



UNIVERSITY  
*of York*

# The University Application Process

Naomi Thomas  
Graduate Ambassador (Student Recruitment)



# What will I learn?

By the end of this presentation, you will:

- ✓ Understand **how to apply** to a UK university/college
- ✓ Know the **timelines & deadlines** of your application
- ✓ Know **what to include** in your application, including some **personal statement top tips**
- ✓ Understand how to **track your application** and reply to offers

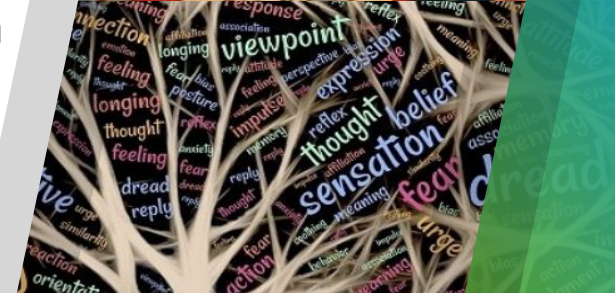


# What is UCAS?

- **‘The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service’** – the central body for all UK Higher Education admissions
- There are sometimes **separate admissions systems** for some institutions e.g. music, dance and drama conservatoires
- Allows you to apply for **up to five courses** or **four** if you’re applying for **medicine, veterinary medicine/science or dentistry**

# Before you apply

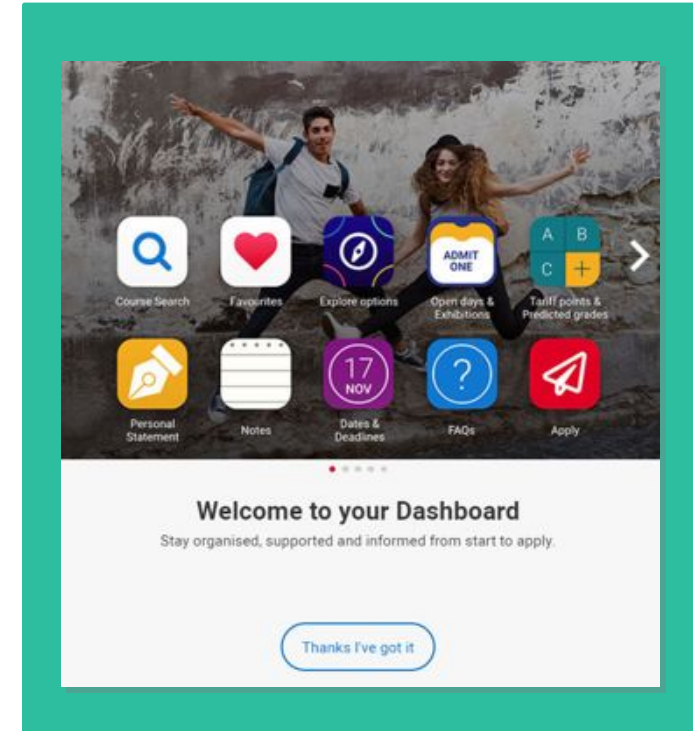
- **Do your research.** Course content and modules, teaching and assessment methods, support, societies/sports, internships, study abroad opportunities etc.
- **Gain some skills and experience.** Work experience, Multiple Open Online Courses (MOOCs) or other relevant resources you can mention in your application e.g. research papers, lectures, podcasts, books





