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## Applying for a Higher Education course

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Once you've decided which Higher Education (HE) course you are interested in, you need to follow the application procedure as outlined below.

### Full time courses

#### How to apply:

If you are applying for a full time undergraduate course (HNC, HND, Foundation Degree or Undergraduate Degree) you need to apply via the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

All applications through UCAS must be made online. As well as information relating to predicted grades, schools attended and any work experience, the application form also requires you to complete a 'Personal Statement'. In your 'Personal Statement' you need to explain your motivations for applying to the course and, the reasons the university or college should offer you a place.

If applying through UCAS you are allowed to select up to five different courses. For further information on the online application process, visit [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com).

#### When to apply:

To ensure your application is guaranteed equal consideration, you need to apply before 15 January in the year you are hoping to start your course. It is recommended that you apply as soon as possible (after 1 September the year before you wish to start studying). However, there are alternative deadlines for other courses/institutions:

- 15 October - deadline for dentistry, medicine, veterinary science and veterinary medicine and for all courses at the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge.
- 24 March – deadline for art and design courses except those listed with a 15 January deadline.

For the majority of applications which are received after 15 January, these are considered at the discretion of individual institutions and there is no guarantee that they will be given the same level of consideration as applications received prior to the closing date.

From late February to early July, UCAS operates a system called **Extra**. This is for applicants who, for whatever reason, find themselves without an offer or wish to change their choice of course and decline previous offers. UCAS Extra enables people to have an additional choice and not have to wait until Clearing to find a place. The last date to apply through Extra is 2 July.

**Clearing** operates after 30 June and is for applicants who have already applied through UCAS but not secured a place for a course. It can also help late applicants, who have not yet applied for courses.

## What happens next?

If you submit your application to UCAS before 15 January in the year you wish to start your course, by the end of March you should have received decisions from all the institutions you applied to.

If you apply between 15 January and 30 June you should receive a decision by mid-July. Decisions on applications received through Clearing will be made by the institution as soon as possible. Applications sent in after 30 June will be entered through Clearing.

If you receive an offer of a place it will be either an 'unconditional' or a 'conditional' offer. An unconditional offer is one which is not dependent on you achieving certain grades, whereas for a conditional offer you will need to obtain certain grades or points in any exams you have yet to take.

Once you have carefully considered any offers, you need to let UCAS know which you wish to accept. You can accept two conditional offers, with your second choice having lower grade requirements (or being an unconditional offer), or one unconditional offer.

In mid-August, GCE and Advanced Diploma results are published and the full Clearing vacancy information service starts.



## Part time courses

### How to apply:

If you decide to apply for a part time course you'll need to apply directly to the university or college you wish to study at. You should contact the Admissions department of the institution you wish to apply to for further details and to request an application form.

### When to apply:

In order to ensure your application is guaranteed equal academic consideration you should apply as early as possible and ideally before 15 January in the year you are hoping to start your course.

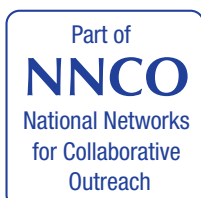
### What happens next?

The university or college you've applied to will contact you to inform you whether or not they are offering you a place. Timescales will vary depending on where you've applied and at what time of year you submitted your application.

### Interviews

Depending on the institution and course you decide to apply to, you may be invited to attend an interview. Courses which require the submission of portfolios (e.g. art and design) along with those requiring the demonstration of practical skills (e.g. dance) will typically involve interviews or auditions. It will be made clear in any information relating to courses whether or not an interview is necessary.

If you are a mature student without formal qualifications, whatever course you apply to, you are likely to be asked to attend an interview in order to discuss your skills and experience in more detail.



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