

Guide to



UCAS 2026

APPLYING TO HIGHER EDUCATION VIA UCAS : KEY DEADLINES

- Register with UCAS Hub, start your application and complete the sections headed **Personal Details, Nationality Details, Where You Live, Contact Details, Supporting Information, Finance and Funding, Diversity and Inclusion, More About You, Education, Employment** and **Extra Activities** by Friday 18 July 2025.
- Conservatoires and private drama/music schools are via different application systems and may have deadlines as early as Thursday 2 October 2025. Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science have a deadline of Wednesday 15 October 2025. If you are considering applying to these, you **must** discuss your application with a member of the Sixth Form Team before the end of Year 12.
- Complete the rest of the application (**Choices** and **Personal Statement**) in Term 1 of Year 13.
- Once the application is complete (showing 100% complete on the dashboard), you will need to fill out the **APPLICATION SUMMARY SHEET** at the back of this booklet and hand this to your tutor for checking.
- Once your tutor has checked your application, they will return your Application Summary Sheet for you to hand in to the Sixth Form office. You need to do this by Monday 22 September 2025 if applying for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science, or to Oxford or Cambridge. For all other courses, this must be handed into the Sixth Form office by Friday 7 November 2025.
- Applications will be checked in the order that the Application Summary Sheet is received, so be aware that applications submitted after Friday 7 November 2025 are likely to be held in a queue.
- Once your application has been checked and you have made any necessary changes, you will be told that you can click **SUBMIT** and then **ACCEPT AND PROCEED**. You need to pay the cost of £28.95.
- The Sixth Form Team will then add your reference and predicted grades and send the application to UCAS.

1 Registering with UCAS Hub

- Go to www.ucas.com and select **Sign In** from the top right menu. Then click on **Register**.
- Complete the form using a personal email address (**not your school one**), and a memorable password. UCAS will then email you a code to verify your email address.
- Select the **2026 Entry** option (please note that even if you are intending to defer your application to start in 2027, you still need to select 2026 Entry) and the correct level of study (undergraduate). Enter your postcode and marketing preferences.
- Select the subjects you are interested in (you can change these at any point), then scroll down to **Create Account**.

2 Starting Your Application

- To start your application, click the **Your 2026 Applications** tile and select **Undergraduate**. If you are wanting to apply to a conservatoire, please speak to a member of the Sixth Form Team.
- You will be asked if you are applying from a school. Click **Yes** then **Continue** and enter the Buzzword **backwell26**. This links your application to the school, so we can track your progress and add your reference/predicted grades.
- Select your group. If you are applying to Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science, select the group **Early Applicants**. If you are an **ex-student**, select this group. Everyone else will select their **tutor group** (as it will be in Year 13).

3 Application Overview

- The **UCAS Application** homepage is where you will see all the sections which need to be completed and what percentage has been done. You must complete all mandatory questions to mark a section as complete (they have a *) and all sections must be complete before your application can be sent to UCAS. To start, scroll down to the box marked **Personal Details**.

Personal Details

Name: Your name will already be visible, but you'll need to add your title and the other mandatory fields. Make sure you mark the section as complete.

Nationality Details

Enter your country of birth. If you weren't born in the United Kingdom, you will be asked for the date of your first entry to the UK. The questions you will then be asked will be relevant to the information you provide.

For nationality, most of you will be **UK National** (option at the top of the list). If you were born in the UK but have a different nationality, you will be asked additional questions.

If you have any queries about this section speak to the sixth form team.

Where You Live

Add your address and the date you started living there. Confirm as your permanent home or add a different address. You will need to add any addresses you have been living at since September 2023.

Area of Permanent Residence: For most of you this will be **North Somerset**. If your local authority is Bristol City Council select **Bristol** (this will be the case if you live in Hotwells, Southville, Bedminster or Bishopsworth). Add your residential category and mark section as complete.

Contact Details

Add your contact details. Under Nominated Access click **Yes** and give the details of a person who could speak to UCAS about your application if for some reason you cannot. Usually this would be a parent/carer.

