



Sackville School



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UCAS = University Colleges Admissions Service [WWW.UCAS.COM](http://www.UCAS.COM)
UCAS processes all applications to universities

Learning Outcomes will be obtained through: **Self-Assessment**
Self-Exploration
Self-Management

Claire Bach - Leader of UCAS - Sept 2017/18

Preparing to Apply to University for 2018 Entry

UCAS and SACKVILLE TIMETABLE

DATES TO REMEMBER	WHAT'S GOING ON?
<p>SPRING TERM 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> February/March Wed 28th March 	<p>See Subject Tutors and Futures Leader with any questions for Progression.</p> <p>Higher Education Fair at ExCel – Royal Victoria Dock, London E16 1XL for students applying to university for 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> talk to staff from over 100 Universities sign up for a place with your Form Teacher
<p>SUMMER TERM 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April onwards April/July June/July 	<p>Form Staff and Futures Leader to help with using resources and ways of researching Higher Education courses.</p> <p>Students should start to research subjects and institutions to be able to choose up to a maximum of 5 courses, using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sixth Form Centre library UCAS website: www.ucas.com University/college websites and prospectuses Open days University Taster Days <p>Higher Education Evening for Parents/Guardians</p> <p>3 weeks of application sessions after AS Level examinations with help from your Form Teacher and the Year team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Register for UCAS 'Apply on line'

Applying to University for 2017/2018 Entry

IMPORTANT APPLICATION DEADLINES

DEADLINE	WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?
<p>AUTUMN TERM 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September • 30th September 2017 • 8th October 2017 • 15th October 2017 • November 2017 • 7th November 2017 • 18th November 2017 	<p>Two day Conference including session on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to write a personal statement (1 day course) • Student Finance • How to choose the right University • Student Life <p>College internal deadline for Oxbridge, Medicine, Veterinary Science and Dentistry candidates to have their completed UCAS application checked by Careers Staff.</p> <p>Applications finalised for Oxbridge, Medicine, Veterinary Science and Dentistry, paid and sent to Claire Bach</p> <p>FINAL closing date for Oxbridge, Medicine, Veterinary Science and Dentistry applications.</p> <p>UCAS Personal Statement Clinics (There will be 2)</p> <p>For all other courses we strongly recommend students submit their applications to Form Teachers by 7th November so that there is time for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject tutors to write/update references • Form Teachers to compile all references • Students to see Core Form Teachers with their completed application form • Year Team to check UCAS forms <p>College internal deadline for all other applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To guarantee it reaching UCAS by 15th January 2018. • Includes some Art and Design Courses.
<p>SPRING TERM 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30th June 2018 • 24th March 2018 	<p>FINAL UCAS late application deadline (many Universities do not accept or read these applications)</p> <p>Deadline for most Art and Design courses NB Check the institutions' websites for closing dates.</p>

UCAS accepts applications from 1st September 2017 until 15th January 2018.

After this deadline applications are **LATE**.

Late applications can be made up to 30th June 2017. After 30th June 2017 and up to 30th September 2017, UCAS will handle applications through CLEARING only.

Deciding What and Where to Study

Self-Assessment, Exploration and Management

It Takes Time!!!

Remember, you will be spending 3 or 4 years at University so take time to research **the place** and **the course** to make sure that you like it.



Use the following information to help yourself create a shortlist of Universities and courses that you are interested in. Choose a few of these to visit at open days.

What resources can help you find out about a course or University?

Choosing a career or course is not easy. You need to find out a lot of information to be able to make decisions that are right for you as an individual.

UCAS



UCAS Website - www.ucas.com

Use the UCAS website to search for and find out about courses. The website has a course search option where you can search for courses by University, subject etc.

This gives a great deal of information about entry requirements, course length, information about the course content etc.

How many course choices do you have?

- You have a **maximum of 5 choices**. If you choose less than 5, you can add further course choices at a later date.
- If you apply to less than 5, you do reduce your options.
- **NOTE:** If you are applying for **medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine/science**, you have a maximum of 4 choices in these subjects. The remaining course choice can be another subject without prejudicing the application.

Choose courses with related subjects – you only have one personal statement to convince admissions tutors that you want to study that subject at their university.



