. The universities and colleges make the final decision on your residential category and they have the right to decide which category you are in.

You do not have a Unique Learner Number.

Who is paying?

You must choose a code from a pull-down menu to show how you expect to pay for your tuition fees. Most applicants will be in **category 02**. If you live in England, your Local Authority (LA) will assess your eligibility for any financial support and they will inform the Student Finance Company. You can select your own LA by clicking the link **LA selection.**, this again will be the borough council you live in.

Nominated Access

If you are likely to be away at any time during the application period, for example on a gap year, you may wish to appoint someone to act for you. You will also need to give them your personal ID, application number (which you will receive after you have submitted your application), username and password, so that they may use the Track service on your behalf.

Disability/special needs

If you have a disability/special needs, select the most appropriate code. This will help the university meet your needs whenever they possibly can. If you don't have any special needs or disability, you must select **None**.

Additional information

This is not used for selection purposes and is not given to universities and colleges until after they have made a decision on your application. The occupational background you enter should be the occupation of your parent, step parent or guardian if under 21. You can enter 'unknown' or 'prefer not to say' if you do not wish to divulge any of the information. National Identity reflects how you choose to classify yourself. It is different from Ethnicity and nationality and can be based on many things, including, for example, culture, language, ancestry and family history.

You can also enter details of any activities in preparation for higher education such as summer or taster courses you attended such as MEDlink courses etc. You can give further details in your personal statement.

Choices

This section allows you to enter up to five university or college choices. Please read the **help content** VERY CAREFULLY before filling in this section. The institution codes and course codes are linked to a UCAS Directory for lookup and validation purposes. You can only enter course codes, which are valid for that institution. You can enter your choices in any order, but Apply will rearrange them into alphabetical order. Each University or College will only have details of the course or courses you have applied for at that University or College.

If applying for Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science, you can only have up to four choices in any of these subjects, your other choice can still be filled in with another subject.

You are advised to apply for courses that offer different levels of acceptance grades and to ensure that you do not make things difficult for yourself by only applying to very popular institutions for very competitive courses.

It is advisable to make all applications for ONE subject area or be prepared to defend a selection of courses that lack an obvious common thread in your personal statement. See below for university admission tests and more information on art and design courses.

Education

This is another section that requires very careful reading of the **Help** notes, especially if you have international qualifications. It is divided into education and educational qualifications.

Current school

Your current school is Charterhouse, the exam centre being 64390.

Previous school

If you came into the sixth form from another school you must provide the name and centre number of your previous school. Use the search link to find the appropriate school.

Qualifications

For most of you, academic qualifications gained so far are **GCSE** and **GCE AS levels (Advanced Subsidiary NEW)** and pending **GCE Advanced Level (A Level)**, and under International **IGCSE** and **Hong Kong Certificate of Education**.

You must make sure that the details of your qualifications are complete and accurate as UCAS match your information with records from awarding bodies and send your results to the universities where you are holding a place. You must enter all qualification for which you have accepted certification even if you are retaking all or part of the qualification. As you have certificated your AS results you can enter details for the units that make up this award.

The relevant examination boards for this section are shown in the following Table.

Table 1: A/AS Level, AEA/Step, GCSE & IGCSE Examination Boards for Charterhouse (64390)

A/AS Level Exam Boards used at Charterhouse (updated 08)

Arabic	Edexcel	French	Edexcel
Art	AQA	Geography A	OCR
Biology	OCR	German	Edexcel
Business Studies	OCR	Government & Politics	Edexcel
Chemistry	AQA	History	AQA
Chinese	Edexcel	Italian	Edexcel
Classical Civilisation	OCR	Japanese	Edexcel
Classical Greek	OCR	Latin	OCR
Computing	AQA	Mathematics	Edexcel
Critical Thinking	OCR	Music	OCR
Design Technology	Edexcel	Physics B	OCR
Drama & Theatre (A-2008)	Edexcel	Polish	AQA
Drama & Theatre (A-2009)	AQA	Portuguese	OCR
Economics	Edexcel	Religious Studies	OCR
Electronics	OCR	Russian	Edexcel
English	OCR	Spanish	Edexcel

