

BHASVIC

Dedicated support through tutorial

Research on University courses & degrees, study abroad

Guest speakers, Higher Education evenings for parents

Specialist tutor groups for Oxbridge, Medics and Visual Arts

1:2:1 Personal Statement support & UCAS Apply form

Opportunities for Taster Days and Summer schools

Close links with many Universities including Sussex, Brighton & Chichester

Progression Day - taster lectures & campus talks

Support for ex-students

Parents & Carers Guide to Higher Education 2019

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Introduction to Higher Education

It may seem as though your young person has only just got here, but it is important for them to start thinking now about what they will do when they leave.

The main options open to students are:

- To carry on in full time education, either at a University for a degree or a Further Education College (e.g. Art Foundation) where a third year of study comes at no cost
- To study a part-time course, e.g. with the Open University or take a Distance Learning Course
- To take up employment (with or without) training
- To begin an apprenticeship
- To take time out from formal learning (perhaps take a gap year)



A number of our student's progress directly to employment with A Level / BTEC qualifications and the College provides advice and support on the range of opportunities that are available to those considering this route. Student can access appointments with the careers team through student services. However, the majority of our students (73% in 2018) go on to study at Higher Education level. This guide has been produced to support that application process.

Before even considering applying to university, it is worthwhile getting your young person to think about the following questions:

- Why do I want to go to university?
- What do I want to study?
- Why this subject and not others?
- Where do I want to live?
- What are the financial commitments?
- Will it be worth it?



Contact us for help

Nikki Fabry

Guidance Manager, Higher and Further Education, Study Abroad

E-mail: n.fabry@bhasvic.ac.uk or HE@bhasvic.ac.uk

<https://www.bhasvic.ac.uk/parents-carers-dashboard/higher-education>

Please do email me with any BHASVIC specific or general questions regarding Higher Education.

We have a dedicated email address for questions, although please be aware every higher education institution is different, and we often can't give specific advice on institutions and courses.

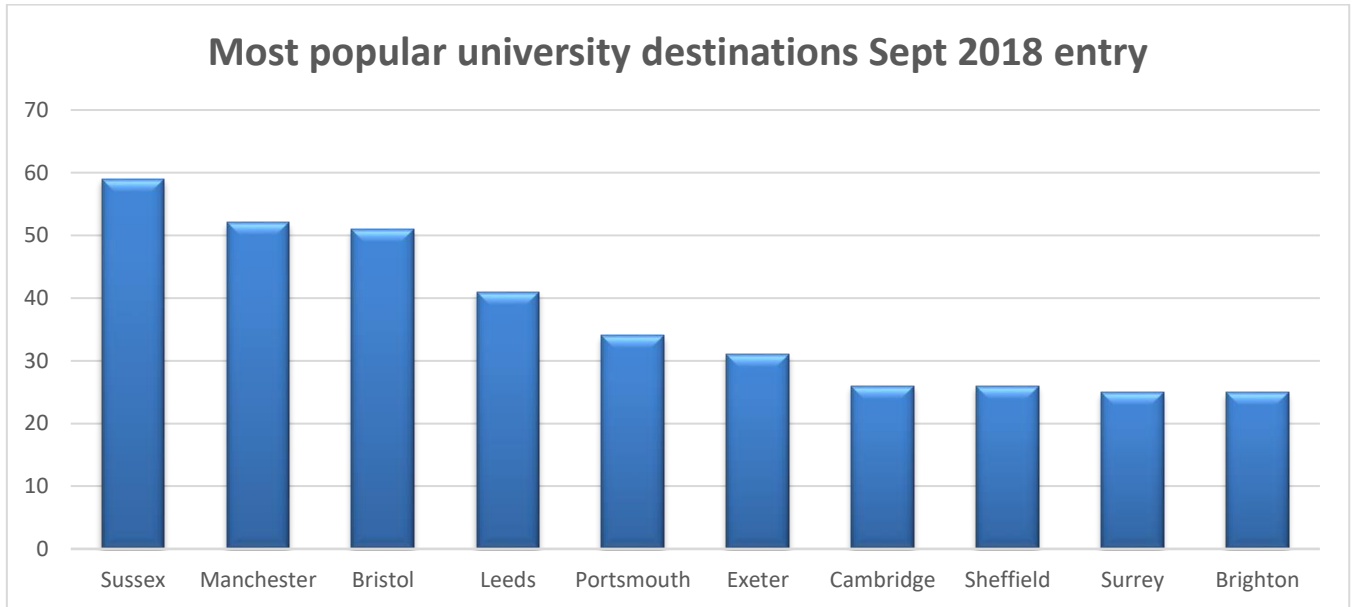
BHASVIC Headline figures 2018 Entry

- BHASVIC processed 1024 University applications last year from current and ex-students – and increase from 893 in 2015
- 97.7% of BHASVIC students applying to University successfully began a university course, compared with a national figure of 74.5% for post-16 education.
- 97.6% of our applicants receive offers compared to 87.1% nationally, showing we are successful in guiding students to make appropriate course choices, usually a mix of aspirational, solid and safe.
- We have seen a large increase in Unconditional offers from 0.9% in 2014 to 12.3% in 2018.
- 82.9% of BHASVIC students accepted their firm offer.
- We continue to be pleased that our percentage of acceptance routes for BAME groups is significantly higher than the national average.
- 53.9% of BHASVIC students accepted a place at a high tariff university (including Oxbridge & Russell Group universities), substantially higher than the national average of 20.2%.
- Number of Oxbridge offers continues to increase year on year with over 120 offers in the past three years – making us the highest non-selective state provider to Cambridge. Our Oxford offers also increase year on year.
- We are also seeing an increase in Medics, Veterinary and Dentistry offers from 17 in 2015 to 22 in 2018 with an offer rate of around 1:2 compared to 1:10 nationally.
- HESA data shows our students are more likely to complete university compared to the sixth form, state and independent sectors
- 70% of our vulnerable and disadvantaged students (low income, young carers, in care, care leavers) go onto university and 60% of our students receiving learning support – figures equal to our main student cohort
- 82% of our students achieve first and 2:1 degrees, 10% higher than the independent sector. For students from low participation wards for all UK universities the figure is 92% compared to 69% for the state sector.
- 14% of our students progress into specialised further education, including very successful art foundation entry

