POST-18 INFORMATION HANDBOOK





After A-levels and Sixth Form

What path should I choose after A-levels?



Choices, choices....

The next 12 months will be an exciting time as you start thinking about your future. Whether you're considering university, an apprenticeship, or jumping straight into work, there are plenty of possibilities to explore. Keep in mind that your first choice doesn't have to be your final one—many people take different paths before settling into their ideal career. So, stay open-minded and take the time to explore all your options!

You are about to begin an important journey of decision-making that will help shape your future. Over the next few years, where you study, train, or work will play a big role in your career and personal growth. This is your chance to think about what excites you and what kind of path you want to take next.

If you would like to make an appointment to discuss your options, then please contact:

Mrs Brennan (Pathways & Progressions Co-ordinator) - brennan.c@woodhousegrove.co.uk

Higher Education

Is University the Right Path for You?

University remains the most popular choice for our students after A-levels. While apprenticeships are becoming more attractive, university offers a chance to explore academic interests, gain valuable skills, and enhance career prospects.

Choosing Your Courses

You can apply for up to five courses, so research carefully! Use UCAS, prospectuses, open days, and advice from teachers, friends, and family to guide your decision. If you're unsure about your future career, a degree can give you time to explore options. You can also apply now and decide later; deferring or withdrawing is always an option.

Making the Right Choice

University isn't for everyone. Consider finances, your preferred learning style, and where you'd be happiest. Success isn't just about the course; it's about the environment and opportunities. There's no single "best" university; just the best one for **you**.

Research & Making the Right Decision

When applying to university, your application is reviewed by the subject department, not a computer or central admin team. Different universities—and even different departments—have their own admissions policies, so processes can vary.

Highly competitive courses like medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, law, and economics receive more applicants than they can accept. While most of our students receive offers for their chosen courses, some courses are oversubscribed. To boost your chances of success:

- ✓ Start your research early
- Take responsibility for your decisions
- Choose courses wisely
- Listen to advice from teachers, family and friends

Which Subject?

Key Approaches to Choosing a Subject:

- **Vocational Courses** Ideal if you have a specific career in mind (e.g., dentistry, midwifery). Be sure you understand the work involved and undertake work experience to confirm your interest.
- **✓ Building on A-Levels** If you enjoy a subject at A-level, continuing it at university could be a great choice. You can also explore joint or combined honours courses.
- A New Subject Many degrees (e.g., zoology, sociology, anthropology, engineering) may be entirely new to you, so research them thoroughly.

Remember: Employers value skills like critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving more than the specific subject studied. However, some careers require specific degrees so check requirements early.

Which Course?

Courses differ significantly in content, teaching style, and assessment. Research individual university websites for the most up-to-date details.

Types of Degrees:

- Single Honours Focus on one subject, often with specialisation in later years.
- **Joint Honours** Two equal subjects, e.g., History and French.
- **Combined Honours** A mix of subjects, narrowing as the course progresses.
- Interdisciplinary Courses A blend of subjects (e.g., Environmental Studies).
- Courses with a Placement Year Includes a year in industry.
- Foundation Year A preparatory year before starting a degree.

Course Considerations:

- Theoretical vs. practical focus.
- Contact hours, teaching style (lectures, seminars, tutorials), and assessment methods.
- Specialisation opportunities and course flexibility.
- Employability and graduate outcomes check https://discoveruni.gov.uk/

Which University?

Universities vary widely in environment, size, and teaching style. Choose based on personal preference and suitability for your course.

Factors to Consider:

- Location City-based (Leeds), campus-based (Exeter), or rural (St. Andrews)?
- Accommodation Halls, self-catering, university-managed flats?
- Entry Requirements Check both general and course-specific grade requirements.
- Facilities & Support Libraries, labs, extracurricular opportunities, support services.

Types of Universities:

- Civic Universities Based in city centres (Manchester, Bristol).
- City Campus Universities Near city centres but with a campus (Nottingham)
- Greenfield Campus Universities Self-contained, often in rural areas (Warwick, York).
- **Collegiate Universities** Oxford, Cambridge, Durham.
- Russell Group Universities Research-intensive universities (UCL, Imperial, Oxford).
- **Specialist Universities** Focus on niche subjects (e.g., conservatoires, art schools).

University Visits and Open Days

Open Days are a great way to explore a university. You can meet staff and students, learn more about courses, and experience campus life. Subject-specific Open Days often provide more detail than general ones, and some universities also offer taster days to give you a better idea of what studying a course is like.

However, it's important to balance visits with your studies. Missing too much school could affect your progress, so we recommend limiting school-time visits to three. Many universities also hold Open Days on Saturdays, which can be a good option to avoid missing lessons.