GCSE Exams Boards used at Charterhouse (updated 08)

Arabic	Edexcel	History	AQA
Art	AQA	Information Technology	AQA
Astronomy	Edexcel	Italian	Edexcel
Chinese	Edexcel	Japanese	Edexcel
Classical Civilisation	OCR	Latin	OCR
Classical Greek	OCR	Mathematics	Edexcel
Design Technology	OCR	Music	AQA
Dutch	OCR	Physical Education	OCR
English	OCR	Portuguese	OCR
English Literature	OCR	Religious Studies	AQA
French	Edexcel	Russian	Edexcel
Geography	OCR	Science Double Award	OCR
German	Edexcel	Spanish	Edexcel

IGCSE Exams Boards used at Charterhouse (updated 08)

Biology	Edex Int	Maths	Edex Int
Chemistry	Edex Int	Physics	Edex Int
German	Edex Int	Science Dual Award	Edex Int
History	CIE		
Italian	Edexcel	Biology	Edex Int

AEA/Step Exams Boards used at Charterhouse (updated 08)

Biology	AQA	History	Edexcel
Business	OCR	Latin	OCR
Chemistry	AQA	Maths 1 (Step)	OCR
Economics	AQA	Maths 2 (Step)	OCR
English	OCR	Maths 3 (Step)	OCR
French	OCR	Physics	CCEA
German	CCEA	Spanish	Edexcel
		Religious Studies	Edexcel

****Please note the dates of your results are August of the relevant year. GCSE/IGCSE: August 2007, AS level: August 2008 and A Level: August 2009.**

If you cannot find the relevant subject or grade, you will have to enter it manually in the **other** section. If you wish to include music exams in **Other Qualifications**, ONLY declare the highest levels you have achieved.

Don't forget to enter the A levels you are studying now with a pending grade.

You are encouraged to enter your module grades for your AS/A Level qualifications but it is not compulsory. You will find your module grades, title and codes on your exam statement from the relevant boards.

Click on **save** when you have completed your qualifications. Check that you have entered at least 7 GCSE/IGCSEs and 1 Dual Award or at least 9 GCSE/IGCSEs, 4 AS levels and 3 A levels. If you agree with the information mark the section complete by clicking **section completed?**

Students at Charterhouse do not tend to have BTEC registration numbers.

Employment

To be able to mark this section as complete, you need to click on employment and complete and save the section. You should only enter paid employment in this section.

Personal Statement

This section is crucial and should be prepared in word and then pasted directly into this window to avoid spelling, punctuation and grammar errors. It is your opportunity to tell Universities why you are applying and why they should admit you. We list some advice as to how to complete this section and append some examples for you to look at. For universities/courses that do not hold admissions interviews the personal statement is your only chance to communicate directly with university tutors. We stress there is no single right way of completing this section but it is easy to give a poor impression of yourself, so take great care. See "Writing your Personal Statement", starting on page 19.

UCAS also provides a comprehensive and very useful 'Guide to writing a personal statement'

<http://www.ucas.com/students/startapplication/apply09/personalstatement/>

You should also note that UCAS operates a similarity detection programme which will flag up any personal statement which is more than 10% similar to another personal statement previously submitted.

Click on preview or save to update the line count. You are able to enter up to 4,000 characters on 47 lines and you will not be able to change the presentation of your personal statement by using features such as bold, italic and underline. Also accents and foreign characters will not appear on your statement, this will not disadvantage your application.

Pay/Send

Now that you have completed your application, you need to check it before sending it to the administrator.

Click on **view all** to check your completed application. Use the scroll bar at the right hand side to check the content of the application.

Click on **Print** at the top right hand side of the screen to print a copy

You will only be able to click on **pay/send**, when you have completed all sections. Make sure that you send your application **after** you have checked it through with your tutor or Housemaster.

Declaration

Having read the application screen:

Click on **I agree**, to agree the declaration.