Most popular Universities Sept 2018 entry

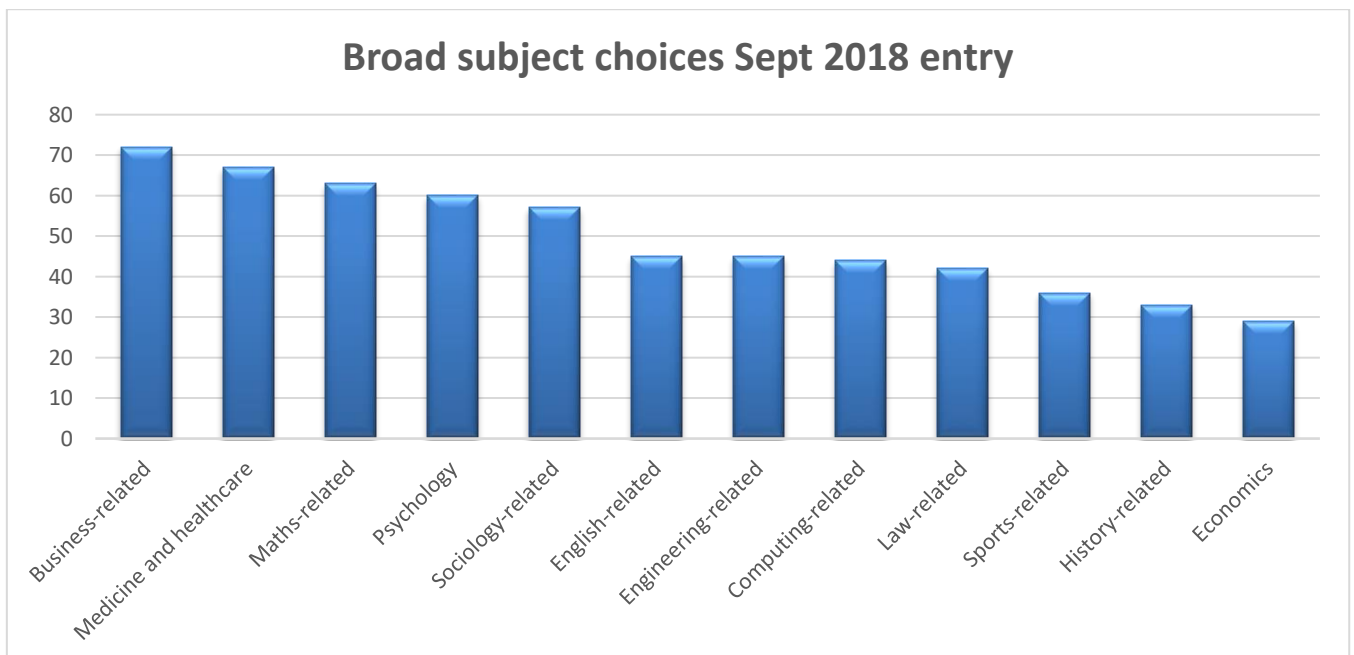
Our students began University life at over 100 different higher education institutions last year.

Alongside more traditional institutions, students began studying degrees at BIMM, Northbrook, Ravensbrook, SOAS, Falmouth, and Glasgow Arts alongside conservatoires for Dance, Music and Drama.



Most popular subject areas Sept 2018 entry

Of note is the diversity of combined degrees studied for example: Mechatronic and Robotic Engineering, Liberal Arts with Study Abroad, Adventure and Outdoor Management, Photojournalism and Documentary Photography



Additional HE Subject specific information

You will find more specific subject information on our Parents and carers HE page <https://www.bhasvic.ac.uk/parents-carers-dashboard/higher-education>

HIGHER EDUCATION SUBJECT POSTERS: Please find a list of helpful resources below relating to Higher Education and Employment in the subject areas we offer:-

Biology	Business	Business & Finance	Chemistry	Classical Civilisation	Computing
Economics	Engineering	English Language	English Literature	Environmental Science	Graphic Design
Geography	Health & Social Care	History	Law	Mathematics	Medical Careers
Philosophy	Photography	Physics	Politics	Psychology	Social Science



Click on the links on the website to open the pdfs & find out more.

Graduate Job Market Information

The UK's top 10 growth industries 2019:

Despite uncertainty around the economy over the past two years and Brexit, there are still industries in the UK which have enjoyed exceptional growth and have big projections in the future. The UK is transforming into more and more of a service economy, meaning we are making less and selling services instead. This is exemplified by the massive growth of newer industries employing more people.

- Financial Technology
- Advertising and Marketing
- Creative Industries
- Augmented and Virtual Reality
- Fintech (Financial Technology the industry has exploded in size in recent years)
- Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

(Source: <https://www.moneymagpie.com/make-money/the-fastest-growing-industries-for-2019>)

For information about the **graduate job market** including salaries <https://www.prospects.ac.uk>

Changes in Higher Education

These are challenging times for those working in Higher Education and there is a lot of media coverage about potential changes, potential impact of Brexit and University funding.

At BHASVIC we keep a close eye on current issues and the effects they might have on our students.

It would be quite a discussion to write about changes that may, (or may not), occur but the following considerations are current live debates:

- Value for money for tuition fees
- Social mobility, particularly at 'top-end' universities
- Decrease in student numbers



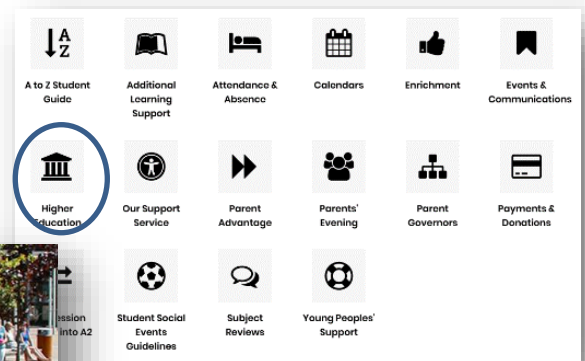
Generally, we can summarise into two broad points;

1. To get maximum benefit from Higher Education, students have to **start researching choices early**, make use of all the sources of help available and take responsibility for making a decision about their future.
2. Interested, supportive and objective parents are invaluable when it comes to helping their young person choose between the bewildering range of courses and options on offer; a choice which can often leave students suffering from 'paralysis of analysis', unable to make a decision.

