

UCAS JOURNEY AT ST THOMAS'S

UCAS

- 10 Embedded in curriculum through PSE 'Pathways' S1-6
- 10 All pupils have a 'My World of Work' account which provides careers guidance and a section on college/university advice
- 10 Post School options SDS inserts S2-6
- 10 Next destination trawl S3-6
- 10 1:1 pathway interviews with PSL S2-5
- 10 September S5 UCAS discovery exhibition

UCAS DEADLINE DATES

June/ August 2026	Complete online LEAPS forms
Week beginning 7 th Sept 2026 (During PSE class time)	1 st Draft of Personal statement for early deadline candidates
Week beginning 28 th Sept 2026 (During PSE class time)	Submit final personal statement for early deadline candidates
Week beginning 5 th Oct 2026	School deadline date for submission of UCAS early deadline applications
Week beginning 28 th Sept 2026 (During PSE class time)	1 st Draft of Personal statement all other candidates
Week beginning 26 th Oct 2026 (During PSE class time)	Submit final personal statement all other candidates
Week Beg 30 th November 2026 or before!!	UCAS forms completed and sent to Pupil Support
Fri 11 th Dec 2026	SCHOOL DEADLINE FOR UCAS FORMS
N.B. THERE WILL BE NO WORK DONE ON PUPIL UCAS APPLICATIONS BY PUPIL SUPPORT STAFF OVER THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY PERIOD	
Wed 13 th Jan 2027 6.00pm	UCAS EQUAL CONSIDERATION DEADLINE

What is UCAS? www.ucas.com

University & College Admissions Service is an independent charity providing information, advice and admissions services. They help people discover what their next step might be.

UCAS does:

- provide information, advice, and support
- process applications
- complete fraud and verification checks
- take part in education sector engagement

UCAS doesn't:

- make decisions or offers
- set entry requirements
- advise on finance
- advise on immigration or visas for individuals

What's right? – Explored in PSE

There are a number of things to consider with your next step :

- something you enjoy – you are investing time and effort
- whether it's right for your career path – check with employers and professional organisations
- location – city or rural, transport links
- a study and assessment style that suits you
- environment including extracurricular, clubs, and societies
- finances

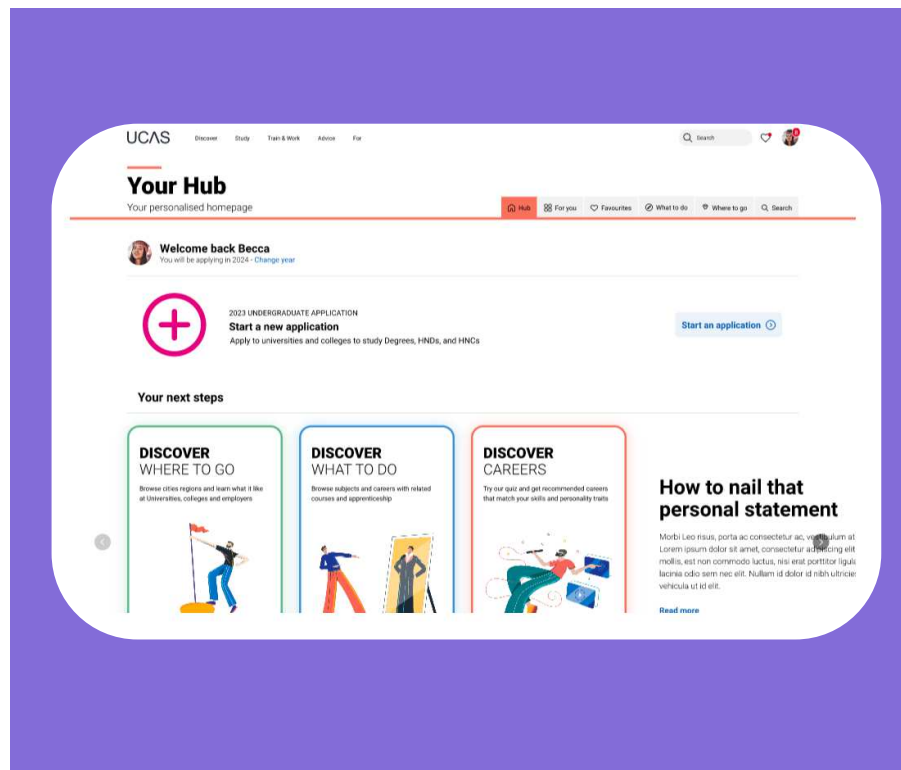


UCAS HUB – SUPPORTED IN PSE

UCAS

Register with the UCAS Hub to:

- explore careers, subjects, places, and apprenticeships
- find and favourite over 35,000 courses
- search for open days, events and virtual tours
- turn predicted grades into UCAS Tariff points
- speak to those in the know using [Unibuddy](#)
- speak to career, higher education, and application specialists by attending [Hub lives](#)
- take the [UCAS Quiz](#) to find your career matches
- start your application



Completing the UCAS application



Student registers for a UCAS Hub account to carry out research and start application.