You will then be presented with the **how do you want to pay?** screen. Choose payment method by **cheque for school/college**. The UCAS fee of £17.00 will then be added to your school bill at the end of the term. If you complete your form post A Level you will need to bring a cheque payable to the school or preferably pay by debit/credit card. If you only apply for one course the fee will then be £7.00.

You have now completed your application and have sent this to ABB to check. Your Housemaster's reference will then be added to your application before it is electronically sent to UCAS. You may view your application at any time but you will not be able to change it unless it is sent back or 'unlocked' by the administrator (ABB or C Portefaix).

Click **log out** when you are ready.

University Admission Tests

Note that some universities and colleges require applicants to sit an admissions test for certain popular courses. Only after assessing your performance in the test will the university or college decide whether to offer you a place.

BMAT: BioMedical Admissions Test - The 2 hour test will take place on Wednesday 5th November 2008, it must be taken by Medicine or Dentistry applicants of specific courses (see below). Registration deadline is Tuesday 30th September 2008, but you must let the HE & Careers Dept know by Tuesday 16th September so that you can be registered for the test in plenty of time. Check the web site www.bmat.org.uk for further information.

ELAT: English Literature Admission Test - This 90 minutes test will take place on Wednesday 5th November 2008 for all applicants to English courses at Oxford. You will need to let us know by 16th September if applying for these courses as we will need to register you for the test. See www.elat.org.uk for more information including test papers.

HAT: History Admissions Test - The two hour test will take place on Wednesday 5th November 2008. Check the web site www.history.ox.ac.uk Registration is automatic on application to read History at Oxford.

LNAT: Law National Admissions Test - The LNAT is an on-screen test including multiple-choice questions and essay questions. You choose a date to take the LNAT at a test centre near your home or the school. Test dates begin on 1st September 2008. You will be able to access the 2008-9 LNAT website from late June 2008 and you will need to register online for the LNAT, there is a small exam fee to pay. Check the web site www.lnat.ac.uk after 30th June 2008 for 2009 Entry information including universities which will require the LNAT, below are the universities which required it for 2008 entry.

MAT: Mathematics, Computer Science and Physics Admission Test - The 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hour test will be held on Wednesday 5th November in school. Registration is automatic on application to read Mathematics, Computer Science and/or Physics either as a single honours or with a combined subject at Oxford. Please see <http://www.physics.ox.ac.uk/admissions/sample.htm> or <http://www.maths.ox.ac.uk/prospective-students/undergraduate/specimen-tests> for more information.

TSA: Thinking Skills Assessment - For certain subjects at Cambridge you may be asked to take this test when you go for an interview. More information and examples of TSA questions can be found on www.tsa.uct.ac.uk Oxford will also require you to take this test if applying for PPE or Economics and Management. You will need to let us know by 16th September if applying for these courses as we will need to register you for the test. This will take place on Wednesday 5th November 2008. See www.tsa.uct.ac.uk/tsa_oxford for more information.

UKCAT: UK Clinical Aptitude Test - This 2 hour on-screen test must be taken by applicants to study Medicine or Dentistry (see below), The test is designed to be a test of aptitude rather than academic achievement, therefore the test does not draw on any particular body of knowledge or curriculum that a candidate can learn in advance. The test is available to take from 7th July 2008 until 10th October 2008. When registering you select a test centre close to the school (Guildford) or your home. See www.ukcat.ac.uk

for more details. It is recommended you should sit the UKCAT test as early as possible so that you are not disappointed when selecting a date and test centre.

These are the Universities which at present require pre admission tests. Please note that Oxford and Cambridge have tests for some subjects during the interview process.

Also all candidates are required to have a minimum grade of C in English Language at GCSE or equivalent. If your first language is not English you will be required to have an IELTS or TOEFL score which will vary depending on the university and course. Check the university web site for details.