Help on our website

Please visit our parents and carers dashboard for more information about Higher Education.

<https://www.bhasvic.ac.uk/parents-carers-dashboard>



Welcome to your Parent & Carer dashboard

We recognise the importance of the involvement and support of parents and carers of all of our students throughout their time at the college. The information included within these pages is aimed at keeping you informed about the college and what we expect from students, so that you can participate as effectively as possible in your young persons' education. The Guidance and Student Services Team at BHASVIC are here to support all our students.

University Entry Requirements

Universities usually have a general admissions policy about the average standard they expect their undergraduates to have achieved on entry, but also have subject specific entry requirements and grade requirements.

Subject specific entry requirements

Different subjects will have their own specific entry requirements which will vary from university to university. Information about entry requirements is available in individual university prospectus or on-line.

What are the entry requirements?

In general, the **minimum** entry requirements are:

For Degree Courses

- ✓ 5 subjects passed at GCSE Grade A* – C and 2 subjects at A-level
- Or**
- ✓ A BTEC National Certificate (12 units)

For Higher National Diploma/Foundation Degree

- ✓ 5 subjects at GCSE Grade A* – C and 2 subjects studied at A-level standard with at least one A-level pass
- Or**
- ✓ BTEC National Certificate (12 units)

These are the **minimum entry requirements to Higher Education** and do not necessarily guarantee entry to the course of choice. Individual institutions and indeed, individual departments within those institutions will often set specific subject and grade requirements and/or require further evidence of ability and commitment.

Some university departments set tests for students thinking of applying for their courses. These include a BMAT or UKCAT for students applying to medicine, and an LNAT for students applying to law.

Entry requirements are clearly advertised on university course information webpages.

Entry requirements

Academic qualifications

A-LEVELS
Typical offer: AAB-ABB

ACCESS TO HE DIPLOMA ×
Typical offer: Pass the Access to HE Diploma with 45 level 3 credits at Merit or above, including 24 at Distinction.
Specific entry requirements: The Access programme should be in the humanities or social sciences.

ADVANCED DIPLOMA ×
Typical offer: Pass with at least grade B in the Diploma and A in the Additional and Specialist Learning
Specific entry requirements: The Additional and Specialist Learning must be an A-level (ideally in a humanities or social science subject)

BTEC LEVEL 3 EXTENDED DIPLOMA ×
Typical offer: DDD

UCAS (University Central Admissions Service) Tariffs

Universities may ask an applicant to achieve a certain number of points rather than specific grades.

A level UCAS Tariff

A levels		AS levels (40% A level)		Extended Project (higher tariff than AS)	
A*	56 (equiv D* at BTEC Sub Dip)	A	20	A*	28
A	48	B	16	A	24
B	40	C	12	B	20
C	32 (28 is A* for EPQ)	D	10	C	16
D	24 (20 points is A at AS level)	E	6	D	12
E	16			E	8

BTEC UCAS Tariff

And their equivalents at full A level

BTEC Certificate		BTEC Subsidiary Diploma		BTEC Diploma		BTEC Extended Diploma	
D*	28 (C/D)	D*	56 (A*)	D*D*	112 (A*A*)	D*D*D*	168 (A*A*A*)
D	24	D	48 (A)	D*D	104 (BBD)	D*D*D	160
M	16 (E)	M	32 (C)	DD	96 (AA)	D*DD	152
P	8	P	16 (E)	DM	80	DDD	144
				MM	64	DDM	128 (ABB)
				MP	48 (DD)	DMM	112
				PP	32	MMM	96 (CCC)
						MMP	80 (BB)
						MPP	64
						PPP	48

There are lots of online UCAS calculators – try googling them

There are several UCAS points calculators online. For example

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/entry-requirements/tariff/calculator>

My qualifications

Points 0

Points 0

Points 0

What makes a good University?

Knowing where a university and/or course stands in the pecking order of Higher Education is regarded as a vital piece of information for any prospective student and their parents. Employers discriminate between institutions and between classes of degree; the existence of many diverse institutions and an ever-growing pool of graduates makes a pecking order inevitable.

However the whole Higher Education system has changed dramatically over the past few years; it can be both misleading and dangerous to rely on other people's opinions and experiences (which may be at best subjective and at worst out dated and inaccurate) or on the array of League Tables, unless you really understand the criteria on which these are based.

Your main guideline must be what is right and relevant for your young person; the 'best' course is the one that allows them to develop to their maximum potential.

So whilst you might use university rankings as a starting point, view them in context, not in isolation. They are only one of the information sources available and an excellent ranking for research may not equate to a stimulating and exciting undergraduate course.

1. Some points to bear in mind

1. **Do not assume that the content of courses across Higher Education Institutions is the same;** courses with the same title can vary enormously, reflecting the approach of the university and/or the interests of the department
2. **Some universities will concentrate on developing a reputation in particular subjects; others spread their resources more widely.** It is important to look at the particular departments and subject areas within the institution and not just at the reputation of the university as a whole – the most modest institution may have a centre of excellence and the famous universities may have some mediocre departments. The TEF rankings of bronze, silver and gold provide some indication of the teaching and learning on a course or institution and act a little like OFSTEC rankings for schools.
3. **Do not assume that high entry grade requirements indicate excellence;** they usually reflect the competitiveness of the courses which can be a comment on the popularity of the location of an institution. However, remember that courses with high entry requirements (for whatever reason) get filled by "high calibre" students which, in turn, may indicate a more challenging learning experience.
4. **Do look at the range of courses on offer in a department.** For instance, if a language department in a university only offers French, it is unlikely to be as well-resourced as a university offering a wide range of languages.
5. **Contextual Offers/Financial Incentives/Widening Participation.** Leeds, Surrey, Newcastle are among some universities offering schemes for Widening Participation students aiming to narrow the social mobility gap. It is worth exploring these options and Lynne Trower is our Widening Participation co-ordinator in student services who will have more information. It is also worth checking University incentive schemes for high grades etc.
6. **University Prospectuses:** These are the main way to obtain information about specific courses. Information is also available on the Internet on each university's website which are generally updated more regularly than the annual paper version.

