

Top 10 tips for UCAS applications

Many students worry about going to university and find the UCAS application daunting. However, if you do your research and follow some basic tips it really isn't as bad as it first looks!

1

Do your research!

Finding out as much as possible about the universities and courses before you apply really helps. Many students choose the wrong course/ university which can be very costly. Find out about accommodation and the area in which you will live as well as what else the university can offer.

2

Check Entry Criteria!

Be realistic about the entry criteria of your chosen courses. Don't apply for courses that have UCAS tariffs that you cannot achieve as this will be a wasted choice.

3

Meet the Deadlines!

Make sure you know when the deadlines are for your course. If you are applying for Medicine / Oxford or Cambridge then the forms need to be in by 15 Oct. The general deadline is 15 January each year, but for popular courses such as Nursing, Social Work and Teaching, they will start interviewing before this date so get your forms in early!

4

Other Requirements of the Course!

Some courses may ask for specific work experience or voluntary work. Some courses will require an interview or audition so be prepared!

5

Attend Open Days!

Open days can be a real eye opener for students as to the suitability of the course and uni. The open days can also give you tips for what they are looking for which could make all the difference. It will also help later on when the offers start rolling in!

6

Be Money Wise!

Not all universities charge the full 9K per year, so shop around. Many universities offer scholarships which could be useful. Most of your student loan will be taken up on accommodation fees so living at home is a cheaper option!

7

Draft the Personal Statement!

This is the hardest part of the UCAS form. You need to show your passion for your subject and your suitability for the course you have applied for. Try to have a really punchy opening paragraph (ie WHY you want to go) . Then focus on WHAT you have done on your course, work experience, skills gained etc. You can add here outside interest etc. Then focus on WHERE you are going after university. You have 47 lines to make an impression!

8

Check it Out!

Once you have got your draft together get someone to go over it with you. An adviser or tutor can help give tips on what to put. Make sure you are honest and it is your own work as the UCAS system can detect if you have copied your statement!

9

Decisions Decisions!

Once you have sent your UCAS form off you will have to play the waiting game. If you are not required to attend an interview, then offers will go straight on to the TRACK system so it is useful to download the UCAS APP onto your smart phone. If you get more than one offer you will have to make decisions on your first choice and an insurance choice. These choices are time limited so make sure you don't miss the deadlines!

10

EXTRA Help!

Even if you do not get any offers, or simply decide you do not want to go to the unis that you choose, you can still apply via EXTRA. This will give you another chance to apply and even after UCAS closes in June you can use clearing to try and secure a place at university!

A few no-no's!

- Don't mention one particular university on your statement as all your chosen universities will be able to see this!
- Make sure your statement is not negative
- Don't rush making choices, not being prepared is one of the main reasons people drop out
- Choose a course or university because your friends are going
- Have no back-up plan
- Go to interviews and auditions without any preparation.

