

2017

Student Guide to Post-18 Applications



Farmor's School
AN ACADEMY

SIXTH
FORM

Emma White

VI

EW

6/1/2017

CONTENTS

Page	Topic
2	What are the Post-18 options?
3	Getting a job
3	Planning a Gap Year
4	Apprenticeships
5	Registering on the UCAS Apply System
6	The UCAS Process
7	Important Dates in the Application Process
9	Choosing Universities, Apprenticeships and Courses
10	Useful University Websites
11	Checklist for the Different Sections
12	After Applying
13	Questions about your applications and FAQs from www.ucas.com .
14	UCAS Tariff
15	Student and Tutor Responsibilities

► **What are the different options post-18?**

There are four main options after A levels:

1. Get a job
2. Apply for an apprenticeship
3. Go on a Gap Year
4. Apply to University.

► **How do I get help /support / advice for those different routes?**

You can start plans and applications for all these different routes and then decide after your results which one to take up.

This guide explains how to access the resources, advice and support available for all these paths. It is up to you to take up these and attend the sessions and ask the right people.

There is also a list of relevant websites for each option included here where you can research. In addition there are lots of paper resources for each pathway in the Careers Corner of the LRC.

Nikki coordinates these resources. If you can't find what you need, just ask.

Getting a Job

You will need to choose the field (or fields) you are interested in to start looking at the opportunities. Nikki is the person you need to talk to. She will help you to:

- ▶ Choose your preferred field.
- ▶ Tailor your CV and application
- ▶ Choose whether you want interview practice and set it up for you.
- ▶ Choose whether you want advice from alumni or someone already working in the industry you are interested in.

Employment / Careers Websites:

www.monster.co.uk www.doctorjob.com www.glosjobs.co.uk www.prospects.ac.uk www.apprenticeships.org.uk www.theswac.org.uk www.jobseekers.direct.gov.uk www.careerpilot.org.uk www.thisisgloucestershire.co.uk www.fasttomato.co.uk www.careers4u.tv https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk www.ucasprogress.com	www.realworkrealpay.info www.movingupgloucestershire.com www.whatnowglos.co.uk www.notgoingtouni.co.uk www.thetimes100.co.uk/information www.allaboutschoollleavers.co.uk www.mycareersspringboard.org www.sscalliance.org www.growingambitions.tes.co.uk www.yes2jobs.co.uk www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk
---	--

Planning a Gap Year

We have a range of speakers who come in each year to talk about their gap year experiences, so make sure you check the Speakers' Programme each week. Our speakers are always happy to have individual conversations after their talks.

There is a list of approved providers for each different kind of gap year (e.g. sport, teaching, skiing, conservation etc) in the Careers Corner of the LRC. Start looking these up and making decisions about what you'd like to do.

Once you've chosen, Nikki will help you with your application and any sources of fundraising that might be open to you. Start planning early to make the most of your opportunities. Start with these websites:

www.bunac.org.uk www.yini.org.uk www.csv.org.uk www.yearoutgroup.org	www.gapyear.com www.gap.org.uk www.worldwidevolunteering.org.uk www.gogapyear.com
---	--

Apprenticeships

There are three different levels:

Intermediate apprenticeship	Advanced apprenticeship	Higher & degree apprenticeships
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level 2• 12-18 months• Equivalent to 5 GCSEs A* - C	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level 3• 18-48 months• Equivalent to 2 A-levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Levels 4,5,6,7• 24 months+• Equivalent to foundation degree level+

Advantages of Apprenticeships:

- A higher and degree apprenticeship is a way to earn while you learn in a real job, gaining a real qualification and a real future.
- It is a work-based learning programme with substantial training and the development of transferable skills.
- These apprenticeships are available at level 4 and above, with level 4 and 5 being equivalent to a Higher Education Certificate/Diploma or a Foundation Degree, level 6 equivalent to a Bachelor degree and level 7 equivalent to a Master's degree.
- Degree apprenticeships are at level 6 and 7 and must include a Bachelor's degree at level 6 and a Master's Degree at level 7
- More of these specialised and highly skilled apprenticeships are being offered each year.
- There were over 500,000 apprenticeship starts in 2015/16
- Advanced Level apprentices earn between £77,000 and £117,000 more over their lifetime than those with lower level qualifications; this rises to £150,000 for those doing Higher Apprenticeships.
- The highest starting salary for an apprenticeship vacancy is around £32,000.
- After finishing, the majority of apprentices (90%) will stay in employment (including 2% self-employed)
- Nearly 25% of former apprentices had received a promotion within 12 months of finishing their apprenticeship.