7. **Assessment and Teaching.** Different university courses will have different methods for assessment – for example exams and coursework, and the levels of each to reach the final grade. It is worth exploring with your young person their favoured way– it can make all the different.
- **University Prospectus Finder** Order your **10** free copies sent to your home address. <http://www.prospectusfinder.co.uk>
 - **Other useful websites**
 - www.thestudentroom.co.uk/wiki/Choosing_a_University
 - <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/>
 - www.guardian.co.uk/education/universityguide

2. Open Days

Open Days: If students have not already visited universities of interest, they could attend an open day. Information on when these take place is available in prospectuses, on the website or by phoning universities.

We highly recommend students visit universities before they decide to apply. It is the most effective way of seeing whether a university is right for them.

Students are authorised for any open day absences – they just need to bring confirmation of their visit to reception. Some universities offer funding for open day travel which is worth exploring.

They are generally organised between May-Oct.

We would recommend taking a pen and paper with a list of questions to ask. Also remember to take photos on your mobile for review later. Really useful questions to ask can be found here <http://university.which.co.uk/advice/open-days>

Find out about taster days and summer schools <http://www.unitasterdays.com/>

To find out more about **University Open Days** visit [opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com/) <http://www.opendays.com/>



3. Summary of University considerations

- Been on an open day - was it welcoming?
- Distance from home
- Travel from home?
- Accommodation - halls or private?
- Location - city or rural?
- Cost of tuition / living?
- League tables / student satisfaction?



- ❑ Clubs/enrichment/social life/sports?
- ❑ Facilities?
- ❑ Scholarships and bursaries?
- ❑ First generation scholars' scheme/ WP /student support?
- ❑ Cost of travel and books?

4. Tariff universities and aspirational/solid/safe applications

University providers are grouped in tariffs dependent on UCAS points requested for entry onto courses.

For instance, a higher tariff university may ask for grades AAA. A medium tariff BBB/BBC. A lower tariff CCC or lower.

Each group is comprised of around a third of university providers.

We can see that the most common tariff group that BHASVIC students will apply to are in the higher tariff group which comprises of almost half of the total figures.

We strongly advise students to aim for applying to a mix of providers. Of their 5 UCAS choices (the maximum allowed on their UCAS Apply forms) we suggest aspirational offers (1 or 2) above what they may be aiming for. Solid will be relative to their predicted grades and safe may be slightly lower.

Ideally, all of their 5 choices should be at universities that they would be happy to be accepted to. Encourage your young person to NOT put an insurance down if they wouldn't want to go to that uni.

How to choose the right course

This is crucial for any student, not only because they will be spending three or four years of their life studying the subject, but also because the financial commitment is high.

It is therefore really important for students to do research into the appropriate course. The starting point is to identify courses that they will find interesting, and the following resources are very useful: -

- **UCAS (Universities Central Admissions System) Website:** This contains lists of degree courses within the UCAS system. It can search for subjects, types of courses (e.g. degree or HND), and locations in the UK. The address of the website is www.ucas.com and is available to all students on computers in the Library, computer rooms and the Student Services Centre. The website can be accessed from home
- **College Intranet (Virtual Learning Environment/VLE):** This site provides up to date information on Higher Education applications and links to other sites. Available in and outside the College. The My Future Plans booklet has details of the SACU test (try it t's fun!) and also A level Explorer <https://university.which.co.uk/a-level-explorer> can be useful too.

Having identified potential courses, it is essential that students research the course thoroughly. What A-level grades are needed to be considered for the course? Are certain A levels required to do the degree course? Does the course involve work placements or a year abroad?

Students need to take advantage of the following if they want to be well informed about their course:

- **Degree Course Offers**, written by Brian Heap, gives a comprehensive guide on entry to UK universities and colleges. It is available in the Student Services Centre and is exceptionally helpful. Students are also able to access this online via the VLE.
- **League Tables** are available online from a number of sources but do need careful use.



If students are still confused, they can get further advice and help from their tutor, teachers or by going to the Student Services Centre.

Unistats is a very good source of information and useful for comparing courses. <http://www.unistats.co.uk/>

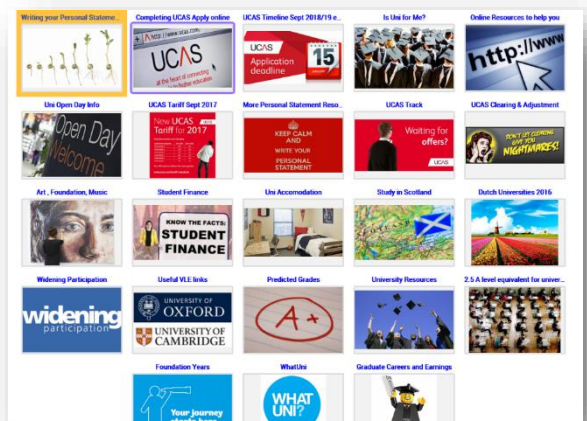
1. Summary of course considerations

- What grades do you need?
- Assessment/exams/coursework
- lecture time/independent study
- Professional qualifications?
- Gender split/mature students?
- Combination of courses?
- Combination of subjects?
- Work experience needed?
- Work placements offered?
- Study abroad?
- Interview or portfolio needed?
- Accept resits?
- Grades or tariffs?
- Foundation year available?
- How many students receive offers?
- What kind of graduate destinations are there?
- Tuition fees?



Please encourage your young person to access the college intranet (VLE).

The University page has plenty of information and links.



How BHASVIC helps students – Our UCAS timeline 2018/20

The following calendar gives you some idea of how we support students at BHASVIC in deciding whether to apply for higher education and if they do decide to apply, how to select their university and relevant course, and how to complete the application process.