Advice

- ✓ Visit universities before applying to ensure they match your needs.
- ✓ Prioritise the **course** over the university—content and teaching styles vary.
- Research thoroughly using DiscoverUni and university websites.
- Choose a university where you have a realistic chance of securing a place.
- Taking time to make an informed choice will set you up for success.

What About Finance?

The most common way for students to cover university costs is by taking out a student finance loan, which can cover tuition fees and some living costs. There are two main types of loans that most students can apply for, although some exemptions exist for international students. You'll need to apply for these loans every year that you study, and you can use these loans for the duration of your course.

- Tuition fee loans cover your tuition fees these are sent directly to your university to pay for lectures, seminars and equipment. (£9,535 per year for 2026 entry) You won't need to deal with tuition fee loans until after you graduate.
- Maintenance loans will cover some of your living expenses as a student the exact amount that you receive will vary depending on your circumstances. Where you're from, how much your parents earn, and where you'll be studying are all considered, so those who need extra help can get it.

We will advise students when the online application process opens (usually in March with a deadline in May) and will guide them through the process.

Key Information

- You don't need to pay anything upfront.
- Loan repayments only begin after you graduate and once you earn over £25,000 per year.
- Once you earn above this amount, you'll repay 9% of anything over the £25,000 threshold.
- These repayments are automatically deducted from your salary.
- ✓ If your income drops below £25,000, your payments pause until you earn £25,000 again
- Interest is added to your loan from the moment the money is paid to you.
- For more details and to estimate your repayments, visit: gov.uk/student-finance

Extra Support Available

- Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) If you have extra study-related costs due to a
 disability, you can apply for DSAs. This does not need to be repaid. More details:
 gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa
- Healthcare Bursaries Students studying nursing, midwifery, physiotherapy, and other allied healthcare degrees receive a £5,000 per year bursary that does not need to be repaid.

Studying Abroad

Students choose to study abroad for various reasons, including course options, cost, and gaining a unique experience that stands out to employers. There are two different ranking sites that may be of use in your research; QS World Rankings: http://www.topuniversities.com and

The Times http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/

Short-Term Study Abroad

Many UK universities offer up to a year abroad, often at reduced tuition fees. Some integrate this into a three-year degree, while others extend to four years.

European Universities

Many European universities teach courses in English. Fees vary, but UK student loans don't cover international fees, so funding plans are essential. Popular destinations include:

- The Netherlands The widest range of English-taught courses, with fees between €9,000-€25,000 per year (www.studielink.nl).
- Germany Many tuition-free courses, but fewer English taught options
- **Medical/Dentistry Schools** Offered in cities like Prague and Budapest. Applications are separate for each (www.medicaldoorway.com).
- Other options include Ireland, Spain, Italy, Estonia, and Malta (<u>www.eunicas.co.uk</u>)

Studying in the USA

US university fees are high (\$27,000–\$65,000 per year), but financial aid and **sports/academic scholarships** are available. The **SAT/ACT tests** are often required—start preparing in Year 12. The **Common App** (www.commonapp.org) is used for many applications, which include essays and The **Fulbright Commission** (www.fulbright.org.uk) holds helpful events.

Other International Destinations

Students have also studied in **Australia**, **Canada**, **New Zealand**, **and Hong Kong**. As with UK applications, pupils will be supported through the process of applying to non-UK universities.

Apprenticeships

How Do Apprenticeships Work?

- You'll be employed by a company and earn a wage while gaining hands-on experience.
- At the same time, you will study towards a **nationally recognised qualification**, with a college, university, or training provider.
- Apprenticeships take one to five years to complete, depending on the level

What Are the Different Levels?

- Intermediate (Level 2) Equivalent to GCSEs
- Advanced (Level 3) Equivalent to A-Levels
- Higher (Level 4 & 5) Equivalent to a Foundation Degree or Higher National Diploma
- Degree (Level 6 & 7) Equivalent to a full Bachelor's or Master's Degree

What Are the Benefits?

- Earn a salary while you train.
- No tuition fees, so you avoid student debt.
- Gain valuable work experience that employers look for.
- Develop practical skills directly relevant to your chosen career.
- Many apprentices are offered **permanent jobs** at the end of their programme.

How Do You Find an Apprenticeship?

- Search vacancies on https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship
- Check company websites, as many large employers run their own schemes.
- Vacancies start becoming available to apply for from September/October onwards of Year 13, with competitive schemes requiring applications in Year 12.
- Current vacancies are advertised on a Teams page for Year 13 students.
- Help and support is available from the Sixth Form Team

Apprenticeship or University – Which is Right for You?

