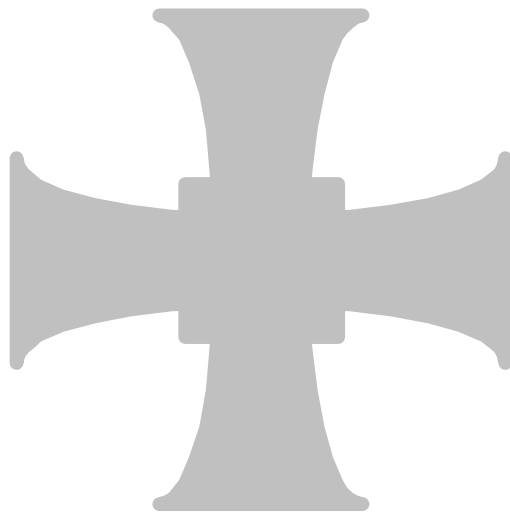
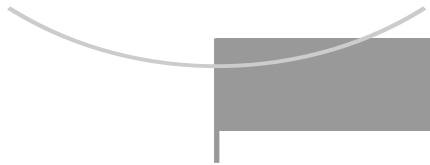




Trinity Sixth Form Centre



Handy Student Guide for University Applications

**Welcome to the Trinity Sixth Form Centre
Handy Student Guide for University
Applications**

We hope that you find this booklet useful, as it guides you through the process of applying to university through the UCAS system. Mr Runciman, Mrs Medley, Mrs Fleming and Mrs Ogilvie are also available to answer any questions you may have.

You will find useful dates and a calendar of events that you need to work with, from starting to apply right through to setting off for university next year. It comes round fast!

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Applying Through UCAS @ www.ucas.ac.uk

All applications for university have to go through the online UCAS system.

Before you do this, you need to thoroughly research the universities and courses you are interested in. On your UCAS application you can apply for **FIVE** courses, although there are some exceptions:

- Medicine, Veterinary and Dentistry (maximum of four only) plus one different subject.
- Oxford/Cambridge - you can only apply to one college at one, not both, universities. You can apply to four other universities.

Once you have decided on course(s) and universities and are ready to apply, log on!

Online - first few steps

You only have to register once, and through the school, not as an individual. This means that the Sixth Form team can access and check your application as you go through the application process and attach references. Once you have finished your part, it often takes two or more weeks to check it and add the school reference. Don't forget to make a note of your username and password!

The buzzword for the school is:

bejustandfearnot13

There are five sections of the UCAS online form to complete:

1. About You
 2. Courses
 3. Education
 4. Employment
 5. Personal Statement
-

Getting It Right First Time

Take your time on each section, making sure all information is correct, and that you use punctuation and capital letters as appropriate. Remember, this form is your first contact with each university you are applying to, so set the standard high and make a good first impression.

- Make sure you enter all your GCSE's with the correct exam board, year and grade.
 - GCSE Double Awards and Short Courses have to be entered separately - use the pull down menu on the Education page.
 - Remember to include **ANY** GCSE's you may have taken earlier.
 - Enter **ALL** secondary schools attended and include all relevant dates (leaving date for Trinity will be 06/2013).
 - Enter the information for all AS grades achieved and pending grades for all A2 subjects. Remember to input the correct exam board and dates.
 - If you are applying for a loan, the Fee Code is '02 LEA', unless you are applying to do an NHS funded course, or live in Scotland.
-

Entrance Exams

Biomedical Admissions Test (BMAT)

You may need to do this test if you apply for certain medicine, veterinary medicine and related courses at certain universities. The standard entry closing date is Monday 1 October 2012, with the test date of Wednesday 7 November 2012, and results issued on Wednesday 21 November 2012. This test can be taken in school and lasts for two hours and costs £42.50, although a late entry fee will apply. Email bmata-info@cambridgeassessment.org.uk for more details.

UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT)

You may need to do this test if you apply to study medicine or dentistry at certain universities. You can register to take the test from Tuesday 1 May 2012 until Friday 21 September 2012 and it has to be taken by Friday 5 October 2012. The test has to be taken at an external examination centre (Pearson Professional Centre, Carlisle). The cost of the test varies depending on when you sit it - for example it is £65 if you sit the test between Tuesday 3 July and Friday 31 August 2012 or £80 if you sit the test between Saturday 1 September and Friday 5 October 2012. For more information visit www.ukcat.ac.uk.