A1 Year (Autumn 2018)

- **Careers staff available** – students encouraged to book appointments with our careers staff
- **How parents/carers can support:** Talk to students about their BHASVIC course choices, future plans.

A1 Year (Spring 2019)

- **My Future Plans** - Tutor sessions considering pathways – higher education, apprenticeships
- **Futures Fair** – wide range of exhibitors from all sectors
- **A1-A2 Transfer** - Students make their second year course choices
- **Higher Education/Specialist evenings** for parents/carers – parents evenings
- **Careers staff available** – students encouraged to book appointments with our careers staff
- **How parents/carers can support:** HE evening for parents/carers, talk to students about their BHASVIC course choices, future plans.

A1 Year (Summer 2019)

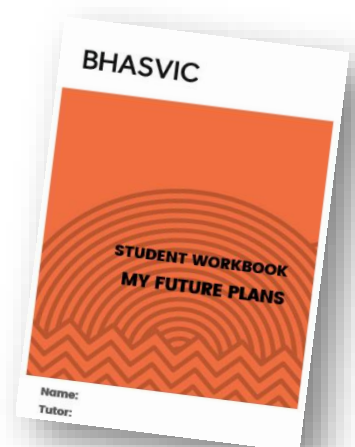
- **Research skills** – 4/5 Tutor sessions dedicated to considering future pathways
- **Open days** – Students begin to attend open days at universities they may be interested in
- **Careers Enrichment Day** – Students must attend careers sessions of their choice
- **Careers staff available** – students encouraged to book appointments with our careers staff
- **Personal Statements** – Students introduced to personal statements – an important aspect of their applications
- **Help me write your reference** – Students give information to tutors to help them write individual references
- **Subject references** – drafts are completed, prior to September final updates. Subject references sent home to parents / carers at the end of term
- **Tutor references** – drafts are completed, prior to September final updates.
- **Preparation work for Personal Statements** completed in the autumn term
- **Summer schools and taster days** – in preparation for applying to uni
- **How parents/carers can support:** Support students in researching options. Support and encourage students to attend university open days. Discuss choices and encourage matching preferred choices with realistic predicted grades. Home will receive subject references.
- **Open Days:** There is a lot of useful info online. Students will be spending a lot of time and money at University and we strongly suggest visiting universities to check they are right for them. Prime times are June/July and September/October. Students need to plan and book online in advance. We will authorise absences on receipt of evidence (emails) to reception.
- **Open Days:** <http://www.opendays.com/>
- **UCAS Open Days search tool:** <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/events-and-open-days>
- **Get the best out of Open days:** <http://university.which.co.uk/advice/open-days/how-to-get-the-most-out-of-university-open-days>

A2 Year (Autumn 2019)

- **College Internal Deadline for Oxbridge / Medics** 15th September 2018
- **College Internal Deadline for all guaranteed UCAS applications** to book UCAS Apply session Friday 23rd November 2018
- **Personal Statements** – focus in tutor on writing Personal Statements (5/6 sessions) and support given by tutors on draft statements to improve quality. Additional support offered to WP students.
- **UCAS Apply Sessions** – BHASVIC runs regular sessions (every lunchtime through mid-October to end of November) where Guidance managers will check students online applications. Students MUST attend a session for their application to progress
- **References and Personal Statements** reviewed in tutor sessions
- **How parents/carers can support:** Continue to support researching options. Open days will still be available early in the autumn term. Read through personal statements. Encourage to be realistic about choices reflective of predicted grades. Remind students to check their emails.
- **Ensure deadlines are met:** This is crucial. Our internal deadline for applications guaranteed for submission in time for the national UCAS deadline on 15th January is Friday 29th November. It of our general office staff (and university staff) will be term time only so do not work over Christmas. If there is an error on a student's Apply form we will need to contact the student to ask them to correct the information. If students do not check their emails regularly this becomes problematic.
- **Aspirational/Solid/Safe:** We encourage students to make a mix of applications. Aspirational choices will be slightly above predicted grades, solid will predict their grades and safe may well be slightly under. This will ensure they are able to make effective Firm and Insurance Offers when universities make offers later on.
- **Firm/Insurance offers:** There is lots of really good information online regarding offers. A good place to start is <http://university.which.co.uk/advice/ucas-application/firm-and-insurance-choice-replying-to-university-offers>
- **Predicted Grades**
- **For more information** regarding our processes on predicting student grades please see the notes in the separate link on this page

A2 Year (Spring 2020)

- **FINAL UCAS Application deadline 15th January 2020** (Internal deadline to book UCAS Apply session 29th November 2019)
- **Tutor – University preparation** - accommodation / Student Finance / Independent Living
- **1st May** – Deadline for offers and replies otherwise they disappear
- **Student Finance Applications**
- **How parents/carers can support:** Remind students to check their emails and UCAS track. Students need to register for student finance around May-time. They will need their NI number. If they delay their finance maybe delayed, including their maintenance loans for September.
- Student Finance Applications Usually open for registration in Spring. Students must register before the deadline (please check – Usually sometime in May). They will confirm after results day when accepting their offers.



A2 Year (Summer 2020)

- **Deadline for University replies and offers** – check UCAS website
- **Clearing and UCAS Extra** opens for late applications.
- **Study leave and revision!**
- **How parents/carers can support:** Support students with revision. Planning for University – discuss accommodation and finance. Encourage learning skills of Independent Living including budgeting, basic cooking skills etc.

A2 Year (Results day)

- **Mid-August 2020** – BHASVIC Helpdesk opens (until end of August)
- **UCAS Adjustment opens**
- **UCAS Apply 31st August** Offer conditions must be met & Adjustment ends
- **How parents/carers can support:** Support students with acceptances/offers/clearing. Students may contact universities through clearing or adjustment (when grades are better than expected).