How do you choose which subject to study?

Think about your:

- interests, in and out of college
- talents and skills
- your career aspirations

Talk to your:

- form tutor
- subject tutors
- futures leader



Aim High!

The qualifications you have already achieved at Sackville will enable you to aim high for university. You have a lot to offer any university course and you should challenge yourself when thinking about where to apply to. Remember that you have five choices of university. So use some of these options to aim for a higher level option, with one or two lower grade options for back up. Ensure you refer to university league tables. You can do this by subject by visiting - <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/universityguide>. Check which is the best university for your chosen subject(s) and look at the entry requirements – if these are in line with your predicted grades then believe in yourself and look further into these options.

Do you know your Russell Group?

The Russell Group universities are committed to the highest levels of academic excellence in both teaching and research. The Russell Group was formed in 1994 and the name really is a result of the fact that the first meeting of the group was held in Russell Square in London! These universities attract students from around the world and offer a range of courses from medicine, biological and physical sciences to business, social sciences and the humanities. The Russell Group universities receive a huge amount of funding from government so they can afford to provide the best facilities and opportunities for students. Completing a degree at a Russell Group university can significantly impact on your graduate employment options and research suggests those students who attend one of these universities have an improved earning potential longer term (Office of National Statistics 2013). They are not the right university choice for everyone but you should make decisions based on facts. Therefore, take a moment to look at the courses they offer and decide whether you would like to aim for one of these universities. Below is a list of the current 24 universities in the Russell Group:

University of Birmingham	University of Bristol
University of Cambridge	Cardiff University
Durham University	University of Edinburgh
University of Exeter	University of Glasgow
Imperial College London	King's College London
University of Leeds	University of Liverpool
London School of Economics	University of Manchester
Newcastle University	University of Nottingham
Oxford University	Queen Mary, University of London
Queen's University Belfast	University of Sheffield
University of Southampton	University College London
University of Warwick	University of York

2Oxbridge and Medicine / Veterinary Applicant Info

- **Oxbridge Applicants – First meeting February 2017**
Coordinators Claire Bach (cbach@mysackville.co.uk)/ Dionne Flatman (dflatman@sackville.co.uk) will give help and guidance.



- **Medicine/Veterinary/Dentistry Applicants – Coordinator Claire Bach** (cbach@mysackville.co.uk)
Contact her for help and guidance throughout the UCAS process.
Ongoing sessions already being held.

Important Information Sources

- **Student Finance**
See Student Finance England – www.gov.uk/studentfinance
www.thestudentroom.co.uk
- **University Open Days**
Information on dates is on the Open Days website www.opendays.com
and on each university website

- **University Taster days**

You can also attend **Taster Days** which provide workshops, seminars and taster lectures. To find out about these visit:

www.unitasterdays.com
www.london.ac.uk/tasters



What else could you consider in choosing a University course?

To help you create a short list of possible courses, think about the following reasons for choosing a particular course:

✓	Is there a work placement offered as part of the degree?
✓	Do you need any work experience to get a place on this course?
✓	What are the inspection results for this department in the university? See www.gaa.ac.uk
✓	How far is it from home?
✓	What are the transport links?
✓	How many years will it take you to complete the course?
✓	Is there any opportunity to study abroad with the course?
✓	What are the tuition fees?
✓	Is it a city or campus University?
✓	What kinds of careers do people enter after graduating in that subject?
✓	How many students get jobs after graduating from that subject and University? See https://unistats.direct.gov.uk/

Find out about different Universities



Attend **Open Days and Taster Days** - try to visit universities. You will be spending 3 or 4 years there. **MAKE SURE YOU LIKE IT.**

To find out about open days visit and for ideas on what questions to ask when you're there:

www.opendays.com



You can also attend **Taster Days** which provide workshops, seminars and taster lectures. To find out about these visit:

www.unitasterdays.com

www.london.ac.uk/tasters

Where in the country do you want to study?

Thinking about where in the country you want to study can help you make your search for University and courses more manageable.



Are there some places that you've been to that you really liked and would like to see again? Would you like to study abroad?