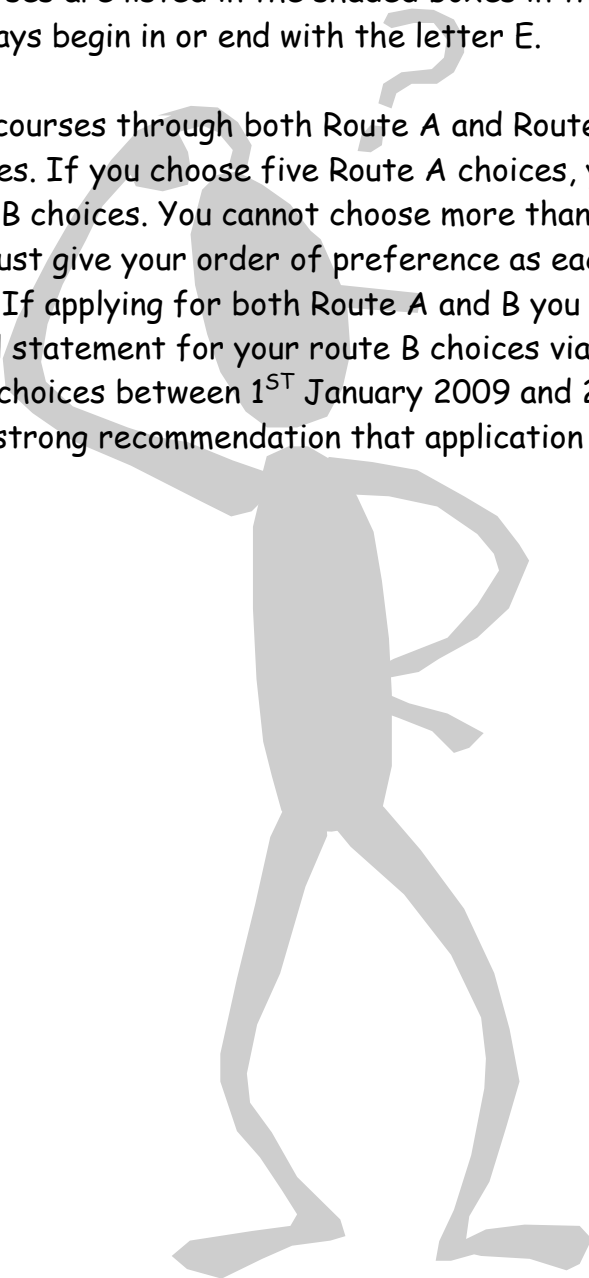
Aberdeen	UKCAT	Medicine A100
Birmingham	LNAT	Law M100, M1N1, MR11, MR12
Brighton and Sussex Medical School	UKCAT	Medicine A100
Bristol	LNAT	Law M100, MR11, MR12
Cambridge	BMAT LNAT STEP TSA	Medicine A100, Veterinary Science D100 Law M100 Mathematics G100 Computer Science G400, Economics L100 Engineering H100, H810, Land Economy KL41, Natural Sciences BCFO
Cardiff	UKCAT	Medicine A100, A104, A200, A204
Dundee	UKCAT	Medicine A100, A104, A200, A204
Durham	LNAT UKCAT	Law M101 Medicine A106
East Anglia	UKCAT	Medicine A100, A104
Edinburgh	UKCAT	Medicine A100, A104
Exeter	LNAT	Law M103, M105, M120, M124
Glasgow	LNAT UKCAT	Law M114, M1R7, M1R1, M121, M1R2, M122, M1R3, M1M9, M1RR, M1R4, M123, MN11, MN12, MV13, ML11, MQ13, MQ15, ML17, MV11, MV15, ML12, MR17 Medicine A100, Dentistry A200
Hull York Medical School	UKCAT	Medicine A100
Imperial College London	BMAT	Medicine A100, Biomedical Sciences B900, B901, Pharmacology and Translational