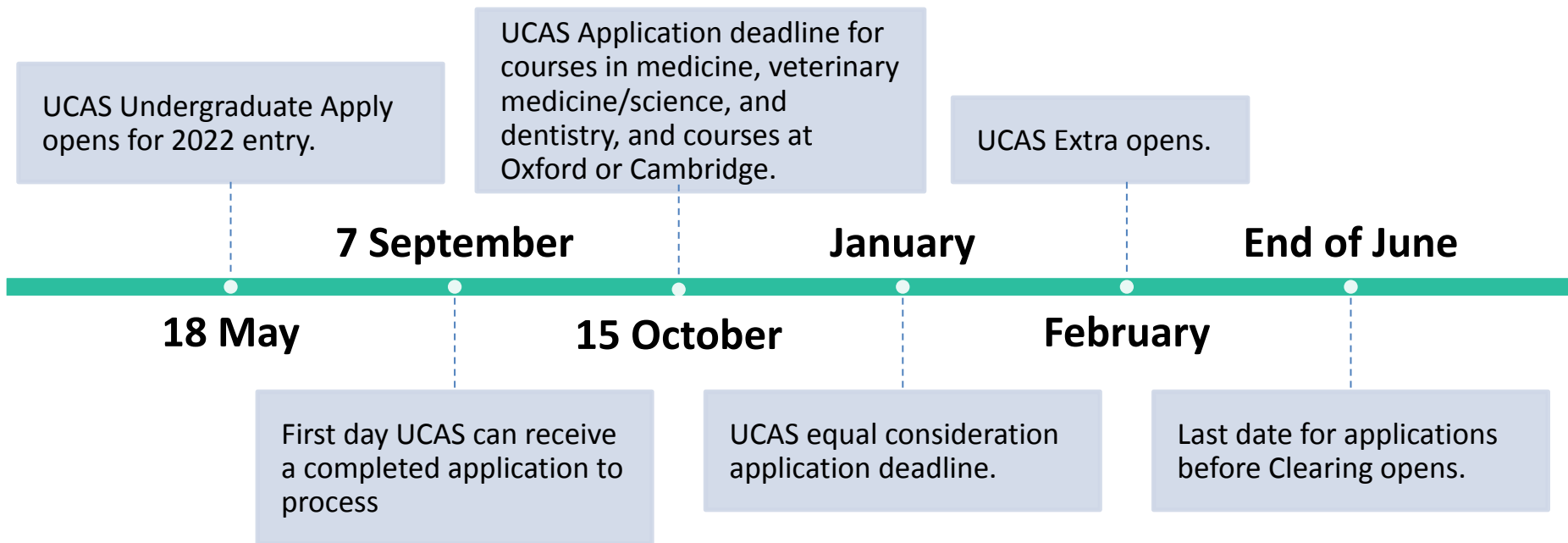
# UCAS Hub

- **Register before you want to apply** – there are lots of handy resources to help you research your options
- Explore **careers, subjects, universities and apprenticeships** with over **35,000 courses** to look at
- Search for **virtual tours** and **online events**
- Explore **job profiles** to discover different **career roles and pathways**



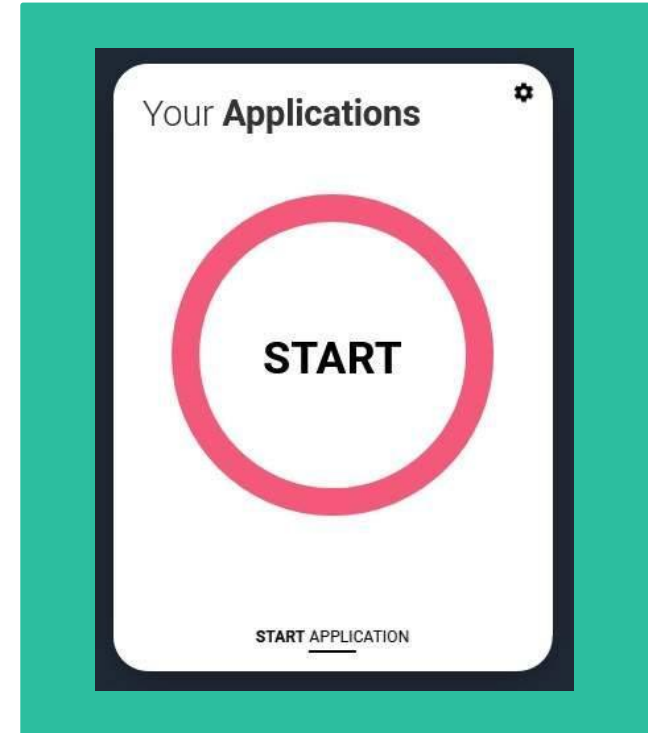
# When should I apply?

