

**Applying for Higher Education** – All students are with Mrs Lennon or Mr Wilbraham once a fortnight Jan–Dec for collective and individual appropriate guidance / advice. If **PARENTS** have any queries, they can contact Mrs Lennon or Mr Wilbraham directly.

Year 12 – Spring	Year 12 – Summer	Year 13 – Autumn / Winter	Year 13 Spring	Summer
<p><b>Prior Knowledge / Experience &amp; Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Why consider HE?</li> <li>➤ Alternatives?</li> <li>➤ Requirements of HE students.</li> <li>➤ Overview of the process (timescales, deadlines).</li> <li>➤ Start research – universities, courses, finance (bursaries etc)</li> <li>➤ UCAS:-                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What is it?</li> <li>○ Register.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Attend convention – gather university / course details.</li> <li>➤ Oxbridge:-                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Might it be for you?</li> <li>○ Special considerations / arrangements / requirements.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Preparation activities:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reading</li> <li>○ Lectures / talks</li> <li>○ Work experience / shadowing</li> <li>○ Future Learn courses</li> <li>○ Etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Research &amp; UCAS</b> <i>Measure twice – cut once!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Why it is important to thoroughly consider and research:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Which institution?</li> <li>○ Which courses?</li> <li>○ Finance (including bursary availability / conditions)?</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ The more research you do (internet, course details – entry profiles, league tables, past students, university open days, university guest speakers) – the more considered your decisions, the more focussed your application and the more likely it will be that you get on the <b>‘right’</b> course.</li> <li>➤ Find the <b>‘right’</b> course for <b>you</b> – not your friends, not league tables.</li> <li>➤ Centigrade tests (Cambridge Occupational Analysis) to help inform choices available.</li> <li>➤ Inform tutor and subject teachers of interests, university subject choices etc – to inform the reference they write.</li> <li>➤ Start writing your <b>Personal Statement</b>– get it read / checked by the relevant people.</li> <li>➤ Start filling in the UCAS form (online). <a href="http://www.ucas.com">www.ucas.com</a></li> <li>➤ UCAS handbook, Apply, Choices 18+, Oxbridge seminars / visits, extra tests – see course details for information.</li> <li>➤ August – results – inform choices.</li> <li>➤ A2 courses, extra AS courses, and Extended Project work.</li> </ul>	<p><b>UCAS &amp; Personal Statements</b> <i>Show – don’t tell!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fine tune your <b>Personal Statement</b> – ensure it fits your choice of courses. Think of it as a formal job application – simple, straightforward. Consider the image you are projecting – this is often the only chance you have to convince Admissions Tutors to offer you a place. <b>Don’t</b> – lecture the Admissions Tutors (don’t teach Granny to suck eggs) and <b>don’t</b> say your hobbies include <i>“socialising with friends”</i>.</li> <li>➤ Ensure your form is ready for submission – timeliness is important, early applications are at an advantage (accuracy is important too) – both must be ‘right’. UCAS will acknowledge your application.</li> <li>➤ Different courses have different external deadlines, this is 15<sup>th</sup> October for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Oxbridge</li> <li>○ Medical</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ ALL UCAS forms should be completed by the end of October.</li> <li>➤ Interview / CV / ‘tests’ – guidance. If called for an interview, arrange a mock interview with a member of staff.</li> <li>➤ Extra ‘tests’ for certain courses – LNAT, HAT – usually November – check course profiles.</li> <li>➤ December – interviews for Oxford &amp; Cambridge.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Decisions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 15<sup>th</sup> January – UCAS deadline</li> <li>➤ Finance – apply online <a href="https://www.gov.uk/apply-online-for-student-finance">https://www.gov.uk/apply-online-for-student-finance</a></li> <li>➤ April – decide between offers – select realistic choices for <b>FIRM</b> and <b>INSURANCE</b> offers – put in the work / effort to achieve your maximum grades (they will be on your CV for the rest of your lives!)</li> <li>➤ UCAS Extra – if no place yet – check availability through UCAS Extra.</li> <li>➤ Accommodation? Researching and applying – much variety. How to research and apply. Also contact universities direct. <a href="http://university.which.co.uk/advice/student-accommodation/applying-for-university-accommodation">http://university.which.co.uk/advice/student-accommodation/applying-for-university-accommodation</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Results</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Receive results – clearing &amp; adjustment starts – confirmation of places. Courses with vacancies published 5<sup>th</sup> July.</li> <li>➤ Mrs Lennon / Mr Wilbraham if any problems.</li> </ul>

