



Years 12 – 13

Preparing for University



Supporting your child
through their next steps

**UNIVERSITY
OF WARWICK**

Undergraduate courses

What does undergraduate mean?

'Undergraduate' degrees are the first degrees you can study at university after gaining further education qualifications (such as A-levels, BTECs and T-levels). This includes associate and (most commonly) bachelor's degrees such as BA (Bachelor of Arts) or BSc (Bachelor of Science).

Choosing a university

How do I support my child in choosing a university?

There are many different universities to study at! Important things to consider would be:

Location/Facilities

When choosing a university, location plays an important role in shaping the overall experience. Consider factors such as proximity to home, cost of living and transport links. A university's surroundings can influence lifestyle, social opportunities, and career prospects, so it's important to choose a place where your child feels comfortable and motivated.

Facilities are equally important, as they support both academic success and student life. Look for well-equipped libraries, modern lecture halls and laboratories. Sports centres, accommodation, study spaces, and student support services can also enhance your child's time at university. Strong facilities help create a productive, supportive environment where students can learn and thrive.

University rankings

Some universities with higher rankings will have higher grade requirements, so before applying research these on the UCAS course finder!

To help with this, visiting campuses on open days and taster courses will give you a good feel for the area and the subjects/facilities available. Looking at specific university websites will also help you to find tailored information.



Navigating UCAS

What is UCAS?

UCAS (Universities and College Admissions Service) is the UK's application service. Their job is to handle all higher education applications and be the point of contact for both applicants and universities.

What is the application process?

As UCAS is a charity, they require application fees. If your child has received government-funded free school meals at any point in the last six years, they will be exempt from this.

When applying for an undergraduate degree, you can apply for up to 5 choices (usually one subject at 5 different institutions).

Applicants must answer 3 shorter questions as part of their personal statement.

Choosing a course

How do I support my child in choosing a course?

Help them to consider different factors such as: Do they know what job they want when they are older? Do they have favourite subjects or skills they excel in?

Some courses (such as medicine or maths) will require certain GCSE or A-level subject choices, but other courses only require certain grades (no subject-specific prerequisites).



UCAS
Course Search

UCAS Clearing

What happens if my child doesn't meet the grade requirements?

When receiving offers from universities, your child will have until mid-June to make provisional decisions. If receiving an offer, they will receive one of three types of offer:

- 01 CONDITIONAL**
A place is offered dependent on certain criteria (e.g. certain grades)
- 02 UNCONDITIONAL**
A place is offered with no criteria to be met
- 03 CONTEXTUAL**
An offer where the university considers the personal circumstances of the student (e.g. lowered grade criteria for care experienced students)

If your child receives no offers out of their 5 selected, they will be able to apply to additional universities through UCAS Extra.

From these offers, students will make a 'Firm' choice (where they would like to attend) and an 'Insurance' choice (where they would like to attend if they do not fulfil the criteria for their 'Firm' choice).

If the grades they receive do not fulfil the criteria for either choice, they will have the opportunity to look on clearing for an alternative degree/university option. Clearing is a service offered by UCAS, where you can see which universities have spaces on courses and are open to students joining. This involves calling universities on results day, with more detailed and specified guidance on the UCAS website.



UCAS
Extra



UCAS
Clearing

Preparing for university

What can my child do now to prepare themselves?

University is a big transition so, there are many things your child can do in preparation for this next step.

Prior to applying, students should make themselves aware of key timeline dates (such as deadlines for UCAS applications and when applications for student finance and accommodation open*)



Entry application dates and deadlines

*More details about student finance, budgeting and accommodation are further explained on the Student Finance factsheet

Wellbeing support at university

What wellbeing support is there at university?

All universities provide wellbeing support. Specific services vary, so look into the specific universities your child is interested in. However, counselling services, online resources, personal tutors and disability support are common.

How can my child stay SAFE at university?

Universities have dedicated security, and emergency services can access campuses. Students can also report any misconduct or incidents to their university which will be dealt with accordingly. Some universities have call lines for safety at nighttime. Suggesting to your child to use apps such as What3Words and having emergency contacts on their mobiles are encouraged.

How can my child make friends at university?

Universities have societies (run by students) which are great places to find other students with similar interests. Also, there are opportunities to join sports clubs or to complete volunteering with other students.

What SEN support would be available?

Universities offer a range of Special Educational Needs (SEN) support to help students succeed academically and manage university life. Most universities have a dedicated team that assesses needs and coordinates support for students with learning difficulties, disabilities, or long-term health conditions.