Widening Participation

Widening participation has been set up to improve participation in Higher Education from particular socio-economic groups. The aim is to promote and provide the opportunity of successful participation in higher education to everyone who can benefit from it. The local universities, Brighton, Chichester and Sussex, all run schemes which are particularly aimed at young whose parents didn't go to universities themselves.



Art and Design Courses

These courses have deadlines of either the **15th January or 24th March 2018**. You will need to research individual institutions for their closing dates.

Important Information Sources

CHOOSING COURSES

- **UCAS website** - www.ucas.com.
Information on every course at every institution and lots of advice for students on all aspects of the UCAS process.
- **Which online degree search tool** - www.university.which.co.uk
- **University Prospectuses**
Up-to-date copies are in the Sixth Form Centre and are for reference only.
- **University Prospectus Finder**
You can request up to 10 prospectuses to be sent to your home address. Order your **FREE** copies: www.prospectusfinder.co.uk

COMPARING UNIVERSITIES

- www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/courses/choosing-a-course
- <http://www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2015/may/25/university-league-tables-2016>
- <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/complete-university-guide-reveals-its-top-uk-universities-2016/2019901.article>

COMPARING COURSES

- For information about costs and employability relating to different university courses:
www.unistats.com
- For information about the graduate job market including starting salaries:
www.prospects.ac.uk



Studying Abroad

Why Study Abroad?

Have you considered studying abroad, but are not sure whether it's worth your time? If you ask anybody who has studied abroad they will most certainly tell you that it is a life-changing experience and one of the most rewarding things they have ever done! There are a number of reasons why you should consider studying abroad:

- *A great opportunity for travel
- *An optimal way to learn a new language
- *It gives you the opportunity to learn about another culture
- *You can make friends around the world
- *It provides you with a different perspective of the world
- *It can enhance your employment prospects

Where you study is totally up to you. You might prefer to stay in the UK which has a world renowned system of higher education but there are other world class universities. Take a look at the rankings for world class universities online at:

www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2016/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25

If you are interested in studying abroad, anywhere in the world, you should request a careers interview to discuss your plans further.

Other ways to find out more

Course-matching tests

These can be useful if you have literally no idea what to study. Try www.coursefinder.co.uk. It requires you to do a short test and then suggests possible degree subjects which match your interests.



University League Tables and Surveys

League tables can help you to make an objective evaluation of courses and universities. However it is important that you understand how university league tables work and what the individual criteria mean. Some of the main ones to look at are: **The Times Good University Guide**: www.timesonline.co.uk ; and **Guardian University Guide**: www.guardian.co.uk

UNISTATS



The UNISTATS website includes results of the National Student Survey (NSS) of final year undergraduates in the UK and asks students to rate their courses as well as looking at costs and employability. It also includes Key Information Set (KIS) to help compare courses: www.unistats.com

Social Media

It is always best to visit the universities you are thinking of applying to; but it is possible to get a feel for what a university is like via social media platforms including:



Online forum for sharing information with other students about University life, courses, student finance etc.

Facebook

Most universities have Facebook pages. It can be a great way to find out more about campus life, the local area or meet future flatmates. But remember that some groups may not be officially monitored. If you do want information such as fees or accommodation, then check the university website.



Twitter

Universities use Twitter to regularly update prospective students on daily news and events such as open days, Students' Union, etc.



YouTube

YouTube will have a variety of university-related videos – both official and unofficial. These can include anything from interviews with vice-chancellors and principals to lectures and campus tours.

YOU DECIDE!





Maximising Your Graduate Employment Prospects

Why are you going on to Higher Education?

If your reasons are related to improving your career prospects, then:

- think about how your choice of course might affect these.
- start to acquire the skills that employers seek early on in your course.

Graduate Employment – Issues to consider:

- A minority of graduates join training schemes run by large employers. To get these jobs you need good qualifications (your university entrance grades may be as important as your degree). Good transferable skills are required which you can develop during your time in education by getting involved in clubs/societies and completing work experience.
- Work experience gained whilst studying has many advantages. Sandwich courses (normally four year degrees, with a year out in employment) are probably the best way of getting the skills that employers require. If you do not take this route, make sure you get very good part time/vacation experience. Research the jobs of interest to you and start networking with people who do that kind of work – these contacts could be very useful in the future.