**PARENTAL GUIDANCE – Parents can also help by:**

- *Proofreading the Personal Statement.*
- *Encouraging and supporting students in their research into appropriate / relevant universities, courses, finance etc. (UCAS, open days, Student Finance).*
- *Encouraging students to complete the UCAS form early.*
- *Conducting mock interviews – or arranging for family & friends to do so.*

**AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY:** *By helping students stay on task and committed to their A Level studies:-*

- *To get the A Level grades needed for their chosen university / course.*
- *To allow their subject and form tutors to write a reference which will make students (positively) jump out of the page for Admissions Tutors.*

## UCAS in a Nutshell



### Really useful websites

- UCAS – for all aspects of the process: [www.ucas.co.uk](http://www.ucas.co.uk)
- Direct Gov – for financial support information: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-online-for-student-finance>
- Accommodation – universities & Which? <http://university.which.co.uk/advice/student-accommodation/applying-for-university-accommodation>
- The Complete University Guide: <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/durham>

### What is UCAS?

- The University and College Admission System
- It is the only way to apply to a University.

### How does it work?

- Students complete the UCAS form that contains four vital pieces of information:
  - Personal details (DOB, address, GCSE results etc)
  - Five choices of universities and courses (can apply for more than one course at each university).
  - A Personal Statement
  - An academic school reference (form & subject tutors, and Mrs Lennon / Mr Wilbraham)
- Some students will be invited for interview, to submit work and tests.
- From the offers made, students accept a FIRM offer and an INSURANCE offer.
- When results come out in August, universities will decide if students have met the offer or not.

### What are the deadlines?

- Universities process forms as soon as they arrive. There is a distinct advantage to getting forms in early.
- See table for this cycle deadline dates.

### What is the Personal Statement?

This is the opportunity for the student to convince the Admissions Tutor that they are committed to, and appropriate for, the course. An interesting CV will help – what have you done that tests / challenges / supports your interest in your chosen subject? Show – don't tell!

### Who writes the references?

Subject and Form Tutors write a personal reference (academic / attitude / independent study habits) for students. This is checked & completed by Mrs Lennon and/or Mr Wilbraham.

### What is UCAS Extra?

If you are unlucky enough not to receive any offers from any of your choices, or you have a change of heart and decide to decline any offers you do have, UCAS Extra comes into play.

- UCAS Extra operates from late February and is open until early July.
- It, in effect, allows you to make a sixth choice of university.
- If you become eligible for UCAS Extra, UCAS will send you all the details you need, and courses at universities willing to consider UCAS Extra applications will be available on the UCAS website.
- You can then either use the UCAS website to make an application or contact a university directly.
- If you are made an offer, either unconditional or conditional, you can firmly accept or decline it just like any offer in the main UCAS scheme.
- If you don't get an offer (or decide to decline your offer), you can opt to make another UCAS Extra choice and so on, until either you get an offer or you run out of time (the scheme ends in early July).

### What happens if students don't achieve their offer grades?

If students don't achieve their FIRM offer grades, the university makes the decision as to whether to accept them or not. If they reject them, students are automatically given their INSURANCE offer through UCAS if they meet those grades. If they do not meet the INSURANCE offer and the university does not accept them they are automatically put into clearing.

### What is clearing?

This is the system that sorts out spare university places. It takes place immediately after results and involves students contacting universities directly. It is therefore important that students are not on holiday when results come out so that they can deal with clearing if necessary.

### What is Adjustment?

If you get better results than expected (exceed your Conditional Firm offer) you might be able to look for an alternative course. You might be happy where you are, but with the UCAS Adjustment service if you've had a firm conditional choice accepted – and therefore made into an unconditional firm choice – you could potentially swap your place for one on another course. Adjustment is available from A level results day until 31 August.