## Application timeline for 2022 entry



# Your application

- You can begin your application from **18 May 2021** (for 2022 entry) but won't be able to submit it until **7 September at the earliest**
- To link your application to your **school or college** you'll need to enter their '**buzzword**'
- Applying costs **£22 for 1 choice** or **£26.50 for 5 choices**. Once you've paid, your school/college will complete your **reference** and **submit your application to UCAS**





# What's on the application?

## These sections must be completed:

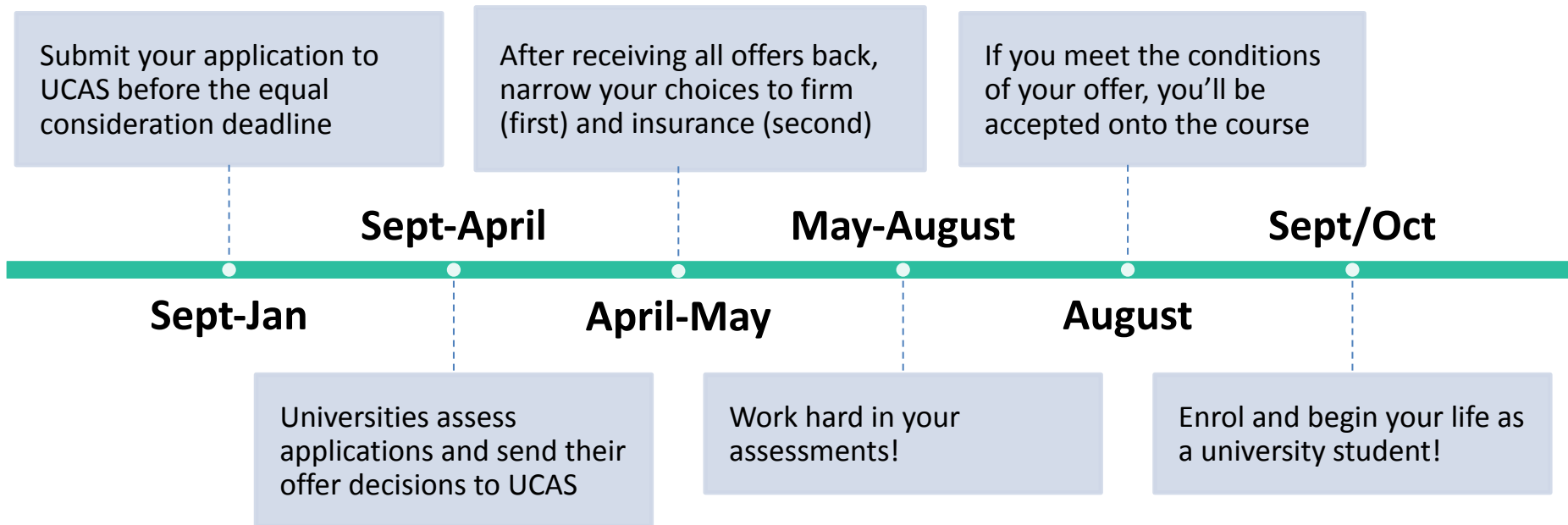
- Personal details
- Contact and residency details
- Work experience
- Education
- Nationality details
- English language skills
- Supporting information
- Personal statement
- Choices – make up to five
- Reference
- Finance and funding
- Diversity and inclusion

The screenshot displays the UCAS Application dashboard. At the top, it says 'UCAS APPLICATION' and '2020 Undergraduate application'. A progress bar indicates 33% completion. Below this, the 'My profile' section is shown with a grid of boxes for different application areas. Each box has a progress indicator (a circle with a checkmark or a question mark) and a 'Start this section' button. The sections are: Personal details (33% complete), Contact and residency details (33% complete), Work experience (33% complete), Education (33% complete), Nationality details (33% complete), Supporting information (33% complete), English language skills (33% complete), Finance and funding (33% complete), Diversity and inclusion (33% complete), Personal statement (33% complete), Choices (33% complete), and Reference (33% complete). Below the grid, there are buttons for 'Application questions', 'Personal statement', 'Choices', and 'Reference'.