University might be better suited if you're interested in more **theoretical study** or careers that require a specific degree, such as medicine or dentistry. Apprenticeships offer an exciting, debt-free route into a career, providing valuable skills and qualifications. Whether you're a hands-on learner or looking to get a head start in the working world, they are well worth considering!

Useful websites:

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk www.apprenticeships.org.uk www.amazingapprenticeships.com

Current higher apprenticeship recruiters include KPMG, Deloitte, Ernst and Young, PWC, Jaguar Land Rover, The National Grid, Rolls Royce, Unilever, BAE Systems, Asda, Marks and Spencer, Nestle, Boots, BAM Nuttall and Channel 4.

Gap Year

If you want to take a gap year, you can still apply to university during Year 13 for deferred entry (2027 entry) or you can apply during your gap year. There are a variety of companies that can help you find placements of differing lengths. These include

https://projecttrust.org.uk/

https://www.projects-abroad.co.uk/

https://www.workaway.info/

UCAS Application

The personal statement format has changed for 2026 entry and now consists of the following three questions:

1. Why do you want to study this course?

This is your chance to show your enthusiasm for the subject and explain why it's the right choice for you. Think about:

- ✓ What inspired you—was it a person, an experience, or simply your love for the subject?
- What excites you most about this subject? Have you read books, done research, or explored it outside of school?
- ✓ How does this course fit with your future career plans or goals?

2. How have your studies prepared you for this course?

Here, you should highlight the skills and knowledge you've gained from your education that will help you succeed. Think about:

- How your subjects relate to the course—have they developed key skills or sparked your interest?
- Any specific topics or projects that helped you understand your strengths.
- What super-curricular activities have you engaged in (articles, podcasts, journals etc)
- Any achievements, like competitions, leadership roles, or special projects, that show your commitment and abilities.

3. What have you done outside of school to prepare for this course?

This is your chance to showcase any extra activities or experiences that make you a great candidate. Think about:

- ✓ Work experience, volunteering, or jobs that gave you relevant skills.
- Personal challenges or responsibilities that helped you grow.
- Hobbies, sports, or clubs that demonstrate your skills, interests, and dedication.
- ✓ Any activities you've done since leaving school, like travel, courses, or work.

Things to remember:

- There is a maximum limit across all three questions of 4,000 characters (including spaces).
- ✓ Each section needs a minimum of 340 characters
- UCAS run all personal statements through a plagiarism tool; so, it must be your own work.
- You can only write one personal statement and so it needs to be relevant to all the courses you are applying for.
- There is a cost of £28.95 to submit an application to UCAS (UCAS is a charity).
- A member of the Sixth Form Team will check all applications before they are submitted.

UCAS Points Tariff for Entry Requirements

	A-level	AS-level	EPQ
A*	56	-	28
Α	48	20	24
В	40	16	20
С	32	12	16
D	24	10	12
E	16	6	8

	National Extended Certificate (equivalent to 1 A-level)		
Distinction *	56		
Distinction	48		
Merit	32		
Pass	16		

Sports Leaders Award	16

University Entry Requirements - What You Need to Know

Each university sets its own entry requirements to make sure students are ready for the course. Checking these should be one of the **first things** you do when researching. By understanding entry requirements, you can make **smarter choices** about where to apply and boost your chances of getting into the right course for you!

Types of Entry Requirements

1. Qualifications & Grades

- ✓ Universities look at your A-levels, BTECs, or other qualifications.
- Some courses require **specific subjects** or **minimum grades** in certain subjects.
- Retaken grades may not always be accepted, so check university policies.

2. UCAS Points

- ✓ Some universities use **UCAS points** instead of grades.
- Most universities accept up to three qualifications, but some universities that make points-based offers will accept up to five qualifications.

3. GCSE Requirements

- ✓ Most universities ask for at least a grade 4 or 5 in English language and maths.
- ✓ Some courses may require specific GCSE subjects or higher grades.
- Competitive courses will pay more attention to your GCSE results