Supporting Information

These two questions are mandatory, but you do have the option of **I don't know** or **I prefer not to say**.

Finance and Funding

Most of you will be applying for a student loan and therefore need to select **UK, ChI, IoM or EU student finance services**. For student support arrangements select **North Somerset** (or **Bristol** if you live in Bristol). If you are not applying for a loan, select **Private Finance**.

Diversity and Inclusion

This section will only appear once you have completed the Contact Details section and have added a UK address. There are only two mandatory questions, but you do have the option of **I prefer not to say**. This information is only shared with universities once you have accepted an offer. It does not influence any decision making, but is used to ensure that applications are dealt with fairly.

More About You

This section is shared with universities so they can support you – it does not influence any decision making. Support can be difficult to be put into place at a later date if you do not highlight it here. Please speak to a member of the sixth form team if you are unsure.

Education

Add Places of Education: click **Yes** to add Backwell School. If you started in Year 7 the start date will be 09/2019. Your end date will be 07/2026. Select **Full Time** and **In Person**. If you are an ex-student and retaking your exams, select **Exam Only**.

If you sat your GCSEs at Backwell click **Save and Add Qualification**. If you sat your GCSEs at a different school, you will need to select **Save and Return to Education Section**. Add the school where you sat your GCSEs. Select **Add Qualification**.

GCSE and Equivalent Level 2 Qualifications

Select **GCSE and Equivalent** and scroll down to the **Shortlist provided by your school**.

For Child Development and Sport Studies select **OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National** from the shortlist. For Performing Arts and Music Practice select **Pearson BTEC Level 2 Award**. For Combined Science select **GCSE Double Award**. For everything else, select **GCSE (Grade 9-1)**. If you took a qualification elsewhere, scroll down to the section marked **Search For Your Qualifications**, enter the name of the qualification and select the correct option.

Add your GCSEs or equivalent qualifications one at a time.

Title: once you start writing the title of the qualification it will offer options.

Qualification date will be 08/2024. If you retake Maths or English GCSE in November 2024 you need to enter **both** the qualification you took in Year 11 and the one in Year 12 separately with the appropriate dates (for exams taken in November 2024 the date will be 01/2025).

Awarding Organisation (this is the exam board). If you took your GCSEs at Backwell School, see the list in the 'Exam Boards' section of this booklet. If you took your GCSEs at a different school, you will need to check the exam board on your GCSE certificates.

Enter the **grade**. You do not need to add module details.

A Level, CTEC, AS Level, EPQ, Core Maths

Go to the Add Qualifications section. From the Qualification Type section select **A Level, AS and EPQ**. Scroll down to the **Shortlist provided by your school**.

To enter your A Level subjects select **GCE Advanced Level (A Level)**. Enter the subject and awarding organisation (see Exams Boards section in this booklet). The date is 08/2026 and the grade as **Pending**. There is no need to add modules. Do not enter Business or Health and Social Care as these are CTECs (see below).

For AS Level select **GCE Advanced Subsidiary**. Enter the subject and awarding organisation (see Exams Boards section in this booklet). The date is 08/2025 and the grade is **Pending** (if you are entering the details before 14 August 2025. You can update the grade when you receive your results). There is no need to add modules.

For the EPQ, select **Extended Project (Level 3)**. For the subject add a condensed version of your EPQ title. This is what the universities will see so make the title descriptive, interesting and if you can, relevant. The awarding organisation is AQA. The qualification date is 01/2026 and the grade is **Pending** (if you are entering the details before January 2026. You can update the grade when you receive your results).

For CTEC Business and Health and Social Care, from the Qualification Type section select **Technical (not including BTEC)** and then select **OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate** from the shortlist. You do have to add your modules for these subjects, so you will need to check with your teachers which modules you are taking. The date for all the modules will all be 08/2026 and the grade will be **Pending**.

