



Some important guidance re best A Level /BTECs subject choices for degree options at university

General advice regarding Applications

This is general guidance which cannot take account of individual circumstances – students should email **he@bhasvic.ac.uk** – if they have particular queries/issues.

Information about choices, and where they lead, is key (see below) but above all ***study what you enjoy***.

Consider your future pathways from there.

'Traditional' A level subjects

Leading higher tier Unis have no objection to **ONE less traditional A Level subject such as Media, Film, Art, Theatre Studies** - but taking **TWO such subjects** almost certain rules out a UCAS application to a general higher tier Uni.

This advice is probably sound for a Humanities degree; for a **Science/Mathematics-based degree** – it is **probably necessary to have 3 traditional A Levels**.

Please **note that taking 4 A Levels does not necessarily make for a stronger uni application!** The Oxbridge expectation is for 3 A Levels.

A slate of 3 A Levels completed very well is far preferable to a weaker set of 4 A Levels. The main exception to the 3 A Level 'rule' may be a combination of Sciences including Double Maths as two of 4 A Levels (NB not, say, Biology + Chemistry + Physics + Maths).

Double Mathematics

Students seeking places at higher tier Unis for the following subjects **are strongly advised to consider Double Mathematics**

(Unis like Warwick, Cambridge, Imperial - almost certainly ruling yourself out without Maths x 2):

COMPUTER SCIENCE
ENGINEERING
PHYSICS
MATHEMATICS
and maybe ECONOMICS

Taking AS Further Maths in the second year at BHASVIC certainly strengthens university applications for students only studying single Mathematics – although is still not as 'strong' as Double Mathematics.

Single Mathematics

Students wishing to study the following subjects at higher tier Unis **should seriously consider Single A Level Mathematics** (for some of these courses at some Unis = actually essential

ARCHITECTURE

SCIENCE (such as Biology, Chemistry, Bio-Medical Sciences)

PSYCHOLOGY

PHILOSOPHY

Medicine/Dentistry

Medicine and Dentistry are highly competitive degree courses.

We strongly recommend that you study both **Chemistry and Biology A-levels**, to keep your options open. There are a handful of options for those that take only Chemistry or Biology alongside a second science or Maths, but your choice will be severely restricted.

For most universities, a wide variety of courses are accepted as your third choice of A-level (except General Studies, Critical Thinking and similar) but not BTECS. Some Cambridge colleges ask for the third A-level to also be science or Maths, a few medical schools specify an “academic” third choice and many would like to see three distinct subjects, so will not include both Maths and Further Maths in their offer, for example.

Veterinary Science

Studying Chemistry and Biology A-levels is strongly recommended, as this will enable you to apply to any of the nine UK Veterinary Schools. For your third choice, most A-levels (except General Studies, Critical Thinking and similar) are accepted but not BTECS.

Without both these sciences, your options will be very limited. Harper and Keele accepts Biology or Chemistry A-level, alongside a second science or Maths. Cambridge and Bristol both accept Chemistry A-level with one of Biology, Physics or Maths. Cambridge requirements vary by college but Maths/Science is preferred for the third A-level.

Extended Project Qualification

There will be an opportunity to study an **Extended Project Qualification** (equivalent to 60% of an A level) in either A1 or A2 which will add strength to 3 A levels. Many higher tier unis value the EPQ as a robust dissertation.

BTECs

Many higher tier universities **assess solely by exams and require evidence of exam success in exam-based subjects – hence requirement for A level grades**

HOWEVER

Many excellent universities consider BTECs equivalent to A levels on entry requirements. In fact, BTECs are much more representative of university level work than A levels for many universities.

100% of our BTEC students received offers from universities in the past few years. If particularly keen on a course / university post-BHASVIC it is worth researching entry requirements before settling on subject choices.

A Distinction* is equivalent to A* at A level.

Checking entry requirements for individual courses

There are many different types of degrees and wide range of institutions and whilst general rules apply if in doubt it is always worth checking for particular courses.

Architecture – there are two types of Architecture, maths/physics related and creative
There are options for both.

Economics – can be studied via a BSc (maths-based route) and BA (usually more open in entry requirements).

Nursing and Health professions – many will require Biology. Some will accept Health and Social Care / Sports & Exercise Science BTECs.

History – will often require History or related at A level (e.g. Classics).

