



UCAS timeline

Understanding the UCAS application cycle, with awareness for what happens when, is useful for students and supporters alike. Signposting the UCAS website as a resource along with instilling a sense of ownership and responsibility for making their own choices is advisable.

June – September	RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH. Students need to spend time finding the right courses and institutions to suit their needs and interests. They should use www.ucas.com as an initial search and then use universities' websites and literature to establish specific course content. <i>The Student Room</i> and <i>Which?</i> are useful sites and resources in providing forums for student insight. Students should also start planning university Open Day visits; www.opendays.com is a useful starting point.
July – August	Students should attempt to craft their personal statement in line with their research. Some students do four or five drafts before they are happy with it, so it's recommended that they come back to school or college after the summer break ready with a complete first draft for teacher input.
September	UCAS applications open. Students can make up to five choices and statements should reflect the span of their subject areas of interest.
October	15th is the deadline for students pursuing Oxbridge or selecting course options within medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and veterinary science.
January	15th January at 6pm is the official 'on time' UCAS deadline for students. It is advisable in all cases to submit applications in good time. For a school or college, coordinating the reference section for all students wishing to apply to university can be a timely process and an internal deadline of October or November to enable this process is recommended. Once submitted, students are able to track the progress of their application on the UCAS website. Depending on geographic location, students will apply to Student Finance England, Scotland or Wales. Check out their websites for key dates and information. Applications normally open around January.
February	Students who may not be successful in securing university offers, or perhaps have a change of heart around the subject or universities they have applied for, they may be eligible for UCAS Extra. Students can only select one option at a time at this point in the cycle and it is advisable to check with universities directly on course availability through UCAS Extra.
May	'On time' applicants (those submitted by 15th January), who have received all decisions by 31st March , need to select firm and insurance choices by 4th May . Failure to make this selection will result in students being automatically rejected from all course options.
30th June	Any applications submitted after this date will be automatically entered into clearing.

Please check the UCAS website for other key dates – www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/apply-and-track/key-dates

Top tips

Although they say a watched pot never boils, when left for too long it will boil over and you will be too late. The same applies to the application cycle; there are deadlines and markers set by UCAS at each stage of the cycle and, once submitted, students must keep an eye on any offers being made and decide upon their firm and insurance choice. This should not be a rushed decision. Open Day visits and research will assist students in making informed choices.