For Core Maths from the Qualification Type section select **Core Maths** and then select **AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies (Core Maths)** from the shortlist. The title is Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies. The awarding organisation is AQA. The date is 08/2025 and the grade is **Pending** (if you are entering the details before 14 August 2025. You can update the grade when you receive your results). There is no need to add modules.

Other Qualifications: Music, Dance, Drama, Lifeguarding

You can also add other qualifications that count towards UCAS points, such as Music (practical and theory), Dance, Drama or Lifeguarding qualifications and can add these under Backwell School unless you were studying at another school at the time of the exam.

For music, dance or drama click on **Performance, Art and Design** and **Graded music, dance, drama** in the search box then scroll down to find your qualification. If you are unsure as to the exact title of your qualification or exam board, you will need to check with your teachers/certificates.

For Lifeguarding or any other qualifications you think carry UCAS points click on **All Qualifications** and enter the name in the search box.

Save the Education Section

When you have entered all your qualifications go back to the Education Section and scroll down the page. Unique Learner Numbers – leave this blank. If you have taken an additional exam in English Language such as the IETLS (required by some universities), you can enter the results here.

Mark the Education Section as complete and Save.

Employment

Add any **paid** employment. You can leave this section blank but still need to mark it as complete.

Extra Activities

Add activities you have taken part in to prepare for HE, e.g. national/regional schemes, university-run programmes, summer schools, campus days, taster courses, or booster courses. **Open days are not relevant to this question.** You can leave this section blank but still need to mark it as complete.

Personal Statement

We recommend that you start your personal statement via the **UK Personal Statement** section on Unifrog, using the **Subjects Library** for inspiration. You can then cut and paste it into this section on the UCAS application. If you are writing the statement as a draft in the UCAS application make sure you save it so you can return to it later. There is guidance on what a personal statement needs to contain later in this booklet.

Choices

You add your choices by returning to the **Application Overview** screen and scrolling down to the **Your Choices** section. You have a maximum of five course choices. Although it is possible for you to choose only one or two, we recommend that you opt for all five as this gives you more options later on.

Universities make offers based on predicted grades or UCAS Tariff Points. Tariff Points are awarded for all formal qualifications at Level 3, such as A Levels, CTECs, AS Levels, Core Maths and EPQ as well as other qualifications such as in music, dance, drama and lifeguarding. See the UCAS Tariff Points section of this booklet. Check offers based on tariff points offers carefully as they many contain extra conditions, such as grades in particular subjects or requirement for a certain number of points to come from full A Levels. If you are in doubt, ask a member of the Sixth Form Team.

To add your choices click on **Add Choice**. Start typing the name of university, then select from the options displayed. Do the same for the course you have selected, making sure that the course code is the same as the code on the course website.

Locations and start dates are displayed according to the course details. Select September 2026 unless you are deferring your place, in which case you need to select September 2027 as your start date. You should only do this if you are 100% sure you want to defer your place, as it is difficult to change your mind at a later date. It is easier to select September 2026 for now and then defer later.

Point of entry: This informs the university which year of the course you wish to start. For the majority of you, this will be **1st year**. However, if you are applying for a foundation year, you will need to enter **Foundation Year**. Speak to a member of the Sixth Form Team if you are unsure.

Some courses have extra admissions tests and assessments. These may be shown in blue text on the choice card. Some courses require you to disclose your criminal conviction status. This will only be asked if the course requires it.

Once all your choices have been added, you can mark the section as complete.

Once the Application is Complete

Once all the sections are complete, including the personal statement, you will need to complete the **Application Summary Sheet** in this booklet. Use the checklist on the back of this sheet to check you have completed the entire application correctly and then hand the Application Summary Sheet in to your tutor. Once checked, your tutor will return your Application Summary Sheet to you for you to hand into the Sixth Form office. **Do not click on Review and Submit or pay the fee on UCAS Hub until you are told to by the Sixth Form Team.**

KEEP HOLD OF THIS BOOKLET FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

UCAS Tariff Points

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

AS Level / Core Maths	
A	20
B	16
C	12
D	10
E	6

Extended Project	
A*	28
A	24
B	20
C	16
D	12
E	8

OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate		Business
OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate		Health and Social Care
D*	56	
D	48	
M	32	
P	16	