# What happens next?

## Post-submission timeline



# What happens next?

## Tracking your application

- You can **track your application** and view your offers on your **UCAS Hub**
- You might also have to do an **interview, admissions test, portfolio or audition** depending on the courses/institutions you apply for
- You'll receive one of three decisions from your choices:
  - **Unconditional offer**
  - **Conditional offer**
  - **Unsuccessful**



# What happens next?

## Replying to offers

- Once you've received decisions from all the universities you've applied to, you need to choose two:
  - **Your 'firm' choice** – first choice
  - **Your 'insurance' choice** – back-up choice
- All other offers must then be **declined**
- If you're **not holding an offer** once universities have made their decisions, you may be able to use **Extra or Clearing to find available places**

# The Personal Statement

- The only section of your application that you have **full control over**
- Your chance to show universities **who you are as a person, why you want to study the course** and why you'd be a **good fit for the course and university**
- The same for **all of your choices**
- Minimum of **1,000 characters** and **maximum of 4,000 characters (47 lines)** long



# Before you start...

- **Research, research, research!** Look at the course content and modules. Keep the course page(s) open as you start to type
- **Make a plan.** Use lists, charts, mind maps, etc. The UCAS Hub has a personal statement tool with questions, prompts and a character counter
- **Keep a copy!** The skills you learn putting together your application and personal statement will be useful for future job applications



# The Personal Statement – Do's



## Make sure to:

- ✓ **Be clear and specific.** Your motivations for studying the course should be easily identifiable within a minute or so of reading
- ✓ **Structure it well.** Use a clear layout and development of ideas. Spaces and paragraphs are included in the word count but are necessary
- ✓ **Be honest and focus on the positives.** This is about showing your skills and strengths.
- ✓ **Check your spelling and grammar.** And double check. And triple check. Ask your family/friends/teachers to check it, too.

# The Personal Statement – Don'ts



Make sure not to:

- ✗ **Use clichés or jokes.** Be original. 'Ever since I was young I've wanted to study...' is not going to cut it!
- ✗ **Plagiarise (copy) your work.** Every single statement is run through a similarity detection programme.
- ✗ **Submit your first draft.** Start working on it early so you have plenty of time to plan and consider what to include. Make multiple drafts.
- ✗ **Lie or exaggerate.** You may get caught out in an interview when asked to elaborate on an interesting skill or achievement.



# What are we looking for?

- A demonstration of **clear understanding** of the course(s) and a **genuine passion** for the subject
- Your **reasons and motivations** for studying the course
- **Strong academic potential** from results and predicted grades
- At least half **(50-80%)** of the content should be focused on academic, social or cultural interests **related to the course**



# What are we looking for?

"The key for a good personal statement is to always **sound like yourself**. If there are museums you've been to, galleries you've volunteered or worked in, books you've read, or exhibitions or artists that you just love, even if you can't explain it, talk about that, because **that's how we'll get to know you best, and realise that you'll bring something specific, exciting, and new to the discipline**"

*Professor Jason Edwards, Admissions Tutor, History of Art*



# What to include

## The course

- **Why** do you want to study your chosen course?
- What **interests you** about the subject?
- Why do you think you'll **do well** in studying this subject?

**Top Tip:** talk about **specific things** within the subject area that you have a real interest in, would like to **explore in more detail** or **learn about for the first time**



## Examples

### Academic skills



...History in particular has allowed me to hone my lateral thinking skills, as it is always crucial to challenge assumptions and use an indirect approach to reach a less obvious answer. Learning Spanish has given me the ability to think on my feet when verbally presenting an argument, thus improving my eloquence when speaking publicly. Studying Mathematics has enabled me to take a systematic and methodical approach when tackling a problem and understand the importance of application. The scientific ability to reason logically combined with the linguistic ability to express ideas effectively and draw distinctions is what makes law so appealing to me; it is the perfect blend of art and science

# What to include

## Examples and evidence

- Mention any **relevant examples** that show your **enthusiasm and interest** in the subject: books, articles, documentaries, lectures, podcasts, museum visits etc.
- Does anything you're doing in your **current studies** relate to **skills/knowledge needed for your course**? E.g. increased practical skills in a science subject, research skills from an EPQ
- Are there any particular areas you have **enjoyed** (and **excelled at**)?