How do you apply for an apprenticeship?

- ▶ You need to register with the National Apprenticeship Service and set up an account.
- ▶ Apprenticeships are released all the time, so you can set alerts and monitor what is there before starting applications next spring.
- ▶ Talk to Nikki, Mrs White or Miss Crawford who will help you with your applications.

- ▶ You can apply for all these different pathways at the same time and there are many things in common. You will need a personal statement /CV and you will need a reference. You may want different kinds of support and advice, but the routes to that are all similar.
- ▶ **Your tutor should always be the first port of call** as they not only know how the different systems work, but also have the experience and expertise to be able to help with writing personal statements and applications. They should be involved at every stage of whichever process you are going through and are more than willing to offer advice on courses and institutions where they can, or to point you in the right direction if they themselves do not have the necessary knowledge. It is also important for you to remember that they will be the ones writing your reference!

<http://schoolleavers.milkround.com> is a really useful website. Further assistance and advice can be obtained from your teachers, Mrs White, Miss Crawford and Nikki. The onus is on you to make the most of the help that is on offer. If you do, the chances are you will end up with the strongest application possible. Good luck!

The UCAS process is the only one with specific deadlines. These are explained below.

Registering on the UCAS Apply System

The APPLY system is available for use wherever there is internet access. The following guide should take you through all the necessary steps to make a successful application. There is help on writing personal statements on this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jQ3MjgdkjY&list=PL2SyLaSjZODmkfy2uZa0I_zT3AlZqdjiK%20A

INITIAL PROCESS

1. Go to <http://wwwucas.com>
2. Click on Register.
3. Click on Register and Apply for 2018
4. Go through process for registering. You will need to set up a password and verify an email address. You will be given an ID and username. Note them as you will need them to log on.

There are lots of advice videos on UCAS:

wwwucas.com/fillinginyourapplication

POINTS TO NOTE

Registering: 'a School or College'

Buzzword: *FARMORS2018*

Which Group: Select your tutor group from list eg. **AR**

The UCAS Process

Time	Student	Teacher/Tutor
w/c 5 th June	UCAS APPLY training. Register with UCAS APPLY and start to complete form. Must note username / password	UCAS adviser password issued; begin mentoring students through the process.
5th June-14 th July Study Skills sessions	Research universities and courses and complete as much of the form as possible	Ongoing monitoring of personal statements and application process.
End of Summer term	Complete sections of UCAS form and have personal statement in draft form	Teachers begin to write references on SIMS. EW/SC signs off UCAS form and statement completed so far to allow students to finish on 14 th July.
September/October	Complete rest of the UCAS application form with help of tutor. Once PERSONAL STATEMENT is completed, student proof reads using final checklist and prints off a copy for tutor to check and use to write reference. Apprenticeship applications /work experience etc ongoing	Teachers write references on SIMS. Deadlines: 15th September (Oxbridge/Medicine/Vet Science/Dentistry students). 18th October (all other applications)
		Check and approve personal statement. Tutor completes reference in Word, adds to the application form and saves in their tutor folder in the 6 th Form shared area.
September/October October/October/ November	Receive 'OKAY' from tutor to send form to EW to check online Make Payment of £24 online and PAY AND SEND ONLINE	Tutor checks completed application form and gives 'OKAY' to student.
		Application & reference checked by EW/SC. Any issues are taken up with tutor / student. Emma White approves UCAS form and sends to UCAS.
October/November	Student receives confirmation from UCAS of received application.	Tutor begins monitoring offers received through advisor track
December onwards	Wait for decisions from universities.	JANUARY 15th – last date for UCAS applications
Jan -June	Applications cont.	Ensuring everyone has a meaningful next year planned

Important Dates in the Application Process

Mid-September 2017 UCAS will accept applications from this date

September 15th 2017 Farmor's subject reference deadline for Oxbridge/Medicine applications.

October 15th 2017 The UCAS deadline for **Oxbridge** applications and applications for **Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine** and **Veterinary Science**

October 18th 2017 Farmor's subject reference deadline for all applications.

