

UCAS

Support for parents/ carers

Helping your son or daughter through the UCAS
process

Duncanrig Secondary School

Research - it's free and important to do

- **Start at www.ucas.com**
- **Research** – career options, universities, courses and minimum entry requirements.
- **Attend Virtual Open Days**– if your son or daughter doesn't know what they want to do, speaking to those in the know will help. Keep an eye out for online open days this year.
- **Learn from others** – student videos are available to watch at UCAS.tv.

How can you support the research process?

- ▶ Sign up to the monthly **UCAS Parents Newsletter**.
- ▶ Download the **UCAS Parent Guide** from the UCAS website.
- ▶ Offer to attend virtual open days with them; you may have a different perspective.

Visit www.ucas.com/parents

Other things to consider

- ▶ Finance - course fees, grants, travel and living costs
- ▶ Travel - to and from home
- ▶ Accommodation - uni halls or private residences?

Entry requirements

- ▶ Entry requirements vary from course to course and between universities
- ▶ More qualifications may be required at second sitting (after S6 rather than S5)
- ▶ Prospective students **must check entry requirements** by looking at course specifications or by speaking to the admissions office for individual faculties at their chosen establishments.

Key features of the UCAS scheme

- ▶ Your son or daughter can make up to five choices in one application.
- ▶ The 2021 applicant fee is:
 - ▶ £22 for one choice
 - ▶ £26.50 for up to five choices
- ▶ Applications received by the **key deadlines** are given equal consideration.
- ▶ ‘Invisibility’ - universities cannot see where else students have applied.

The UCAS application process

The background of the slide features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the slide, creating a modern, dynamic feel.

Advice from a former pupil who has started university this year.

Do's

- ▶ Use this link for advice from UCAS on how to lay out your personal statement. There should be a template on how to structure your personal statement with more do's and dont's
- ▶ <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/how-write-ucas-undergraduate-personal-statement>
- ▶ Make sure you tailor your personal statement to your course. Universities will prefer if specifically mention the course you want to study. Mention as many achievements as possible (work experience, school curricular activities etc).
- ▶ The statement is about YOU. So try to make yourself sound as good as possible. It's quite hard to do that but you need to make yourself sound as suited for the university/course as possible.
- ▶ Ask people to read your statement. Teachers may be the best to ask or people who applied to your course as well. They can give advice on what to improve.

Don't

- ▶ Copy other people's personal statements. Universities will know if you have plagiarised a previous personal statement.
- ▶ Don't leave till last minute! It's better to do it sooner and your application may possibly be sent sooner as well.
- ▶ Don't lie in your personal statement. You could be caught out in an interview.
- ▶ Don't use a thesaurus on every word in your statement. The statement will then lack your personality.

The Process

Online application

- Pupils must register and complete application online
- Linked in with school to allow staff to access and add reference

Pay and Send to referee

- When completed payment made to UCAS and application sent to referee
- Reference added by Pupil Support Teacher/Referee

Application checked, reference added and sent to UCAS

- Pupil Support Teacher checks and if redrafting required, form is returned to applicant.
- Application and reference approved before being sent to UCAS

Making the application

Apply is the UCAS online application system.

Every applicant has six sections to complete:

- ▶ Personal details
- ▶ Student finance (UK and EU only)
- ▶ Choices
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Personal statement

Personal statement - start early

- ▶ Personal statements are really important so make sure your son or daughter includes:
 - ▶ academic achievements, past and present
 - ▶ interests in the chosen subject area
 - ▶ knowledge of the subject and enthusiasm to go beyond the syllabus
 - ▶ what they enjoy about studying
 - ▶ details of their independent study skills.
- ▶ The questions universities and colleges will ask:
 - ▶ have they chosen the right subject for the right reasons?
 - ▶ do they have a range of interests?
 - ▶ does the personal statement confirm their interest in the subject?
 - ▶ have they studied independently?
 - ▶ are they motivated and committed?
 - ▶ do they possess good numeracy and literacy skills?

Students

- ▶ Ensure they are realistic in their choices (aspirational but achievable)
- ▶ Ensure they have considered backup choices/plans
- ▶ Organise relevant work experience if required to support their application
- ▶ Undertake any external tests such as (UKCAT/LNAT) by the deadlines set by the organisations

- ▶ Access help from Skills Development Scotland staff (Careers Advisor) for careers advice - see your Pupil Support Teacher to make an appointment with SDS.
- ▶ Complete their application by the deadlines set by the school, to ensure there is enough time to process and refine their application
- ▶ Pay relevant costs direct to UCAS

School Deadlines for 1st draft of applications to be submitted to Pupil Support Staff

- ▶ Medicine/Vet Medicine/Dentistry -Thursday 24th September
- ▶ Royal Conservatoire (Music)- see Pupil Support staff asap
- ▶ All other applications - Monday 9th November
- ▶ These dates allow the required checks and discussions to take place before UCAS deadlines apply
- ▶ Students missing these deadlines cannot be guaranteed to have their application submitted by the deadlines indicated by UCAS.