Personal Statements

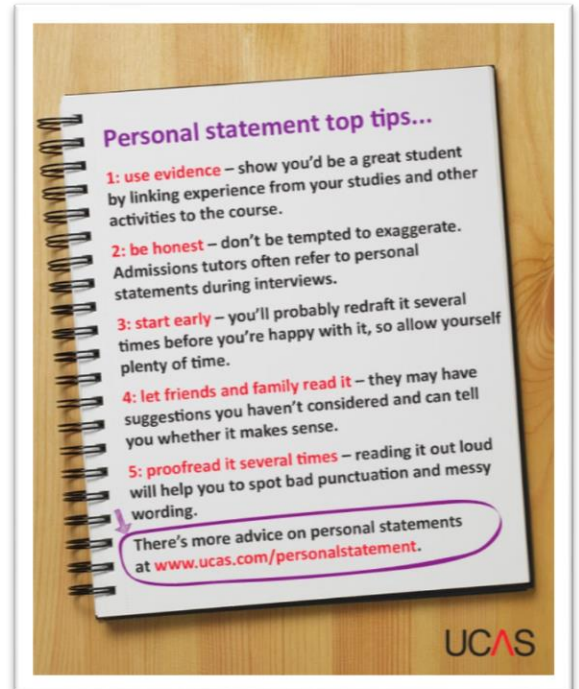
The UCAS personal statement is a crucial part of the university application process. It's also something that you can get involved in by offering encouragement, feedback and a fresh pair of eyes.

The personal statement covers the following main areas:

- Reasons for choosing the degree
- School/college experience
- How A levels contribute to degree choice
- Main areas of interest and abilities gained whilst studying for A level

Relevant work placements especially if thinking of applying for teaching, medicine or law

- Interests and experience outside of College
- Sporting involvements
- Work experience
- If student is taking a gap year, what they intend to do during this year



Specialist tutors are available to help refine the personal statement. However, the main responsibility for this lies with the student. It is important to know that students' personal statements are compared against a library of personal statements to identify students who may have used the internet to buy or copy personal statements. UCAS will inform the university if this is the case.

We spend a large amount of the autumn term supporting students writing their personal statements, help from home would be most welcome.

Getting started

This is often the hardest part, so get it down on paper together any way you can. Try using mind-maps, spider diagrams, bullet point notes, or just scribble things down in a long stream of consciousness, which your young person can edit later.

Encouragement

It's up to your young person to get their personal statement written, but some positive encouragement will help them stay motivated.

Proofreading

Help your son or daughter pay attention to the little things that make a big difference. Check for spelling and
Some useful final checks

- ❑ **Relevance to the course:** Your young person's suitability to the course should form the backbone of their personal statement, so ensure they've gathered examples from their experience that specifically relate to course criteria
- ❑ **Imagine you're the admissions tutor:** Does it read well and make sense, does your son or daughter's true personality come through – and the ultimate test: would you want this student in your seminar group?
- ❑ **Language and tone:** If your young person wouldn't say something in a day-to-day discussion, don't let it slip into their statement.
- ❑ **Encourage** them to steer clear of overblown phrases such as grammar – and avoid txtspk!
- ❑ Break up the text and use paragraphs
- ❑ Avoid using 'I' at the start of every sentence.

Make sure they aren't trying to cram in every skill and experience they've built up – remember that less is more.

The little things....

Help your son or daughter pay attention to the little things that make a big difference. Check for spelling and grammar.

Some useful final checks

This is one of the most important parts of writing a good personal statement. If your young person can reflect critically on their experience, achievements and knowledge, they will get the attention of admissions tutors.

For example:

- how did they develop the customer care skills that made them employee of the month?
- how has basketball improved their teamwork, leadership or communication skills?
- what is it that they admire about Cervantes' novels or Katherine Dunham's choreography?

With each example they use to demonstrate their experience, apply the 'ABC' test:

- **Action:** explaining what they have done, achieved, read or experienced
- **Benefit:** reflecting on what they have learned or gained from it
- **Course relevance:** why does this make them a good applicant for their chosen course?

Policy on Students Predicted Grades

What are they?

A UCAS Predicted Grade is an honest, professional judgement provided by the College about the most likely final grade the student will achieve in the qualification on completion of the subject. A UCAS Predicted Grade is a grade provided in a student's College reference. These grades are most commonly used for a student's UCAS application, but they can also be used by the College for other student application processes and reference requests. The College takes into account all available and relevant information but the prediction itself is not negotiable.

When and where are UCAS Predicted Grades used?

UCAS Predicted Grades are generated for A2 students in the first two weeks of September by teaching staff. The grades are added to the student reference, drafted in the second half of the summer term in the student's A1 year. The written reference is updated and predicted grade added after the release of A1 grades (for example, official exam results and AS grades, progressions and resit exam results, summative end of year assessments, key formal assessments throughout the year, coursework and mock exam results, etc).

How are predictions made?

A-level predicted grades are generally based on performance at A1 level and/or formal assessments within the subject (coursework, progression exams, etc). These form the basis of accurate and evidential predictions. Predictions for BTECs and other vocational subjects are similarly based on formal assessments of work completed to date, as are predictions for one-year subjects. It is worth remembering universities can see unit grades and Universal Mark Scheme (UMS) scores, so our predictions **have** to be in line with these unless there is a good reason for them not to be. Indeed, the UCAS guidelines for advisors states that:

Over-predicting grades can be counter-productive because many universities and colleges monitor the accuracy of schools' and colleges' predictions.

At the teacher's discretion a UCAS predicted grade can be varied from A1 grades to take account of firm evidence that the student is likely to do better. There is a presumption that predictions will not be lower than A1 assessments and results, and certainly not without consulting the Head of Department and the student's Guidance Manager.

Re-sits: If a student is re-sitting an exam for a subject they should indicate this via their UCAS Application Form. Re-sits alone are not a basis on which a teacher should raise a predicted grade - there should be clear evidence that:

1. The student has considered the content of the unit they sat and are re-sitting and can demonstrate to the teacher that they know and understand where they need to focus and which aspects of the unit they can improve;
2. They have a clear strategy for gaining this improvement and can communicate this to their teacher;
3. The student's learning and maturity has improved through A2 work seen.

If a teacher is changing a grade to one or two grades above an A1 grade, it is essential an explanation provided in the student's reference from that teacher/ subject, otherwise a University is likely to simply interpret this as an over-estimation and this will weaken the status of predicted grades provided by other subjects in the student's reference. Further variation (for example, in the case of exceptional personal circumstances for an individual, unusual outcomes or something which affected a whole class or cohort, etc.) should be overseen by the Head of Department to ensure consistency and fairness.