	UKCAT	Medical Science BB29, BB2X Graduate Entry Medicine A101
Keele	UKCAT	Medicine A100
King's College	LNAT UKCAT	Law M100, M121, M122 Medicine A100, A101, A102, A103, Dentistry A202, A203, A205
Leeds	UKCAT	Medicine A100
Leicester	UKCAT	Medicine A100, A101
Manchester University	UKCAT	Medicine A104, A106, Dentistry A204, A206
Newcastle	UKCAT	Medicine A101, A106 Dentistry A206
Nottingham	LNAT UKCAT	Law M100, M1R1, M1R2 Medicine A100
Oxford	BMAT LNAT HAT UKCAT TSA ELAT M&PAT	Medicine A100, Physiological Science B100 Law M100, M120 History V118, V140, LV11, VQ13, VT19, LV21 Graduate Entry Medicine A101 PPE LOV0, E&M LN12 English Q300, English with ML TQ93, Classics & English QQ38, QQH8 Mathematics G100, GG13, Maths & Philosophy GV15, Computer Science G400, GG14, Physics F300, F303, Physics and Philosophy VF53
Peninsula Medical School	UKCAT	Medicine A100
Queen Mary (Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry)	UKCAT	Medicine A100, A101 Dentistry A200, A201
Queen's University Belfast	UKCAT	Medicine A100, Dentistry A200
Royal Veterinary College	BMAT	Veterinary Science D100, D101
Sheffield	UKCAT	Medicine A100, A104, Dentistry A200
Southampton	UKCAT	Medicine A100, A102
St Andrews	UKCAT	Medicine A100
St George's	UKCAT	Medicine A100
UCL	BMAT LNAT	Medicine A100 Law M145, M146, M100, M101, M102, M141, M142, M144, M143
Warwick	UKCAT	Graduate Entry Medicine A101

Art & Design Courses

There are two ways to apply for Art and Design courses - Route A and Route B. Route B allows time for applicants studying a Diploma in Foundation Studies (Art and Design) to identify their specialisation and prepare their portfolio. Both types of courses are listed in the shaded boxes in the UCAS Directory. Route B codes always begin in or end with the letter E.

You can apply for courses through both Route A and Route B, with up to a total of five choices. If you choose five Route A choices, you will not be able to have any Route B choices. You cannot choose more than three Route B courses and you must give your order of preference as each university is contacted in turn. If applying for both Route A and B you can provide a different personal statement for your route B choices via Track. You must apply for Route B choices between 1ST January 2009 and 24th March 2009 though there is a strong recommendation that application reach UCAS by 7th March 2009.



WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

What you write in here is likely to have a decisive bearing on whether you receive a conditional offer from universities, particularly those where the competition for places is most intense. You should be working on a draft during the summer. Seek advice from your tutor, Housemaster and ABB.

The Personal Statement is your only opportunity to 'sell yourself' to a university department. It must **stand out**, and be **attractive to read**. No purpose is served by cramming everything into a relatively short space; the statement should be about 300-400 words at the most - and carefully chosen words at that. Write in **complete sentences**, and recognise that lists are of limited value. Avoid any information that is misleading, fictitious or trivial.

You are also reminded of the need for good, clear English as some applications are rejected on account of poor spelling and punctuation. If you want to check spelling and punctuation, write your personal statement as a "Word" document and use the spelling and grammar checker in the "Tools" menu. You can copy and paste this into your UCAS form once it has been corrected.

The principal aim is convey your enthusiasm for studying your chosen subject(s); hence most of the Personal Statement will reflect your academic and intellectual interests. Throughout, specific examples are far more convincing than general statements, so instead of saying "I want to read Geography because I am very interested in it" you could say, "My travels in mountain areas and my fascination with upland landscapes have provoked an interest in geomorphological processes and the landforms of highland regions." (For further guidance, see attached specimen statements starting on page 22.)

You are advised to work on the basis of **three paragraphs**.

FIRST PARAGRAPH: Here you should outline clearly the reasons for selecting your courses/subject(s). Explain exactly what it is that excites you about them, and make explicit references to examples of topics, lessons, practicals, research, courses, fieldwork, projects, reading outside the syllabus, etc. Where a joint honours degree is involved you should do this for **both** subjects involved. If you have not studied your proposed degree subject at school, explain exactly what has attracted you to it, and offer details of research you have done into the subject area. You might also want to explain how your chosen degree subject links with one or more of your **other** 'A'/AS level subjects. In other words, you must justify your choice of degree course.

