

BHASVIC

Clearing Tips 2017

If you do not get the grades needed for your firm or insurance choices, you still have a good chance of gaining a place on a degree course you love if you want to. In 2016, a record 33,000 students (around 10% of all students) found university places through clearing according to the admissions service UCAS. Follow the steps below to help you.

1. Find out if you really don't have an offer from your firm or insurance choice.

Log in to TRACK on the UCAS website. If your offer status has been changed to UNCONDITIONAL you are in! **You may be given a change of course, date of entry or point of entry offer on TRACK (which you do not have to accept). Please make sure you read what the university is offering you before you accept it as it may be different from when you first applied.** If you have been unsuccessful, a button reading 'Add a Clearing Choice' will appear on the track page. You are eligible for clearing but sometimes, even if you missed your offer by only a few points or a couple of grades, there are still unfilled places on the course and the university admissions team might still allow you to enrol. **First of all, make sure you give the university a call (see step 5).** If the university is still not able to offer you a place, you will need to following the clearing steps below

2. Don't panic - make an informed decision - Act quickly but not in panic. You will be in a competitive situation but want to avoid rash decisions. Talk to friends, family, college staff to help you.

3. Make your shortlist Make your shortlist of universities/courses and apply as soon as possible. Making a list of around 5 gives you a better chance of finding a clearing place. You may want to use the following to research clearing vacancies and information

- **www.ucas.com/search** has up-to-date vacancies as well as links to university sites.
- **University websites** – for courses available and clearing contact numbers.
- **Student Room Clearing Contacts Directory 2017**
<https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/content.php?r=17285-clearing-contacts-directory>

Consider important factors such as the course content, the university's location, student satisfaction, work experience opportunities and accommodation policies for Clearing applicants.

Try to put possible clearing choices in order of preference. For Clearing, you apply to one university at a time through TRACK, but can contact as many universities as you want to. Once you have a list of courses, make a priority list and write down bullet points about each course.

Talk through all the pros and cons with someone else as this will help you clarify which ones are best for you. You will need to talk to the university anyway and so it is good practice for you to speak with a friend, parent, brother or sister etc. There is also a **UCAS clearing helpline: 03714680468** and an **Exams results helpline: 08081008000.**

4. Have all your information ready – you may need:

- Your UCAS Personal ID and Clearing number
- Details of your qualifications (including A-level, AS-level, GCSE and equivalent results)
- Login details for UCAS Track
- Your Personal Statement you submitted to remind you of your aims and goals.
- Any information on the course/university (course codes)
- Prepared responses to possible questions and some questions to ask.
- Other activities or information such as aspects of your CV, Widening Participation activities completed or work experience that you have done.
- Notepad to record notes from the conversation (separate page for each choice to keep things organised).

5. Call the universities - A call to a university is like a job interview - it's your chance to make a great impression by showing your suitability and enthusiasm for the course. Prepare yourself before you ring the university:

- Call from a quiet and comfortable place where you have phone and internet access. If you are feeling upset, it may be best to call once you give yourself time to calm down and be ready to get that university place.
- **Call yourself** - don't ask a parent, teacher or friend to call for you.
- Have an idea of what to say to sell yourself. Re-read your personal statement to remind yourself of your qualities and experience and why you're perfect for the course.
- Think about useful questions you might want answered such as:
 - **how long the university offer is valid for and ask if you can have some more time to think it through (some universities ask for a decision by a certain deadline)**
 - **what accommodation you're entitled to**
 - **bursaries you could apply for**
 - **open day dates**
 - **take down contact details, and the name of the person you are speaking to, in case you get cut off/to get back in touch**
- Make a few notes after each call, so you don't get confused about what is available where and end up ringing the same place twice.
- If you receive a verbal offer, ask for written confirmation via email and check how long the offer stands for. Only confirm this by phone if you are very certain you want the place.

6. Be persistent! If the first few universities you call reject you, stay positive and keep calling. If your first choice says no, give them another call later in the day as entry requirements can change and you may get offered a place.

7. Enter your Clearing choice on UCAS Track within the specified time

- Consider the offers you have been made and decide which is the best option for you.
- Most universities will give you a window during which their offer is valid, usually 12-48 hours; make sure you enter your Clearing choice before this time is up.
- You can only enter one Clearing choice at a time - only enter a course you're sure you want to accept.
- Only add a Clearing Choice once you've had confirmation from the university that they are happy to offer you a place.
- **The UCAS system does not permit applicants to refer themselves to a Clearing choice until 15:00 on Thursday 17 August.**
- To add your choice, click 'Add a clearing choice' and fill in the details. Once entered onto TRACK, this counts as you definitely accepting the offer so if the university confirms it, it will show as an acceptance on the choices page of TRACK and UCAS will send you a confirmation letter. If the university/college doesn't confirm your place, you will be able to add another.

8. Try to visit the university you are considering - Many institutions offer Open Days soon after A level results are published. If you are seriously thinking of accepting an offer through Clearing, it is recommended that you attend one of these. However, bear in mind that institutions may also give you a deadline for replying to their offer and each institution sets their own deadline.

9. Relax - The vast majority of students, whatever their final choice of course or university, say that their experience at university was a worthwhile and enjoyable one. You may need to apply for accommodation quickly and change the details of the university on any Student Finance Application.

10. Alternatives to Clearing (Which? University)

- **Reapply next year** for slightly different courses or universities with your existing grades. Plan your gap year to get the most out of it.
- **Consider alternatives such as an Apprenticeship** – explore opportunities for employment / training in a range of different sectors through <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship> and grab a copy of **Career information for Students and Parents from room S201.**
- **The world of work** – brush up your CV, check out job ads or go to recruitment agencies for either short or long term employment.