Queries regarding UCAS Predicted Grades

Students are asked in the first instance to contact their subject teacher to provide advice and guidance with regard to their predicted grades. We would hope that students will understand how the grade has been generated and its relationship to working assessment grades.

Communication to students

Students will be given an introduction to predicted grades and how they are generated in A1 tutorial during the first half of the Spring Term, when they are exploring their progression plans. This comes late enough for A1 students to put the information into context, but early enough so that they can act on it in support of their ambitions. In the A2 year, students will be able to see their predicted grades as part of the UCAS Application process.

Communication to parents/ carers

Parents/ carers are sent a copy of the draft reference at the end of the A1 year; in 2019 we plan to ensure parents are aware of students predicted grades.



Finance

Firstly, you don't have to pay your young person's tuition fees upfront...

So you can start breathing normally again!

Your young person can apply for a tuition fee loan to take care of this. So they can head off to university, without the worry of paying this back until after they've graduated.

Breakdown of your young person's student loan

There are two types of student loan available: the tuition fee loan we mentioned above, and a maintenance loan. Both must be paid back at a later date.

The maintenance loan is there to help with living costs, such as accommodation, food, travel, going out etc. The amount your young person is eligible to borrow in maintenance loans depends on several factors, including where they will be studying and your family's household income.

There is much help and support online regarding student finance.

Your young person will be expected to register in March and complete the application in May of the year they wish to apply. Any later could delay their application.

Useful websites include:

Student Loans Company www.slc.co.uk

UCAS www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/finance-and-support

Student Finance England www.sfcotland.slc.co.uk

Student Finance www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Money Saving Expert <http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/students/student-loans-tuition-fees-changes>

Check out **scholarships available** <http://www.thescholarshipshub.org.uk/>

Accommodation

University institutions provide information about accommodation.

There is usually information available on their websites and more information given on open days.

Accommodation is often the largest cost associated with attending University and whilst many halls of residence and first year accommodation is of reasonably similar cost care should be taken to assess the cost of private accommodation which is usually accessed in the second and subsequent years of degree study.



Progression / Oxbridge / Medics / Visual Arts / Conservatoires

We have a dedicated A2 tutorial programme for Employment and Enterprise routes (including apprenticeships), Oxbridge and Medics (including dentistry and veterinary science), Visual Arts students applying to Art Foundation courses and will also support applications to Conservatoires.

Please note that if your young person falls into one of these categories they will have been given guidance and support during tutorial to ensure that they receive tutorial support through the second year for their chosen routes.

There is a specialist information evening to explain more in May which will be clearly advertised on our college website.



Ex-students

We provide a similar service for ex-students applying after a gap year as we do to current students studying at BHASVIC. There is extensive

instructions on how to apply through college on the college website. If students email into college they will be passed to both general Office and a Guidance manager who will be happy to read and check personal statements, check and update their references and check their UCAS Apply forms. Students can either pop into college or liaise via email.

<https://www.bhasvic.ac.uk/student-dashboard>

Absence	+
Student References	+
UCAS for Ex Students	-

ADVICE FOR BHASVIC EX-STUDENTS ON COMPLETING THEIR UCAS APPLICATIONS

If you are applying through Clearing for 2018 entry, follow the below instructions, but use the buzzword: bhasvic18

Step 1: How to apply 2019

Go to the 'UCAS Apply' website: <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/register>

Checklist for students

1. A level / BTEC results

We want to help students avoid disappointment by making sure they apply for suitable courses where they have realistic chance of being offered a place. Your young person should contact their teachers/tutor to find out their predicted grades to aid their decision. The following checklist should help students in making their choice:

- Am I likely to come near the grades/points they are asking for?
- Do I meet the specific subject requirements for the course?

2. The course

- Does the course contain those aspects of the subject I definitely want to study and avoid those I do not want? Courses with the same course title at different universities often have very different course contents.
- Is the course taught and assessed in a way which suits me? Do I prefer lots of contact with the lecturers, or being left largely to my own devices? Do I prefer more course work assessment to almost total dependence on written examination assessment?
- What is the length of the course?
- How flexible is the course and how much choice do I have in what I study?
- Is there an opportunity for work placement as part of the course? If there is, will I have to find the placement myself or will the university find it?
- If I want sponsorship, can I get help from the university?
- Does the course lead to any professional qualifications which are recognised by the relevant professional bodies?
- What are the job prospects with a degree from this university?
- If I want to learn a foreign language, do I have the opportunity?
- Are there opportunities to study part of the course abroad?

3. The University environment

- Do I want to be in a city, on the outskirts of a town or in the countryside?
- Do I require certain facilities such as a cinema, a theatre, an art gallery, a concert hall etc. to be nearby?
- How far is the university from my home? I'll need to get home sometimes for family events such as birthdays.
- How easy is it to get to the university by road or by public transport?



4. Accommodation

- ❑ Most universities guarantee first year accommodation but what do they mean by University accommodation and where exactly is it?
- ❑ If the accommodation is some way from the academic centre, how do I travel, how long does it take and how much does it cost?
- ❑ What help is there with accommodation after the first year?
- ❑ What form does the accommodation take? It can be in the 'in hall' system where meals are provided but will I find this restricting? If it is self-catering, will I starve?
- ❑ Will I have to share accommodation?
- ❑ What about cooking and laundry facilities?

5. Costs

- ❑ What is the cost of accommodation and what does it include? Do not assume that it is cheap to live in the North and expensive in the South.
- ❑ Will I be able to get a Saturday job if I want one to help with the finances?
- ❑ How much is it going to cost me to travel home?
- ❑ What are costs like in the Students' Union?
- ❑ What bursaries does the university offer?

6. Leisure

- ❑ If I'm interested in certain sports, what facilities does the university offer and are they within walking distance or ten miles away?
- ❑ Do I need to be near the sea or close to mountains to pursue my particular sporting interests?
- ❑ If I'm interested in music, can I join the orchestra or sing in the choir without being a music student?
- ❑ Are there opportunities to take up a new interest or sport and receive suitable coaching?
- ❑ If I'm interested in radio broadcasting or journalism, will I be able to work on the student radio or magazine?