November 23rd 2017 Farmor's deadline for the **completion of all applications by students.**

January 15th 2018 Last date for applications from UK and EU residents for all other courses to be received at UCAS and to be guaranteed equal academic consideration. Deadline is 6pm.

February 25th 2018 *Extra starts for eligible students*

24th March 2018 *Art and Design deadlines for some courses*

30th June 2018 *deadline for all application in the normal process; all received after this will automatically go into clearing.*

31st August 2018 *end of period for conditions to be met and end of Adjustment.*

Music & Conservatoire Applications

1st October 2017 closing date for applications

(Applications open in mid-July 2016)

29th August 2018 final deadline for all applications to UCAS for starting in 2018.

The reason for the relatively early Farmor's deadline is to give you the best possible chance of gaining a place at your preferred institutions. It can still be the case of 'the earlier, the better' as some universities consider applications as they arrive. It also ensures sufficient time for the form to be processed, references added etc.

Once you have made your application you will receive an acknowledgement (the AS2 letter). This letter will include an individual applicant number which allows you to track your application on the UCAS website.

Interviews

There is a trend towards interviewing students. Come and ask for any help and advice that you may need plus more subject specific information. We can set a mock up interview for you if you would like.

Important dates in the Oxbridge Application calendar

Candidates must check to see if there is a written test for their subject, and ensure that they have registered, where required. See Rachael Mundy (Exams Officer if unsure)

1 October 2017

Standard deadline for registering for the BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT).

15 October 2017

Final deadline for registering for the BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT), the English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT), the History Aptitude Test (HAT), the Physics Aptitude Test (PAT) and the Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA)

15 October 2017

Closing date for all UCAS applications.

Closing date for receipt of application forms for the accelerated medical course.

1 September–20 October 2017

Law National Admissions Test (LNAT)

Early November 2017

BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT)

English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT)

History Aptitude Test (HAT)

Physics Aptitude Test (PAT)

Aptitude Test for Mathematics and Computer Science

Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA)

Tests for all Modern Languages courses

Tests for all Classics courses

Usually around 10 November (date to be confirmed)

Closing date for submissions of written work, if required by your subject.

Usually around 10 November (date to be confirmed)

Portfolios for Fine Art must be delivered to the Ruskin School of Drawing & Fine Art by noon.

December 2017

Interviews take place in Oxford. Written tests, for those subjects which require them during the Oxford interview period in December.

By mid-January 2018

You will be notified of the outcome of your application.

Choosing Universities, Apprenticeships and Courses

- Over the course of the year we have used a number of resources to help you decide on career / course / university. You also had the UCAS Convention to gather information.
- Careers – Naturally course choice may well be governed by career choice and it is essential to leave options open if you are unsure. Remember, 60% of all graduate jobs are open to applicants regardless of subject studied.
- You will find a range of useful resources in the LRC to help you when looking for the right university and course including some university prospectuses, but they can also be obtained by ordering them directly from the institution or from the website.
- A list of all the institutions with the courses they offer can be accessed on the UCAS website. The address is www.ucas.com . Find the Entry Profiles when you investigate particular courses, these provide a wide range of information regarding the qualifications and skills needed. There is a course search tool on the UCAS website which will also help you choose courses and give you information about apprenticeships.
- Look at the entry requirements for any courses that you're interested in and then ask yourself whether you're likely to achieve those grades. Set your sights high, but do not set yourself unrealistic goals. If in doubt, talk to subject teachers about predicted A' level grades.
- [SACU](http://www.sacu.ac.uk) is a great website to go onto to help to inform your choices. You can find out about costs of courses, the way the courses are assessed, the amount of time you actually spend in lectures, and lots of other really useful information.
- The Sixth Form is informed of many open days and pre-application events as well as apprenticeships as they open and Nikki will email regular updates as well as pinning up information on the noticeboards in the Sixth Form area.
- The best way of finding out whether you're going to like a university or not is to visit it. Arrange to attend an open day and make sure you talk to as many people, especially students, as you can. Three or four open days are enough for anybody, and in fact any more can be counter-productive.
- The Complete University Guide (www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk) is an interactive site which allows you to alter the weightings of the different criteria to suit your own requirements and so create your own unique table.
- You can apply for a **maximum of five choices** on your application, but there **are restrictions** on the amount of choices **for some courses**.
- Check you have applied for appropriate courses – talk to tutors / teachers about grades required and whether you are likely to get some achievable offers.
- Check you have / have not deferred entry
- You only really need two choices: the one you really want to go to and one that is OK if you can't get into your first choice. You have 5 choices though so you have time to really finally decide. You have to accept your offers by the first week of May 2018.