Music Performance	Grade 8	Grade 7	Grade 6
D	30	16	12
M	24	14	10
P	18	12	8

Music Theory	Grade 8	Grade 7	Grade 6
D	10	8	6
M	9	7	5
P	8	6	4

Tariff points are also available for a number of other qualifications, such as dance and lifeguarding. Please see the UCAS Hub for a full up to date list. However, you should note that some universities only recognise tariff points gained from particular qualifications, such as A Levels. It is therefore important to check carefully on individual university websites for conditions of the offer.

Exam Boards

GCSE/LEVEL 2 SUBJECTS and Exam Boards	
Art, Craft and Design	AQA
Art Textiles	AQA
Biology	AQA
Business	Edexcel
Chemistry	AQA
Child Development (CNAT)	OCR
Combined Scienced	AQA
Computer Science	OCR
Design and Technology	AQA
Drama	AQA
English Language	Eduqas
English Literature	AQA
Food Preparation and Nutrition	Eduqas
Geography	AQA
History	Edexcel
Mathematics	AQA
Modern Languages: French, German and Spanish	AQA
Music	Edexcel
Music Practice (BTEC)	Edexcel
Performing Arts (BTEC)	Edexcel
Photography	AQA
Physical Education	Edexcel
Physics	AQA
Religious Studies	AQA
Sports Science (CNAT)	OCR
Sociology	Eduqas

AS/A LEVEL/LEVEL 3 SUBJECTS and Exam Boards	
Art: All subjects	AQA
Biology	Edexcel
Business: Level 3 CTEC Extended Certificate	OCR
Chemistry	Edexcel
Computer Science	OCR
Design and Technology: Product Design	AQA
Drama and Theatre Studies	AQA
Economics	AQA
English Language	Edexcel
English Literature	AQA
Extended Project	AQA
French	AQA
Geography	AQA
German	AQA
Health and Social Care: Level 3 CTEC Extended Certificate	OCR
History	AQA
Mathematics	AQA
Mathematical Studies (Level 3)	AQA
Further Mathematics	AQA
Media	OCR
Music	Eduqas
Music Technology	Edexcel
Physical Education	OCR
Physics	OCR
Psychology	AQA
Religious Studies	AQA
Sociology	AQA
Spanish	AQA

NB: The exam boards for GCSEs are only correct for ex-Backwell students. Students who joined the school in the Sixth Form will need to check the details of the exams sat in their previous school.

Personal Statements

The personal statement is a chance to let the universities know about your interest in the course(s) you are applying for, as well as the achievements and experiences you have in addition to your academic studies. You submit one personal statement which will be seen by all your chosen universities. If you have applied for different courses, you will need to ensure that the statement is relevant to all of them.

New for 2026 entry, the personal statement has changed from one long piece of text to answering three separate questions. These questions will help you to scaffold your answers and ensure you include the information universities and colleges want to see. The personal statement will remain 4000 characters in length (including spaces), and each question will require a minimum of 350 characters, but if you have more to say in one section than another you have the flexibility within the remaining characters to choose where you use these.

Question 1: Why do you want to study this course or subject?

This is your opportunity to showcase your interest in, and knowledge of, your chosen subject area and to demonstrate to universities and colleges why it's a good fit for you and your future ambitions. Examples of what you might include are:

- **Your motivations for studying this course**
Have you been inspired by a key role model or moment in your life? Maybe it's a subject you love and want to pursue further. What experiences have led you to apply for this course or subject area.
- **Your knowledge of this subject area and interests**
Perhaps there's a particular subject area you've researched and can't wait to learn more about; a book, podcast or subject expert which has sparked your interest. Universities want to see that you have done your research so they can be confident that the course will be one you will enjoy and excel in. Highlight super-curricular activities as evidence of curiosity and interest in the subject outside of the classroom.
- **Your future plans and why this is a good fit for you**
If you already have a particular profession in mind you could talk about how you'll use this to launch your career. If you don't, think about what's important to you and your future, and how the knowledge gained from your chosen course will help you achieve this.