SECOND PARAGRAPH: This might start with some details about your academic achievements, such as scholarships, prizes awarded and participation in external competitions. In this paragraph you should also give some indication of your career aspirations (if you have any) and, where possible, establish links between your degree course choice and your career choice. Relevant work experience should also be described here, especially in **Medicine and Law**. It is essential to explain exactly how you benefited and what you learnt from your work experience. IF you plan to take a Gap Year, outline the reasoning behind your decision, and try to give some indication of what you are planning to do in this time. Any activity that is likely to develop you wider skills is particularly worthwhile mentioning in this context.

THIRD PARAGRAPH: Now you have a golden opportunity to advertise your individual strengths and qualities, and thus to impress the selectors with your likely contribution to university life. This opportunity must be seized! The aim here is to include examples of activities which demonstrate your:

- Leadership skills
- Capacity for teamwork
- Enterprise or originality
- Sensitivity to the needs of others
- Contribution to the community
- Determination to stick to a task

Select three or four activities which bring out these qualities; they do not have to be confined to school activities, and might well include sporting, musical, artistic and dramatic talents and achievements. Charitable works, CCF, community service, team membership, direction of a play, posts of responsibility, musical activities or unusual hobbies are simply a few of the possibilities. Do not include long lists of school sports team representation, or foreign countries visited.

Remember that the aim is to establish that you are an interesting individual in your own right, with your own values, priorities and agenda, someone who will clearly benefit from both the course and university life. This should be encapsulated in a short concluding sentence.

Many universities now list in their Entry Profiles on the UCAS website the sort of attributes they are looking for in successful applicants (this is particularly so for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Sciences). If your chosen university has an Entry Profile then you must give examples of the attributes they are looking for in your personal statement. Such attributes may include: leadership and team work skills; problem solving; ability to cope with a busy lifestyle; empathy; integrity; relevant work experience; resourcefulness, etc.

When you have completed your Personal Statement ask your Tutor or Housemaster to comment on it, and redraft it as necessary.

Personal Statement - Example 1

The A level subjects that I have chosen allowed me to study science in a greater depth and this additional understanding caused me to investigate topics outside of the A level syllabus. I did so in scientific journals and books; one book in particular which I felt was though provoking and original was the 'Emotional Brain' by Joseph LeDoux. This is because he challenged conventional theories on the source of our emotions and conducted his own research to put forward an alternative argument. For example he shows us that Maclean's Limbic System theory which proposed that all emotions were produced in an area of the brain whose centrepiece is the hippocampus, is not as complete as it appears to be and he guides us through the research that led him to his conclusions. It is this development of ideas that makes medicine an attractive career as it is a perpetually evolving field of study.

Having studied the scientific side of medicine, I have also researched its clinical aspects. During the summer of 1998 I undertook some work experience at my local hospital. I spent half my time there shadowing house officers. The first impression that I got from them is that their job is very hard work. However, their job involved many different tasks and challenges, and even though I realised that it is very difficult to do anything outside medicine early on in a medical career, the job itself is diverse and rewarding and the constant stimulation seemed to overcome the feeling of tiredness. I spent the rest of the time in the hospital as a ward assistant. During this time I had a great deal of patient contact and I learnt how important it was to communicate well with the patients to make them feel more at ease.

Within my school community I am a prefect and I was the first person to give a presentation to the rest of my year group in an assembly. The presentation was on the subject of ageism and I have tried to include ethics in my background reading as it features prominently in my chosen career. I also participate in the school debating society and I play tennis for a local club. This year I was awarded a Royal Air Force flying scholarship and I will be following up this flying training in the hope of getting my private pilot's license. Another on-going project of mine is the building of a car. I am in the process of making a replica of a Lotus Seven sports car.

Personal Statement – Example 2

The challenge of reading psychology for me lies in its dual nature: on the one hand the scientific empirical basis, which impacts on and derives from all human behaviour, on the other, the patterns of thought and behaviour of the individual, child development, abnormal psychology and the whole diversity of human beings in their interactions in and with society.