Student completes all sections of the application and sends it to their school/college.



Teacher or adviser reviews the application and adds reference and predicted grades.



Applications are sent to UCAS by the school or college on behalf of the student.



Universities and colleges make their decisions on the application.

Key facts

UCAS

- To start an application you need to register with **ucas.com**, you can register at any time.
- Universities and colleges **can't see** your other choices when you apply.
- Apply by the school deadline **11th December '26** (*or in extenuating circumstances*) the UCAS equal consideration date Wed 16th Jan 2026.
- You have up to **five choices**, unless applying to study medicine, veterinary, medicine/science, dentistry – then it's **four choices**.
- You **cannot apply to BOTH** Oxford and Cambridge.
- Applying **costs £34.50**
- you should enter the school '**buzzword**' to link your application to us **Stthomas2027**
- By linking your application you're giving the school permission to view and track your application. It also means we'll provide you with a reference and send your application to UCAS on your behalf.

APPLICATION FEE WAIVER

- For **students who are currently enrolled at school or college**, and have been in receipt of UK government funded free school meals at some point during the last six years (i.e. during their secondary education) up until the end of their final year, will be eligible to have the application fee waived.
- The *‘More about you’* section in the application gives you the opportunity to share a range of circumstances and support needs – one of these is your eligibility for free school meals. If you have received UK government funded free school meals at any point during your secondary education, select **‘yes’**.

The personal statement – supported in PSE. First and final draft will be reviewed with suggestions for improvement by PSL.



The only section you have full control over



Your only chance to market yourself as an individual



The same for all of your choices



A maximum of 4,000 characters, or 47 lines



Each answer will have a **minimum** character count of 350 characters



There isn't a spelling or grammar check

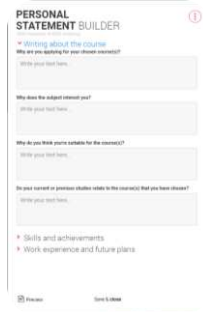


No formatting allowed

UCAS' similarity detection service:

every personal statement is run through software to check for plagiarism.

Pupils can use the 'personal statement builder' tool on UCAS to help them.



Personal Statement –3 question format

- There is no longer a single 4,000-character personal statement. Instead, you will answer three different questions, and each answer must be a minimum of 350 characters. The total character count across all three sections remains 4,000 characters, and you can allocate your characters as needed, with the total length and focus of each section varying by your chosen course
- 1. Why do you want to study this course or topic?
- 2. How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course?
- 3. What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences helpful?

Decisions

Universities and colleges will review the:



**personal
statement**



qualifications



reference

They may also ask for:



admissions test



interview



portfolio/audition

Tracking your application

Follow your application 24/7:

- see your choices
- keep personal information up to date
- view and reply to your offers

You'll receive one of three decisions from your choices:

- unconditional offer
- conditional offer
- unsuccessful

Replies to offers

Once you have decisions on all your choices, you can choose two:

- One as a 'firm' acceptance – your first choice.
- The other as an 'insurance' acceptance. This acts as a back-up if you do not get into your 'firm' choice.

Any remaining offers must be declined.

Once all your decisions and replies have been made, if you are not holding an offer, you may be able to use Extra or Clearing to find available places.

What can students be doing?

- research, research, research
- attend open days and events (most universities have Saturday open days)
- extracurricular and super curricular activities
- work experience
- volunteering
- independent learning outside the curriculum
- focus on this year's studies

Keeping you informed

UCAS



www.ucas.com/parents



Sign up for our parents
newsletter



Read our advice just for you.

<file:///D:/UserData/4021956/Downloads/parent-guide-2027.pdf>



LEAPS

Lothian Equal Access Programme for Schools

LEAPS is a successful and unique widening participation programme, funded by its higher education institution and local council partners to increase progression to higher education. They aim to encourage and advise students who are traditionally under-represented in higher education (at college or university) and currently work with state secondary schools throughout South-East Scotland, supporting pupils who match LEAPS eligibility criteria.

Parent/Carers of all S5 can find out more information on LEAPS by accessing their website:

[Parents | LeapsOnline](#)

We are a LEAPS Group 2 School so our LEAPS eligibility are:

- student who is first generation in family to apply to higher education or whose parents do not already have a degree.
- student from a low-income background.
- student who is care experienced
- student who is estranged
- student who is a young carer
- student who lives in one of Scotland's 20% most disadvantaged communities as defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD20)

Only need to meet one of these criteria to be eligible





Parent and Carers Funding Talks

We will be delivering online funding talks which are designed specifically for the parents & carers of prospective higher education students. These sessions will be running on the evenings of 13 and 15 October 2026 via MS Teams.

Attendees do not require to have a MS Teams account to join. Attendees can book their free ticket

These sessions will:

- explain the funding available from SAAS to the parents/carers of those planning to undertake higher education courses (HNC/HND/Degree courses)
- highlight the information we require regarding household income details required from parents and carers
- provide information on the repayment of student loans; and
- provide direct access to a funding awareness advisor who can assist with specific or general queries you may have regarded SAAS