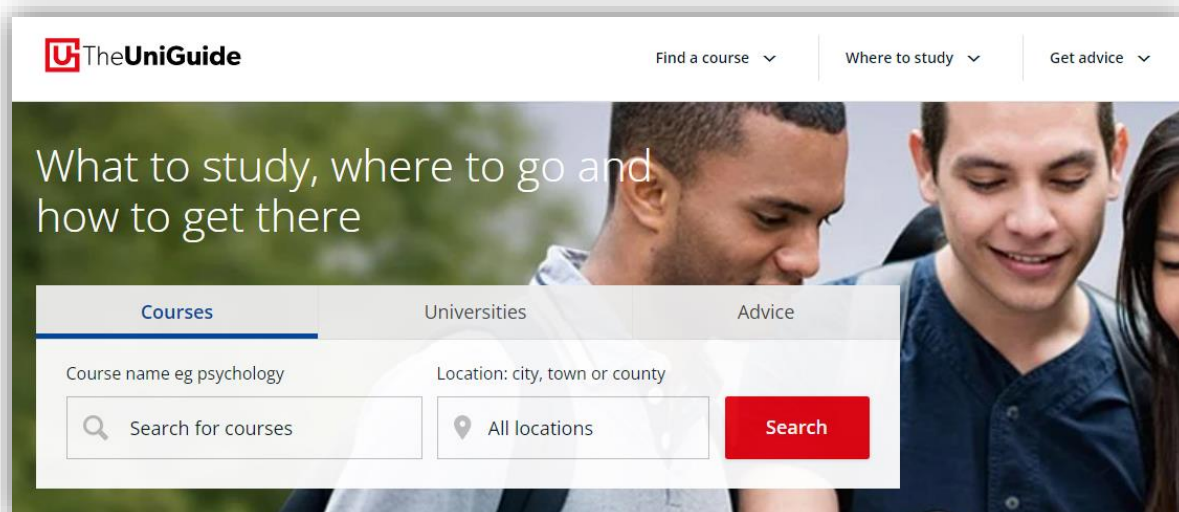
Any many more examples.

If in doubt it is simple to do some university research.

The Uni Guide

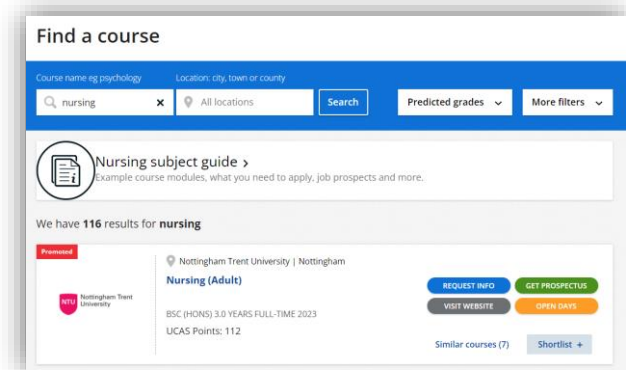
The Uni Guide is a useful first point of call.

[Find and Compare the Best University & Degree Courses – The Uni Guide](#)

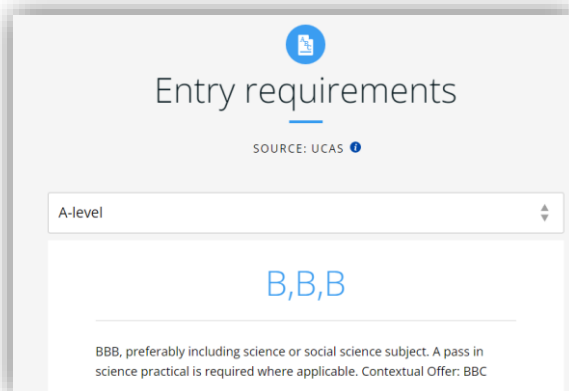
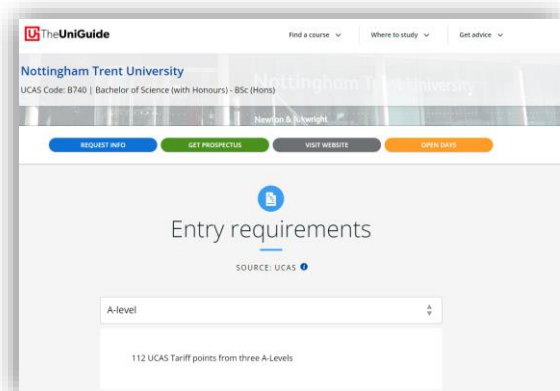


The screenshot shows the homepage of The Uni Guide. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo 'TheUniGuide' on the left and three links: 'Find a course', 'Where to study', and 'Get advice', each with a dropdown arrow. Below the navigation bar is a large banner image of three students looking at a laptop. Overlaid on the banner is a search interface. It features a title 'What to study, where to go and how to get there' in white text. Below the title are three tabs: 'Courses' (which is selected and highlighted with a blue underline), 'Universities', and 'Advice'. Under the 'Courses' tab, there are two input fields: 'Course name eg psychology' and 'Location: city, town or county'. Below the 'Course name' field is a search icon and the text 'Search for courses'. Below the 'Location' field is a location pin icon and the text 'All locations'. To the right of these fields is a red 'Search' button.

Enter a course choice



You will find course entry requirements



This should give you some steer if you are set on a **particular degree**.

There are usually options down the line such as Foundation and Access courses for those changing pathways through their two years at college. We can help with advice and guidance.

More help online with specific choices

There are many different types of degrees and wide range of institutions and whilst general rules apply if in doubt it is always worth checking for particular courses.

[Subject choices at school and college \(russellgroup.ac.uk\)](http://russellgroup.ac.uk)

[Six things you need to know before making your final A-level choices - The Uni Guide](#)

[What University Course Should You Study? \(ucas.com\)](http://ucas.com)

Support from BHASVIC

We always talk to **students about their subject choices at both interview and enrolment**. We are always happy to help with specific questions.

More advice is available through he@bhasvic.ac.uk