Useful Websites

Higher Education

www.ucas.com www.scit.wlv.ac.uk/ukinfo www.qca.org.uk www.educationguardian.co.uk www.unistats.direct.gov.uk www.studentfinance.direct.gov.uk www.universitycompare.com www.careersegg.com Oxbridge: http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate ate - tips on how to apply to Oxbridge and the process with key dates	www.opendays.com www.push.co.uk www.unistats.co.uk www.whatuni.com – can compare the best University and degree courses for free – Degree course rankings, university reviews, degree course details, university profiles etc www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk www.timesonline.co.uk/uniguide www.highfliers.co.uk http://universitycompare.com/university-rankings/guardian-university-league-table-2015/
--	--

Finance / Student Life

There is a cost implication for university and you can find out more information at the websites below. There will be more information given out separately later in the year.

www.nusonline.co.uk www.studentzone.org.uk www.studentunion.co.uk	www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance www.slc.co.uk www.bunk.com
--	--

Student Accommodation

www.bunk.com www.thestudentvillage.co.uk	www.unilodge.com www.anythingstudent.com
--	--

How do universities and colleges view deferred entry applications?

Gap years are brilliant and most universities and colleges will allow you to apply for deferred entry, but check with them before applying. When you apply, include details of your proposed gap year in your personal statement to support your application. Some Medicine/Maths courses may frown upon this.

Can I apply to the same university or college for more than one course?

Yes, apart from the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge.

A great website is <https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/>. This is good for A level information, revision tips and lots of information about different universities and courses.

Checklist for the Different Sections

Personal Details

- E-mail address – no stupid e-mail addresses; e.g. love2party@bt.com
- Fee Code – nearly always ‘02 LA’ (LA = Local Authority)
- Student support arrangements – make sure you have the right LA (Gloucestershire / Swindon / Wiltshire or Oxfordshire)
- Name and Age – often entered incorrectly
- Occupational Background – this is the occupation of one of your parents

Employment

- Check you have listed all employment. If you have only done babysitting, this is valid employment and should be listed. Obviously if the list is long you may need to be more selective.

Personal Statement

The personal statement is supposed to be just that – personal. Spelling and Grammar are important, as is layout and structure. You have had lots of advice on this.

- Leave a space between paragraphs – easier for the reader.
- Make sure you have sold yourself and focused on the skills and attributes you have gained rather than just listing experiences
- Don't start with, 'My name is ...
- You have 4000 characters or 47 lines of text – whichever comes first
- You cannot use bold, italics or underline.

This section is where most mistakes occur.....

Education

- Qualifications are often inputted wrongly. Double check your certificates or see Nikki Clark for a summary of this information.
- Input the grade for any AS subjects you have taken (Advanced Subsidiary). You can put in module information **if you wish**. Use **August** as the date for cashing in/exam results etc.
- Your A Level exams (GCE Advanced) should be listed again and mark grade as 'pending'.
- For the A levels you are continuing, you do not have to input all the units taken/about to take. You may wish to if you have high grades in your AS modules. It is best, however, to be consistent – all your units for all your subjects or no units for all your subjects.
- You can also gain UCAS points for some extracurricular Qualifications like some music grades etc. You can find this out on the UCAS website.

After Applying

- After you've sent the application form to the referee, your tutor will write their reference about you based on the references from your subject teachers. Tutors will add this to your application form. Mrs White will check the reference.
- Mrs White cannot process the application until payment has been made.
- UCAS will then notify you by post and through 'Track' to confirm receipt of your application. This letter will also include your personal UCAS number.
- You can check on the progress of your application at any time by visiting the UCAS website (www.ucas.com) and using your Personal ID number.
- Once you have received a reply from all of the institutions you have to decide on a first (firm) choice and an insurance choice.
- You will be expected to make an application for any student finance normally by the end of May even if you haven't decided on your firm choice of university.

What happens when my application is sent to UCAS?

Once your application is completed and sent to us, UCAS process it. If they have to query anything, they'll contact you for more information. Your application will then be sent to your universities and colleges to consider and UCAS will send you a welcome letter.

What should I do if I don't receive my welcome letter?