Timeline of Key Dates for Applying to University

2025/2026

Thursday 24 th April	Post Sixth Form event		
Spring/Summer	University open days – book in advance		
Wednesday 18 th June	UCAS Fair – Leeds Beckett University		
Tuesday 1st July	Deadline for first draft of personal statements for		
	those applying to Oxbridge, conservatoires, medicine,		
	dentistry or veterinary science		
Start of July	Provisional UCAS Predicted Grades emailed to		
	students and parents		
Wednesday 3 rd September	Start of Year 13		
Thursday 2 nd October	6pm deadline for applications to most conservatoire		
-	music courses		
Friday 3 rd October	Deadline for first draft of all other personal		
	statements		
Thursday 9 th – Tuesday 14 th October	TMUA and ESAT tests (sit at Pearson Vue centre)		
Wednesday 15 th October	6pm deadline for UCAS applications to Oxbridge or		
	for medicine, dentistry or veterinary science		
Tuesday 21 st – Monday 27 th October	Oxford admission test dates window		
October 2025	Students start receiving university offers		
Wednesday 17 th December	WGS target for completion of all UCAS applications		
Wednesday 14 th January	6pm UCAS deadline for applications to be given equal consideration		
March 2026 – May 2026	Students must complete student finance application		
May 2025	Students should have received all university offers		
Wednesday 6 th May	Deadline to notify UCAS of firm and insurance offers		
Thursday 13 th August	A-level results are published, and Clearing begins		
September – October	University courses begin		

Useful websites

<u>https://new.myglobalbridge.com/</u> - you have already started building up a record of your interests and achievements on this website. Use these and the contacts available on the site to network and showcase your achievements. Having all this information in one place will help you to write your personal statement.

<u>https://notgoingtouni.co.uk/</u> to explore non-university routes beyond school.

<u>https://www.prospects.ac.uk/applying-for-university/alternatives-to-university</u> - lots of useful information around alternatives to university, applying to university and general careers advice.

<u>https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/</u> - helps you to find out detailed information about courses and universities

<u>Match your A-levels to degree subjects - SACU - Career Cloud Quiz</u> - try the A-level explorer to get ideas of courses that may appeal to you, based on your A-levels

<u>www.ucas.com</u> - lots of information to explore in the UCAS Hub, including subject guides and direct links to all university websites.

<u>https://discoveruni.gov.uk/</u> - detailed statistical information, including entry requirements, student satisfaction and graduate employment

http://www.fulbright.org.uk/ gateway for information about studying in the USA.

<u>Careers — Woodhouse Grove School</u> – lots of up-to-date information can be found on Firefly.

<u>https://www.amazingapprenticeships.com/zones/student/</u> - everything you need to know about apprenticeships

https://www.gov.uk/become-apprentice/apply-for-an-apprenticeship - search apprenticeships and sign up for job alerts

WOODHOUSE GROVE SCHOOL

Leavers' Destinations 2024



Other UK Destinations 2024

Bath University Economics, Health and Exercise Science

Bradford University Mechanical Engineering, Law, Clinical Sciences

University City of London Business Management

College of Estate Management Chartered Surveying

De Montford University Biomedical Sciences

University of Huddersfield Pharmacy, Creative Music Production, Music Performance, Health Foundation

Keele Pharmacy

Kent and Medway Medical School Medicine

Lancaster Business Management (2), Finance

Leeds Arts University Games Art

<u>Leeds Beckett</u> Creative Writing, Law, Real Estate & Property Management, Business Management with Marketing

Leicester University Medicine

<u>Liverpool John Moores</u> English, Media & Cultural Studies

Loughborough Commercial Management & Quantity Surveying

Manchester Metropolitan Psychology (2), Banking and Finance, Business Management, Events Management, Fashion Communication

Northumbria Geography and Environmental Science, Business (2), Architecture, History, Economics and Finance

Nottingham Trent Business Management & Marketing, Sociology

Portsmouth University Engineering & Technology

University of Salford Quantity Surveying

York St John Education, SEN and Mental Health

International Destinations 2024

Hong Kong Universities (2 students)

Woosong University, South Korea (International Hotel Management)

St Thomas University, Miami, USA Sports Management)

Russell Group Destinations 2024

Newcastle

Accounting and Finance History & Archaeology Psychology English Language and Literature Film and Media Mathematics and Economics Geography and Urban Planning

Durham G History Geography

Natural Sciences

Manchester
Finance
Architecture (2)
Planning & Real Estate
Economics and Finance
Accounting and Finance
Mathematics and Statistics
Sociology and Criminology
Geography



Criminology and Sociology Business Economics

Londe

Philosophy and Politics International Development Mathematics

> * York English

> > Sociology with Criminology

* Sheffield

Aerospace Engineering Applied Social Sciences Business and Economics

Nottingham

Veterinary Medicine (2) Finance, Accounting & Management Economics & Econometrics

Oxford Law

Imperial College

Aeronautical Engineering Design Engineering

Apprenticeships

Police Constable Apprenticeship Country Style Foods

JM Bentley

Employment

Aon

Belvoir Estate Agents Russell Taylor

Bespoke Stairlift

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Leavers' Destinations 2023



Other UK Destinations 2023

University of the Arts, London Interior and Spatial Design, Fashion Management, Architecture