Entrance Exams, continued

Modern and Medieval Languages (MML)

A 45 minute written test which is required by Cambridge University. This will take place whilst being interviewed at Cambridge. For more information visit www.mml.cam.ac.uk

Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) - Oxford

The TSA (University of Oxford) is a pre-interview admissions test for applicants to undergraduate courses in PPE, E&M, EP* and Psychology and Philosophy at the University of Oxford. The test will be sat in school on Wednesday 7 November 2012. For more information visit www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/adt/tsaoxford

- PPE - Philosophy, Politics and Economics, E&M - Economics and Management, EP - Experimental Psychology.

Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) - Cambridge

A 90 minute multiple choice test for certain courses at certain colleges. This test will be taken during the Cambridge interview.

Entrance Exams, continued

Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) - UCL

A 90 minute multiple choice test for students applying for European, Social and Political Studies. Tests will take place on the assessment days (usually in December to March).

History Aptitude Test (HAT)

This is for **ALL** candidates applying to Oxford for History or any of its joint classes. Registration opens on Saturday 1 September 2012 and closes on Monday 15 October 2012. The test will be sat in school and lasts for two hours. The test date is Wednesday 7 November 2012. For more information visit www.history.ox.ac.uk

National Admissions Test for Law (LNAT)

A two hour test in two parts (multiple choice and essay), which is needed for certain universities and courses. The test has to be taken at an external examination centre (Pearson Professional Centre, Carlisle). Registration opens on Wednesday 1 August 2012, with tests beginning on Saturday 1 September 2012. Oxford applicants must have booked their test by Friday 5 October 2012 and sat it by Saturday 20 October 2012. All other university applicants have to have sat the test by Tuesday 15 January 2012. The cost of this test is £50. For more information visit www.lnat.ac.uk

Entrance Exams, continued

Sixth Term Examination Paper (STEPS)

This is a series of mathematics papers required for Cambridge and Warwick Universities. The test will be sat in school towards the end of June and costs £42.70. For more information visit www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk

English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT)

Pre-interview admissions test for applicants to undergraduate courses in English at Oxford University. This test will be sat in school on Wednesday 7 November 2012.

Physics Aptitude Test (PAT)

A two hour subject specific admissions test for applicants to all University of Oxford Physics and Engineering courses. This test will be sat in school on Wednesday 7 November 2012.

Which University?

So you have a list of universities/colleges which you like the look of - how do you narrow it down?

- Firstly make sure that every institution on your list offers the course that you want to study.
- Read up on each institution - there are many resources that you can use to obtain different viewpoints.
- For the 'official view', read the institution's prospectus or go to their website - here you can get the 'hard-facts' and statistics, but beware that these only show what the university/college wants to show. They are hardly likely to tell you that the food is rubbish or that the central heating in one of the halls doesn't work!
- For an independent view, try reading an 'unofficial' guide, such as the Push Guide, Times Online or The Complete University Guide.
- A useful website to make comparisons between different universities is www.unistats.co.uk

The problem with guides however, is that they are **other people's opinions**. To make the best decision, you need to see the place for yourself, so try to **visit** every institution on your list (up to a maximum of 5-6). If you can't make the open days, contact the institution and see if a private visit is possible (it usually is).

Which University?, continued

What will the place be like?

YOU need to find out what sort of location each university/college on your list is in. There are four major categories:

- Civic universities - situated within a city centre, usually with halls outside of the city in the suburbs.
 - City-campus universities - usually within a major city, but situated on parkland campus(es) outside of the city centre.
 - Campus universities - all sited on one campus - usually in a rural setting.
 - Collegiate - life and learning based in colleges, usually in a rural setting (except for Cambridge, Durham, London and Oxford).
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Which University?, continued

Social Life

You will be at university for at least three years and the friends you make will be with you for life, so, apart from bars and nightclubs (which are usually in great abundance anyway) find out the student-mix (male:female ratio) and what clubs/societies are available.