Question 2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

This is your chance to mention the relevant or transferable skills you've gained from your formal education and highlight your understanding of how they will help you succeed in this subject area. Examples of what you might include are:

- **How your studies or training relate to your chosen course or subject area**
This would be your current and previous studies in school but could also include any online courses – any form of formal education. The main thing here is to focus on what's most recent and relevant to your chosen course.

- **What relevant or transferable skills you have that make you a great candidate**

You could mention academic subjects which have helped you develop a core set of skills required for your chosen course, or a particular module/unit that helped you understand where your interests and strengths lie.

- **Any relevant educational achievements**

Include any accomplishments such as winning a school or national competition, serving as a student ambassador, team captain, or having worked on the sixth form/school production.

Question 3: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

This is your chance to mention any other activities or personal experiences you have undertaken outside of your formal education which further demonstrate your suitability for the course. This section is likely to be highly personal to you and you should reflect on the relevance of the information to your chosen course. Examples of what you might include are:

- **Work experience, employment, or volunteering**

Include any in-person work experience, virtual work experience or volunteering and the skills gained.

- **Personal life experiences or responsibilities**

Is there a situation you've overcome that has influenced your decision? Are there responsibilities such as caring for a family member that have helped you develop essential qualities for the course? Universities look for students who show resilience.

- **Extracurricular activities**

Any activities outside of your studies that help further showcase why you would be a student who would get involved in the wider aspects of university life. Examples could be sports, hobbies or community work. You could also include any summer schools or university outreach events.

- **Achievements outside of school or college**

This could be a position of responsibility such as captain for your local sports club, a musical achievement, non academic competition you won, or a qualification you've attained outside of the classroom.

Remember:

- Correct spelling, punctuation and grammar matters as it shows you take care in your work and are motivated to do well. Don't rely on Spell Check!
- Try to link all your experiences to the course/subject area you are applying for.
- Don't just list your experiences; explain what you have learnt or gained from them.

Using AI/ChatGPT

Generating (and then copying, pasting and submitting) all or a large part of your personal statement from an AI tool such as ChatGPT and presenting it as your own words could be considered cheating by universities and could affect your chances of an offer. When you complete your application, you have to declare that your personal statement hasn't been copied or provided from another source, including artificial intelligence software. The UCAS Verification software runs checks to detect fraudulent applications and patterns of similarity and if it detects elements of a personal statement that are similar to others, the universities or colleges it is intended for may be notified.

Example Personal Statement:

Question 1: Why do you want to study this course or subject?

I would like to read English Literature and French at degree level, because it is such a fundamental part of everything I enjoy. I love writing poetry, lyrics and plays, while I also relish gaining inspiration and knowledge from reading and analysing all types of literature in both English and French, in particular the work of playwrights, which has grown out of my passion for all aspects of the theatre. I read poetry, because I enjoy the challenge of interpreting the way poets express their ideas through language, structure and punctuation. In particular, William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience* has been interesting and instructive to read in respect to cultural and social development. His ability to write in simple poetic style, yet conveying effective radical ideas amazes me. His was a time of social and political revolution particularly influenced by the French Revolution and the likes of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. This part of cultural history is what has raised my interest in Literature and French. I have always been an avid reader. The diversity of my reading material is due to my curiosity about the different ways in which writers express their ideas. My preference is for novels which provoke a distinct reaction because of their peculiar themes or the extraordinary writing style of the author. I find that the work of Ian McEwan has this effect on me, and similarly the writing of Iain Banks, whose ability to captivate his audience with his often surreal and horrific contents intrigues me.