How we support and prepare pupils to apply to Higher Education

- ▶ UCAS presentations by various universities in PSE
- ▶ Input from Skills Development Scotland staff on individual and group basis
- ▶ Early identification of students planning to apply for entry
- ▶ Provide the students with Help Booklets which guide them through on line application
- ▶ Staff lead pupils through application process using PSE time and individual interviews

- ▶ Encourage candidates to investigate and attend relevant University Virtual Open Days.
- ▶ Predicted grades identified by staff based on previous performance as well as current progress
- ▶ Pupil Support staff discuss and proof read Personal Statements
- ▶ Application forms scrutinised by staff and any errors highlighted for amendment
- ▶ Write reference to support the application
- ▶ Offer Mock Interviews to students requiring/requesting one
- ▶ Make students aware of how to apply for funding

What we cannot do

- ▶ Complete an application on a student's behalf
- ▶ Amend any of the content entered by the student
- ▶ Write personal statement for student
- ▶ Extend or change deadlines set by UCAS

Decision-making by institutions

- ▶ Universities will review:
 - ▶ Personal statement
 - ▶ Reference
 - ▶ Qualifications
 - ▶ Admissions test results
 - ▶ Interviews*
 - ▶ Portfolios*
 - ▶ Auditions*.(* where relevant)

- ▶ An admissions tutor may make one of three decisions:
 - ▶ **Unconditional offer**
 - ▶ **Conditional offer**
 - ▶ **Unsuccessful.**

Tracking applications

Track will allow your son or daughter to:

- ▶ follow the progress of their application 24/7
- ▶ see their choices and personal information
- ▶ display their offers
- ▶ reply to offers online.

Replying to offers

- ▶ When your son or daughter receives decisions from all of their choices they will need to make their replies by a set date
- ▶ They can now hold a maximum of two offers:
 - ▶ **Firm** - their first choice. If they meet the conditions of the offer they will be placed.
 - ▶ **Insurance** - acts as a back-up choice and only comes into play if they are not placed with their firm choice.
- ▶ If your son or daughter fails to reply to their offers by the deadline date, all offers will be automatically declined.

Extra

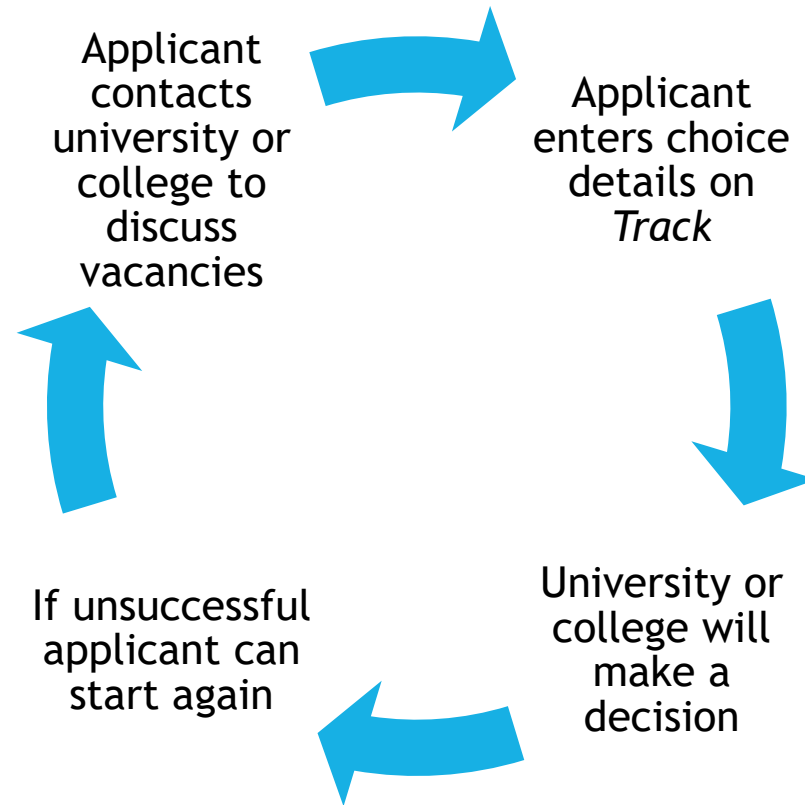
If your son or daughter does not get an offer from any of their choices they can use Extra.

- ▶ Students eligible for Extra:
 - ▶ Used all five choices
 - ▶ All choices unsuccessful, cancelled or offers declined
 - ▶ No option for firm or insurance
 - ▶ Universities have 21 days to respond
 - ▶ Existing apply information used.
- ▶ Extra is open between February - July

Results ...what next?

- ▶ Exam results are published - many are passed electronically to universities by UCAS.
- ▶ Admissions staff check if the applicant has met the conditions of the offer. There are four possibilities:
 1. If a student meets the conditions of their firm choice, it's time to celebrate!
 2. If a student doesn't meet the conditions of their firm choice, but meets the conditions of their insurance choice (which should be lower), they will be given their insurance choice. It's also time to celebrate!
 3. If a student has not met the conditions of their firm or insurance choice, they will be entered into a process known as **Clearing**.
 4. If a student meets and exceeds the conditions of their offer, they are eligible for **Adjustment**. This provides an opportunity for them to reconsider where and what to study whilst still holding their firm offer.

The Clearing process



Useful web links

Open day calendar and information

- ▶ <http://www.opendays.com/>

Advice for parents and guardians

- <http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/parents-and-guardians>

▶ Search Tool for Courses

- ▶ <http://search.ucas.com/>

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Or call us

0871 468 0 468

To speak to one of our trained advisers
between 08.30 – 18.00