If your postal address is in the UK, allow 14 days for your letter to arrive. If your postal address is outside of the UK please allow 21 days. If you still haven't received the letter, please contact UCAS Customer Service Unit.

UCAS PHONE NUMBER: 0371 468 0 468

Farmor's Apply Centre Number: 15248
--

Reply dates

When you have received your last reply (offers / rejections) from universities, UCAS will send you a card/notification through 'Track' that details when you have to make a decision with regard to your firm acceptance and your insurance – **YOU MUST REPLY BEFORE THIS DATE**

- The decision as to which offers to accept as your 'firm' and 'insurance' is difficult. You need to be realistic but at the same time positive about your potential grades. Seek advice from your subject teachers.

What is Extra?

Extra is a way of making a further choice after you have applied. You are eligible for Extra if you have used all five choices on your application and have either been unsuccessful at all of them, or have declined all offers you have received. You can apply for another choice on Track, providing that it is available in Extra (you can check this on Course Search). The Extra service operates from the end of February until the end of June.

What is Clearing?

Clearing (available July-Sept) is a service that helps people find vacancies on higher education courses. If you have applied this year but have not gained a place or have declined your offers, you may be eligible for Clearing. Courses with vacancies will be listed on the UCAS site once Clearing has started.

Adjustment

If you've done better than expected, **Adjustment** is a chance for you to reconsider where and what to study. 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 you prefer. Adjustment is available 14–31 August. You register for Adjustment in Track following exam results.

If you have other questions, you may well find the answers here:

FAQS from www.ucas.com

When will my universities and colleges make a decision about my application?

Universities and colleges can take different lengths of time to make a decision. UCAS gives them a deadline by which to send them their decision. Often universities and colleges are much quicker than this, but if UCAS received your application:

on or before 15 January, we ask universities and colleges to send us their decision by the **end of March**. Some of them do not always achieve this, especially on popular courses, so the **latest you could receive their decision is early May**

after 15 January, your universities or colleges **could take as long as July** to make their decisions.

How do I reply to my offers?

You reply to your offers in Track. You do not need to reply to your offers until you have received decisions from all your universities or colleges. When the universities have all sent their decisions to UCAS, UCAS automatically ask you to reply to offers.

If you are waiting for decisions but you are no longer interested in these choices, you can cancel them in Track and then reply to the offers you have already received. It may sound obvious, but check you have received the offers you wish to accept from UCAS before doing this.

For specific questions about your application, it is always worth ringing the admissions department for your university. They will not mind talking to you at all as they want you to go to them!

UCAS Tariff Tables: how many points are your grades worth?

AS Levels & Core Maths		EPQ		A Levels	
Grades	Points	Grades	Points	Grades	Points
A*	N/A	A*	28	A*	56
A	20	A	24	A	48
B	16	B	20	B	40
C	12	C	16	C	32
D	10	D	12	D	24
E	6	E	8	E	16

Student and Tutor Responsibilities

Students are responsible for...

- Seeking advice about institutions and courses they are interested in using NAS / UCAS / SACU.
- Attending open days at institutions as part of your research, but not attending more than four.
- Completing UCAS form / NAS applications / gap year applications / job applications.
- Requesting Subject References) & talking to their tutor about other information to be included in the reference.
- Writing their personal statements and CVs and applications with assistance from their tutor
- **Thoroughly** checking their completed forms before showing to tutor for checking
- Making payment of **£24** on-line (for multiple courses) or £13 (if applying for one course only) if applying through UCAS.
- Make decision, with help, of firm acceptance and insurance by date given by UCAS.
- Discussing their plans with Nikki if they want interview experience or help with any aspect of applications.
- Having something constructive to do after A levels.

Tutors are responsible for...

- Giving impartial advice on institutions and courses where they can or pointing their tutees in the right direction for advice e.g. subject teachers, library resources, Mrs White.
- Assisting tutees with their personal statements, CVs, applications and their UCAS forms
- Checking that the details are correct on their tutees' application forms
- Checking progress of the students' applications
- Encouraging students to start / complete their UCAS forms / NAS applications / plans for post-18
- Writing the school reference for their tutees
- Monitoring the offers received by their tutees
- Discussing post-18 plans and supporting students to access the different channels of support available.

There is a wealth of support, advice and opportunity available for all students. The only thing you need to do is make your aspirations known and access that support by talking to us: Nikki, Mrs White, Miss Crawford.