How vocational are the courses you are considering?

The extent to which courses will lead you straight into professional employment will vary considerably.

Consider the following categories:

Specifically Vocational Courses (eg Mechanical Engineering, Speech Therapy etc.) These are often the only/main route to a career. They usually cover all, or the majority, of academic stages of training (especially sandwich courses).

Broadly Vocational Courses (eg Business, Media or Sports Studies etc.) May give some (but not total) exemption from an academic stage of training. They are often offered as part of a sandwich course or with practical training. Rarely the only route to a career.

Vocational Academic Courses (eg Chemistry, Psychology, Law etc.) Often the only/main route to a range of careers. They often cover the first academic stage of training but more training is usually required. Combined/joint degrees are common.

Non-vocational Academic Subjects (eg English, History, Philosophy) More training usually required to qualify for a profession. Very rarely offered as a sandwich course.

When Choosing Your Degree:

- Be aware of what career doors you open and close.
- Research first destinations of graduates.
- Research your career interests thoroughly.



Have you got the course entry requirements?

- **GCSE requirements** - some GCSEs can be part of the minimum entry requirements. ALWAYS CHECK!
- Look at the UCAS Tariff requirements
- **MAKE REALISTIC CHOICES.** Choose courses with a range of high, middle and lower entry requirement grades/points.

What are UCAS tariff points?

Your A level grades and level 3 courses will equate to a points score – your UCAS tariff.

Details are at the back of this handout, eg:

- A level grade A = 48 points
- A level grade B = 40 points

Universities may give their entry requirements as points, but many specify grades wanted for particular A level subjects.

What are your UCAS tariff points?

You need to know your UCAS tariff points so that you can make sure that you meet the course entry requirements. This will help you make a short list of courses you can apply for.

To work out your UCAS tariff points:

- Discuss your predicted grades with Subject Tutors and Form Teachers.
- Use the tariff conversion at the back of this handout to convert your predicted grades to points.

UCAS Points System



In order to successfully gain a place at university you will have to meet certain grade requirements. These are usually expressed in the form of a points system, so each grade is equivalent to a certain amount of points. A levels are the gold standard to achieve for universities and they will take points from these in the first instance. Your offer will be based on points from your A level grades.

Below are two tables which give details of the points system for A Level, AS Level grades and the Extended Project Qualification, please see UCAS website for BTEC tables.

A Level Grade	Points System
A*	56
A	48
B	40
C	32
D	24
E	16

AS Level Grade	Points System
A	20
B	16
C	12
D	10
E	6

Visit www.ucas.com for further information on the UCAS tariff.

Please see UCAS Website for BTEC tariff.

Top Tips For Writing The Personal Statement

Alongside your reference, this is the most important part of your form and is your opportunity to 'sell' yourself! Use this opportunity well and remember that the competition for places at university has increased in the past few years. Follow the tips below to help you.

- If you are feeling low it will show! Make sure you are in a positive frame of mind.
- Start with a hard-hitting reason as to why you have chosen a particular subject. How did you become interested in this subject? Show you have researched the course content by mentioning areas in which you are welcoming further study. Reflect that you read widely around this subject – not just books which relate to the A level!
- If you have chosen to continue a favourite A Level subject, say why? What fascinates you about the subject? If you are applying for a new subject, why are you interested in it?
- Mention a career interest to show you have direction and purpose. You may not have a specific job in mind yet, but should have a career field which interests you e.g. helping people, working with computers, the world of business etc. Say how the course will help you reach your goal.
- What personal attributes do you have that may be appropriate for the course? Do not just make statements, always support with examples, eg 'I have good communication skills which I developed through work experience in a primary school dealing with Year 4 children.
- What relevant background experience do you have? Include work experience, voluntary work, performing arts, travel etc.
- If you are applying for deferred entry, what are you planning to do in your gap year? Check the university departments you apply to approve of gap years.
- What are your hobbies? Clubbing, shopping and watching TV do not count!
- **Do not make things up as you may be invited for an interview to discuss things further and be asked to bring evidence!**
- Keep a copy of what you have written and review it before an interview.

There is a lot of guidance on line but do not plagiarise!