## Examples

### Enthusiasm, motivation and focus



My passion for engineering comes from a desire to **provide solutions to real-life problems**. Growing up in Bristol, I was enthralled to learn of the unique competition entries between engineers to provide the best solution to the problem of crossing the Avon between Clifton and Leigh Woods. Brunel's winning entry for the Clifton Suspension Bridge has become arguably the most famous symbol of Bristol. Studying **Maths and Physics allowed me to develop my own interest in problem-solving**, but my motivation has always truly stood with **'real-world' applications of engineering**. This led me to choosing my current course [BTEC Extended Diploma Engineering]...

# What to include

## Extra-curricular activities and achievements

- What are your **hobbies and interests**?
- How do they demonstrate your **personality, skills and abilities**?
- How do they **link** to the skills and experience required for the **course** you're applying for?
- Have you got any **achievements** you're proud of?
- Have you held any positions of **responsibility**?
- What **attributes** do you have that make you **unique**?





## Examples

### Extra-curricular activities



Playing **hockey** at a competitive level has prepared me for university in a number of ways. Firstly, its balance with education has allowed me to gain **time management skills**. I have also developed the **communication and teamwork skills** which are crucial for our success as a team. My **enthusiasm, dedication and determination** have enabled me to win the Player of the Year award at my local club; it is skills like these that will help me to **thrive in an institution like yours**.



# What to include

## Future plans

- What do you hope to achieve **after** completing the course?
- How do you want to use the **knowledge and experience** gained?
- How does the course **relate** to what you want to do in the **future**?
- Are you planning a **Gap Year**? If so, what are you going to be doing during this period?



# What to include

## Additional information



Most universities will give you an opportunity to **supply additional information** (that you may not have been able to include on your UCAS application) that may **have affected your studies**



Qualifications or experiences that **may affect your offer**  
e.g. EPQ, Widening Participation Programmes

**Please note:** If you have already submitted your personal statement, please do **email additional information to us**

# Other options

## Using UCAS Extra or Clearing

### Extra (Feb-Jul)

- Used all 5 choices and received no offers
- Add extra choices for consideration one at a time

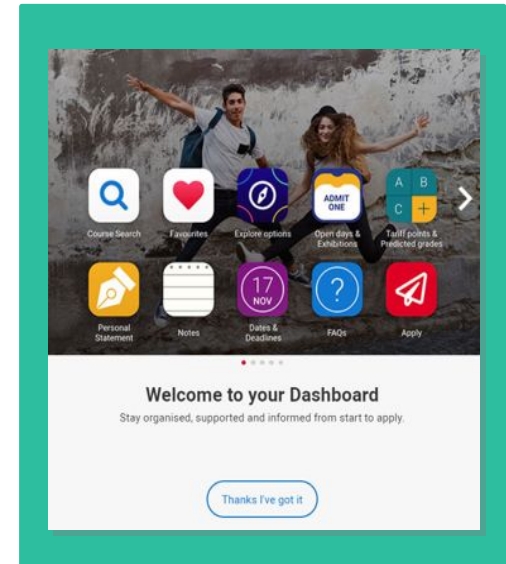
### Clearing (Jul-Oct)

- Apply after 30 June, receive no offers, decline all offers, not met conditions
- Find vacancies from early July and add a Clearing choice to your application



# What to do now

- Head to [ucas.com](https://ucas.com) and register
- Use the **UCAS Hub** and other resources to help you explore your options and make your decisions
- Think about what you're going to write about in your **application and personal statement** – do you need to gain some more **skills and experience** first?





# Find out more

## University of York

***york.ac.uk***

- Use our **course search tool**, view our **360 online campus and city tours**, read **student blogs** and more!
- You can also find us on social media **@uniofyork**
- Sign up to receive **email updates** from us about Open Days, etc. at **[www.york.ac.uk/ug-updates](http://www.york.ac.uk/ug-updates)**