Bath University Management, Sport and Exercise Science, Mathematics

Bournemouth International Tourism and Hospitality

Bradford University Accountancy

Brighton University Sports Journalism, Finance and Investment

Brunel Business Management

University of Central Lancashire Medical Sciences, Pharmacy and Physiology

University of Chester Modern Languages

University of Huddersfield Engineering, Pharmacy

University of Hull Psychology, Chemical Engineering, Law

Keele Computer Science

Lancaster English Literature and Philosophy

University of Law Law

Leeds Arts University Art Foundation (2)

<u>Leeds Beckett</u> Sport and Exercise Nutrition, Biomedical Science, Architecture, Journalism, Primary Education

Leeds Trinity University Film

Leicester University Computer Science

Lincoln University Psychology

Loughborough Management

Manchester Metropolitan Sport and Exercise Science, Ethics, Religion and Philosophy, Human Resource Management

Northumbria Sport and Exercise Science, Geography and Environmental Studies, Business Management, Applied Science, Psychology, Interior Architecture, Accounting, Finance and Economics

Oxford Brookes Law

University of Reading Food Science

Sheffield Hallam Physiotherapy, Sport Business Management

York St John Environmental Geography, Product Design, Media and English Literature, Creative Writing and

International Destinations 2023

Hong Kong Shue Yan University Accounting

Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Engineering

IE University, Madrid PPLE (Philosophy, Politics, Law and Economics)

Sciences Po University, France Liberal Arts and

Russell Group Destinations 2023

Newcastle

Biomedical Sciences (Masters) Business, Accounting and Finance Education

Durham Engineering Geography Natural Sciences

Midwifery

Finance

York

Languages and Culture

Accounting, Business Finance and Management

Biology

Mathematics/Computer

Psychology

Law Sheffield

Politics and International Relations

Economics and Finance

★ Liverpool Criminology and Sociology

Manchester Mathematics

Fashion Marketing

Aerospace Engineering Biomedical Science Economics

Nottingham Veterinary Medicine

Warwick

Politics and International Studies

Cardiff

Architectural Studies

Imperial College *

Materials Science and Engineering

Southampton

Electrical and Electronic Engineering

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Leavers' Destinations 2022



Other UK Destinations 2022

Aberdeen University Computing

Bradford University Clinical Sciences

Bradford College Opthalmic Dispensing (2)

Brunel Sports Health and Exercise Science

East Anglia International Relations and Politics, Geology with Geography

Edge Hill English Literature

Keele International Business Management, Business and Geography

Lancaster Business Management, Computer Science

Leeds Arts University Art Foundation

Leicester University Medicine

Lincoln University Classical Studies

<u>Leeds Beckett</u> Sport and Exercise Science, PE with Outdoor Education, Educational Psychology, Business and Management

Leeds Conservatoire Actor Musician, Music Production

Leeds Trinity University Sports Coaching

Liverpool Hope Music and Psychology

Liverpool John Moores Sport and Exercise Science

London University of Arts Design for Branded Spaces

Loughborough Commercial Management & Quantity Surveying, Liberal Arts, Management

Manchester Metropolitan Fashion Business and Management

Northumbria Real Estate, Sport Management, Law, International Business Management (2), Psychology, Interior Architecture, Finance and Investment Management

Nottingham Trent Computer Science

University of Plymouth Biomedical Science, Physical Geography and Geology

Portsmouth Geology

RAF Officer Training

Royal Holloway Economics

Salford University Business Management, Creative Writing, Pharmaceutical Science

Sheffield Hallam Sport and Exercise Science

Swansea Osteopathy

Teeside University Health Foundation Course

University Centre Myerscough Motorsport Management and Logistics

Manchester Planning and Real Estate ★ Law

Film Studies

★ Liverpool Mathematical Physics

Aerospace Engineering

Birmingham History and Politics

Marketing and Management

International Destinations 2022

Capilano University, Canada Business

ETH, Zurich Mechanical Engineering

Heidelburg University Education Sciences and Maths

Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts Chinese Opera Programme

NYU, Abu Dhabi Psychology

St Mary's University, Texas Business

Russell Group Destinations 2022

French & Spanish

Food Business Management & Marketing Physical Geography

Maths and Statistics Natural Sciences **Business and Management**

Finance

Robotic Engineering Molecular Cell Biology

Aerospace Engineering Chemistry General Engineering

Politics and International Relations

Oxford

English Language and Literature **Physics**

Imperial Colleg Medicine

Queen Mary

Comparative Literature

Apprenticeships Heinz, Direct Line Insurance, Zenith, Proctor and Gamble