Question 2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

In A Level English Literature, I am particularly at ease when participating in the discussion of texts; my contributions have matured along with my breadth of knowledge and my clarity of expression in written work as my Sixth Form studies have progressed. As a progressive learning subject, I found that it was important to practise my French outside of class. For this purpose, I have taken up a variety of activities. I frequently go to the cinema or watch French films, write to my French exchange partner in Lyon and read French novels, such as *Les Grand Meaulnes* by Alain Fournier or *Madame Bovary* by Flaubert.

Question 3: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

Being involved in a variety of voluntary schemes to improve the English skills of younger or less able students has enabled me to gain a greater understanding of English. This involves working for 'Kumon', a project designed to provide extra support for children between the ages of five and sixteen, who find literacy challenging: I explain to the students how they can improve and why they have made mistakes. Community Action work at a primary school in Year 12 prepared me for this task as I spent the majority of my time taking sole responsibility for groups of younger children; it also improved my communication skills, my ability to meet deadlines and work under pressure, skills that are proving invaluable at A Level and will continue to play an integral part in my university life.

During my Gap Year I shall be going to Peru for five months to teach English as a volunteer. This is a project I have been planning for some time: having to raise a significant figure in order to fund the trip has greatly improved my time management, teaching me to balance my commitment to my academic studies with various part-time jobs and fundraising schemes. I believe the experience will be extremely beneficial and my role as a teacher will give me a purpose within the community, thereby immersing me in a culture very different from my own and broadening my outlook on life. I feel that the experience will encourage my approach to new ideas at university to be open-minded, and look forward to the intellectual development and challenge that will come from reading English Literature and French at University.

UCAS Application Summary:

*Tutor to initial _____ to indicate
that the UCAS application online and this sheet have been checked as correct.
Once initialled, the student can hand this sheet into the sixth form office.*

Name: _____ Tutor Group: _____

Results & predicted grades:	Name/Title of subject	Result or predicted grade	Number of UCAS points	Teacher's signature
Subject 1				
Subject 2				
Subject 3				
Subject 4 (if taken)				
AS-level / Core Maths (if taken)				
EPQ (if taken)				

University Choices:		Entry Requirements	
Full Name of University	Course Title and Code	Grades/Points (e.g. BBC or 88-104)	Extra Information (e.g. must have B in Maths)
1)			
2)			
3)			
4)			
5)			
Ensure at least ONE choice is an insurance choice, meaning the entry requirements are LOWER than your predicted grades/ total number of UCAS points.			

UCAS Application Checklist:

BEFORE submitting your completed UCAS application, ensure that you can tick all of the following statements:

*Tick when
complete*

• You have linked your application to Backwell School by using the buzzword backwell26 .	
• You have entered the correct tutor-group or selected Early Applicant if applying for Oxbridge/Medicine/Vet/Dentistry	
• You have entered a Nominated Access person. This is usually a parent/carers who can contact UCAS on your behalf if you are unavailable.	
• You have put your NORTH SOMERSET as your 'area of permanent residence' – unless you live in Bristol, in which case it will be BRISTOL.	
• You have entered UK, ChI, IoM or EU Student Finance for your main source of funding (unless you are not taking out a loan in which case you select Private Finance)	
• You have put NORTH SOMERSET for 'student support arrangements' – unless you live in Bristol, when the local authority will be BRISTOL.	
• You have ticked the boxes of any special support you may need at university, checking with the Sixth Form Team if you need to.	
• You have included all of your GCSE subjects and the grades. You have checked that the boards are correct.	
• You have included your Year 12 subject (AS-level/EPQ/Core Maths) if applicable and the grade (Pending if not yet awarded). For the EPQ you have written a condensed yet descriptive version of the title.	
• You have included all of the subjects you are taking in Year 13 (with the grade marked as Pending). You have checked that the boards are correct.	
• Your personal statement has been uploaded to your application and checked for spelling and grammar.	
• Your choices of university courses have a range of entry requirements, from aspirational to insurance (below your predicted grades).	
• Your application is ready to be handed in to your tutor by the deadline of 22 September for Early Applicants and 7 November for everyone else	
• If your tutor has passed your application back to you, you have made any changes necessary and then handed it into the sixth form office.	
•	