7. Conclusion

Your young person needs to have read the prospectus carefully and talked to some students if they are going to find all the answers. Remember also that their teachers and specialist tutors are there to help them.

Useful Guide

We recommend this guide as a useful first point of call.
<http://university.which.co.uk/advice/advice-for-parents>



Glossary – some definitions

Institutions

- ❑ **Higher Education Course** at an institution, which leads to a post advanced course qualification (E.g. Degree, Foundation Degree, Diploma in Higher Education, etc.)
- ❑ **University** Institution which provides primarily academic courses leading to degrees and in some cases other Higher Education qualifications (E.g. HND)
- ❑ **Oxbridge** The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge
- ❑ **Colleges and Institutes of Higher Education** A variety of institutions, which offer degrees validated by a local university.
- ❑ **Campus University** Style of more modern university design, where the university is situated on a green field site outside a city, has large grounds with all buildings, accommodation, lecture rooms, laboratories, Union buildings together (Surrey and Sussex are examples).
- ❑ **Collegiate University** A large traditional university comprising a group of colleges each of which has its own character and teaching staff (E.g. Oxford, Cambridge, Durham and York).
- ❑ **College of Technology/Technical College** Further Education institutions providing mostly vocational courses for full and part-time students for diploma or other certificated qualification. Some colleges also provide degree courses validated by a local university.
- ❑ **Russell Group** This is an association of 20 major research-intensive universities of the UK. These universities are Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Imperial College, King's College, Leeds, Liverpool, LSE, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Queen's (Belfast), Oxford, Sheffield, Southampton, UCL, Warwick.



Degree Structure

- ❑ **Single** One subject.
- ❑ **Joint** Two subjects studied equally.
- ❑ **Combined** Two or three subjects studied in varying proportions.
- ❑ **Foundation/Access/Conversion Course** One year course for students lacking appropriate A-level qualifications (does not necessarily guarantee progression to degree study).
- ❑ **Foundation Degree** These degrees were introduced in 2001 and are learning degrees delivered by further education colleges, universities and other training institutions working in partnership. Students will often study at a further or higher education college, but their degree will be validated by a university.
- ❑ **Modular** Self-contained units, minimum number required to be studied, mix and match.
- ❑ **Vocational** Directly linked to a career.
- ❑ **Sandwich** Practical experience included.
- ❑ **Sponsorship** Schemes by which some industrial and professional organisations find financial assistance for some courses. Competitive. May involve a commitment to working for the organisation
- ❑ **International element** Chance to study and work abroad.

Degrees studied in Scotland tend to be more modular and main subjects are not studied until the second year. <http://www.studyinScotland.org/find-a-university/>



UCAS

- ❑ **Adjustment:** An acceptance route where applicants who have met and exceeded the conditions of their firm choice choose to take up an alternative offer.
- ❑ **Clearing:** An acceptance route available late in the application cycle.
- ❑ **Conditional firm:** An offer made by a provider dependent on achieving specified conditions which has been accepted by the applicant as their first choice.
- ❑ **Conditional offer:** Offer made by provider depend on meeting specified conditions which may include academic and/or non-academic conditions.
- ❑ **Deferred Entry/Gap Year:** 'A year off'. Application made in the coming academic year, but for entry in 2020.
- ❑ **Firm choice:** An offer made by a provider confirmed by the applicant as their first choice. These can be either conditional (dependent on achieving specified conditions) or unconditional (applicant has met specified conditions and assumed to be accepted or placed at the provider).
- ❑ **Insurance choice:** An offer made by a provider which has been confirmed by the applicant as their second choice, in case the conditions of the firm choice are not met. These can be either conditional (dependent specified requirements) or unconditional (no further requirements met).
- ❑ **Main scheme:** The main UCAS application scheme through which up to five providers/courses can be applied to. This opens in September and closes to new applications on 30 June the following year.
- ❑ **Unconditional offer:** Offer made by provider when it is satisfied that the applicant has met specific conditions.
- ❑ **UCAS:** Universities Central Admissions System (based in Cheltenham). Central body which administers all university and most colleges of higher education applications.
- ❑ **UCAS Apply:** On-line application for applying for higher education courses.
- ❑ **UCAS Extra:** Allows students who have received no offers or who have declined all offers to make additional choices in March
- ❑ **UCAS Track:** A system where applicants can track the progress of their applications online, reply to offers, and make certain amendments, e.g. change of email address.
- ❑ **Unconditional offer:** Offer made by provider when it is satisfied that the applicant has met specific conditions.

BHASVIC University Application Timeline

Autumn Term 2018	Careers staff available
Spring Term 2019	My Future Plans - Research skills / University focus in tutor Futures Fair A1-A2 Transfer Higher Education/Specialist evenings for parents/carers Careers staff available
Summer Term 2019	Open days Progression Day / Careers Enrichment Day Careers staff available Intro to Personal Statements Help me write your reference
Autumn Term 2019	UCAS Apply – applications can be submitted 6th September College Internal Deadline for Oxbridge / Medics 27th September FINAL UCAS deadline for Oxbridge Medics deadline 15th October College Internal Deadline for guaranteed UCAS applications Friday 29th November References and Personal Statements reviewed in tutor / Apply sessions
Spring Term 2020	FINAL UCAS Application deadline 15th January Focus in tutor on accommodation / Finance / Independent Living UCAS Extra opens 25th February FINAL UCAS Application deadline for art / design foundation courses 24th March (check individual institutions) Offers and replies
Summer Term 2020	Deadline for University replies and offers UCAS Apply - if you receive all decisions by 31st March, reply by 4th May UCAS Apply - 5th May UCAS Apply - If you receive all decisions by 5th May, reply by 8th June UCAS Clearing - Applications received after 30th June into Clearing UCAS Clearing opens – 5th July
Results Day 2020	August (date TBC) – BHASVIC Helpdesk opens UCAS Adjustment opens