Student Union

The Student Union operates bars, clubs, shops and societies. Find out what is available and where it is based - is social life based in the town/city or within halls of residence or on the main campus?

Music

Music (in the form of orchestras, choirs, bands and individual tuition) is usually available. Find out how frequently it runs and how much it costs.

Sport

Sport provision is important. Find out what sports are available, how many teams there are and what the facilities are like. The BUSA (The British Universities' Sports Association) ranks all institutions.

Which University?, continued

Learning Resources

Learning Resources are very important as you will need them for research and further reading. How good are the libraries and computer areas? What is the ratio of students to computers? Is internet provided? Are printers provided? And is it free?

Accommodation

Accommodation is generally the most expensive part of higher education. Check if you are guaranteed a place in university-owned accommodation in first year. Decide whether you want to be catered for or cook for yourself (some universities also offer a semi catered option), and then see what the quality of accommodation is. This is best done first hand, so try to visit a hall of residence when you visit on an open day. You will probably have to find your own accommodation in the second year, so ask how easy it is to find, and how expensive it is.

Transport

How far is your accommodation from the main campus - will you need a car (and if so, where can you park it?) or can you cycle or walk? If you need to use public transport, find out how much it costs.

Which University?, continued

Support and Learning

Find out what sort of grades students get at the university/college, especially in the subject that you want to study. See what the destinations of the graduates in your subject are too. Also, find out what sort of student support the university/college offers (such as health and welfare, counselling etc). When you are at the university/college, you will be assigned a personal tutor to look after these things, so find out how many students there are per tutor and how regular tutorials are.

Other Information

- Visit the universities you are interested in - don't rely on what you read in the prospectus. Get a feel for the university, the area and the courses you are interested in. Check when their open days are by visiting www.opendays.com
 - If visiting during term time, remember to fill in a Leave of Absence form, and return it to the Sixth Form Reception Office once signed. Otherwise your absence will be unauthorised and will affect your attendance record.
 - Make sure you know what course you are applying for.
 - At Scottish universities, an Honours Course is normally 4 years but 3 years at English universities (some courses, for example medicine, are longer). However some Scottish courses give you direct entry into year 2, if you have already studied the subject to A2 level and achieved a certain grade - check with each university.
 - Be careful if you choose a Scottish university for certain subjects - for example, with Law you would have to do a conversion course to practise in England.
 - Check the university's website to see what bursaries, scholarships etc you may be entitled to.
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Other Information, continued

- Check carefully what grades (or how many UCAS points) are required for your course. Check whether there are subject specific requirements. This varies considerably from university to university.
 - Check whether you can use Citizenship/Extended Project/General Studies to increase your UCAS points.
 - Check retention rates of the course you are applying for - on some courses the retention rate is as low as 40%.
 - Check how many hours of lectures and seminars are involved - this can be as low as 6 hours of lectures! However, you will be expected to read around your subject and complete self study.
 - Check if the universities you are applying to offer successful applicants places on a first come, first serve basis.
-

What are your Qualifications Worth ?

You can only count a subject **ONCE**, in terms of points. That is, if you took a subject at AS and A2 level, you would only count the points you were awarded for your A2 grade.

As a guide, the following is a breakdown of what your qualifications are worth:

Grade	AS	A2
A*		140
A	60	120
B	50	100
C	40	80
D	30	60
E	20	40

The Extended Project is worth up to 70 UCAS points.

A full list of qualification values is available - please ask one of the Sixth Form team for more information.

Internal Deadline Dates

Please note these important internal deadline dates:

Monday 2 July 2012

First copy of UCAS form - to include completed Personal, Additional, Education (up to GCSE level) and Employment sections.

Monday 10 September 2012

(External deadline Monday 1 October 2012)

- CUKAS applications (conservatoire).

Friday 14 September 2012

(External deadline Monday 15 October 2012)

- Oxford and Cambridge applications.
- Dentistry, Medicine and Veterinary Medicine applications.

Friday 19 October 2012

All other UCAS applications.

Payment of UCAS Form

It is the student's responsibility to pay for their UCAS application. The cost varies from year to year and is cheaper if you are only applying for one course.

**Useful Information
(your own notes)**