Neuropsychology and the human brain have been two aspects of psychology which have interested me – not just what the body and brain do in certain circumstances, but also why. I am interested in how these ideas can also be linked into the social side of psychology. I wish to read psychology as a discipline in itself, but as a career I have in mind educational psychology, for which the course will provide an invaluable basis to later professional training. As the second of seven children, I have had a lot of opportunity to observe children first hand. What particularly fascinates me is the way a child is socialised, how it develops and how it absorbs information.

The Oxford and London lectures I recently attended provided me with a great deal of positive information about psychology at University level, particularly the biological and statistical basis which has complemented my own reading of books such as Richard Dawkins' 'Selfish Gene' and Jared Diamond's 'Why sex is fun' both of which I have enjoyed greatly. I am aware of the demanding nature of a psychology course, and although, at A level, I am not taking scientific subjects, I am confident that with a firm basis in all three sciences as a result of GCSE single science courses and Maths, I will enjoy the academic challenge.

Outside academic interests, I am involved in various types of sport. I have played county rugby from the age of 13 and last year reached the Eastern Counties team. I am vice captain of the School rugby 1st team and I also have played for Cambridge City, helping them win the Eastern Counties Club Cup. I have played county cricket at under 15 and 16 level and have been in the school 1st teams for rugby, hockey and cricket in every school year. I have held a number of positions of responsibility in school, including form representative on the School Council and organising the sale of tickets for a highly successful ball. I enjoy travel and have visited Italy and Greece in connection with my Classics A levels, as well as Portugal, France, Austria and the United States. I play the piano for pleasure, especially Schubert. I think I have demonstrated a high level of motivation and enthusiasm in the range of academic, musical and sporting activities, including team work, which I would want to continue in my University career and eventually in my professional life.

Personal Statement - Example 3

I am attracted to a degree in law because it is a discipline that demands rigour of thought and imagination. In preparation, I have spent a week working in a solicitor's office, have met barristers at their Chambers and a Lord Chief Justice of Appeal to discuss their work. I hope to arrange a mini pupillage soon. I have visited courts in London and Cambridge and student law conferences at Nottingham and Birmingham.

I am especially interested in contemporary problems confronting the legal system, such as the conflict between law and morality and problems posed by varying situations and new technology. The legal system's role as a servant of society is also fascinating. I do not however regard a law degree as merely a vocational course, but I think it is valuable as a way of acquiring powers of criticism and examination.

My academic interests have always been broad and I retain a keen interest in Science. I enjoy the logical nature of Maths and in English and History I enjoy reading beyond the syllabi. I have read an account of The Paston Letters, a set of documents surviving from the late fifteenth century which provide insight into the issues of the period. I have read in greater depth authors such as Virginia Woolf.

As one of two Senior Prefects my responsibilities include organising prefect duties, supervising junior forms and liaising with staff, activities which have kept me in contact with members of the school of all ages. I have represented the school in rugby, cricket and rowing. I am President of the school's Union Society which I helped to re-form. I am also a member of the school Community Service programme. I have a lively interest in French culture and current affairs having travelled extensively there. This interest goes well beyond my A level course. My other interests include archery, chess and fencing.

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE

Candidates for Oxford and Cambridge have to complete extra forms and pay extra fees. Oxford entry forms will need to be received by Oxford before 15th October deadline. Cambridge candidates will be required to fill in a n extra form once their application has been received by UCAS.

It is **essential** that all would-be Oxford and Cambridge applicants consult Heads of Department and ANR (Oxford) / SCA (Cambridge) who will advise you of the procedures pertaining in individual subjects. You may submit an open application, i.e. one not submitted to a specific college, but most people apply to a specific college and we would encourage you to do so. It is your responsibility that you register for any tests that may be required either directly on line or with the Careers Department.

You should also think about what if anything you are going to write in the short space on the Oxford application form, which allows you to advertise your strengths and interests. This should not simply be a rehash of your UCAS personal statement, but rather it should stress what you consider to be your most important academic interests, achievements, reading and aspirations, with specific reference to your chosen subject. This is your opportunity to tailor your application to those responsible for admitting you to your chosen course at Oxford.

Finally...

Take advantage of the extensive facilities of the Higher Education Library and UCAS website to get on with this essential form promptly.

GOOD LUCK! ☺