



KING DAVID HIGH SCHOOL
UCAS GUIDE 2011-12

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ENABLING YOU TO MAKE A SUCCESSFUL UNIVERSITY APPLICATION

This booklet aims to offer the essential information you need as a King David High School/Yavneh student who is applying to university for the first time. You will find advice on all key aspects of your application, but ultimately it is up to you to do the research and choose the course which is right for you. We will do everything we can to enable you to succeed in your ambitions. Before going on to explain the whole process, it is helpful to ask some essential questions about the process. You may have made up your mind already, but for those who have not, here are some questions to think about as you embark on your university application.

UCAS – THE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. Why go to university?

- increased earning power long term
- unique opportunity to learn without pressure of other commitments
- create lifelong friends and contacts
- learn lessons of life in a relatively safe environment
- get essential professional qualifications

2. Which universities should I apply to?

- Do you need to be part of a strong Jewish community?
 - Are you planning to study a traditional academic subject or a more vocational subject?
 - What are the research and teaching ratings of the universities you are considering?
 - What grades are you likely to get?
 - Are you applying to a very popular or a minority subject?
 - Which universities offer the best student support, facilities etc?

- Is cost a major issue – talk to your parents! Find out about grants, scholarships, sponsorship schemes.

3. What subject or subjects should I apply to do?

- What is your favourite or most successful subject?
- Do you want a single subject or a combined course?
- What are your career plans or ambitions?
- What particular talents and strengths do you have?
- What areas of interest do you have outside the school curriculum?
- Are you keen to work in a business, public sector or voluntary organisation? Do you have management or leadership skills? Could you develop them?

TIMETABLE FOR UCAS APPLICATIONS 2011-12

March 24th Introduction to UCAS for Parents and Students

April Tutorials Personal Statements; advice and examples
 Practical writing session with tutors
 Tutorials led by all Sixth Form Tutors

June Tutorials Researching courses and institutions

By JULY 15TH Students should have

- completed a Personal Statement
- made an initial selection of courses
- Completed a practice form.

OVER THE SUMMER: YOU SHOULD PRODUCE A FINAL SHORT LIST OF POSSIBLE COURSES AND PRODUCE A MORE OR LESS FINAL PERSONAL STATEMENT

1st September	Opening date for submitting applications to UCAS
16 TH September	INTERNAL deadline for applications to Oxford/Cambridge, for medicine and related subjects
END SEPTEMBER	ALL students should have submitted a final form so tutors can write references. Oxbridge/medicine forms should be sent
15TH October	FINAL UCAS DEADLINE for Oxbridge, medicine
22 ND October	ALL STUDENTS MUST HAVE COMPLETED A UCAS FORM AND WE SHOULD HAVE SENT IT TO UCAS
15TH November	INTERNAL deadline for submitting applications for Art and Design (Foundation)
December	Universities' deadline for Art/Design
15th January 2012	Final deadline for submitting forms to UCAS.

How UCAS Works

Introduction

There is a single applications procedure for UK universities and colleges through UCAS (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). In essence, this is how it works:

- You complete an application form online in which you can apply for up to 5 universities (4 in the case of Medical and Veterinary applications)
- The form is submitted to UCAS who pass the information on to the relevant institutions
- UCAS send you an acknowledgement slip with your UCAS number and password, which you can use to track the course of your application.
- The individual institutions will contact UCAS with their decisions and these will be passed on to you.
- A Statement of Decisions card will accompany the last decision and you use this to let UCAS know which offers you wish to accept. Also, online you will see a trigger to accept/decline once you have your last offer.
- You may only hold two offers: a firm offer, and an insurance offer (with lower grade requirements) as an insurance. Any other offers must be rejected.
- When the A-Level results come out your firm offer will be confirmed if you have the grades. If not, and you have the grades for the insurance offer, that will be confirmed. If you don't quite make the grades, you may still get accepted. If not, you will be entered for "clearing."

When to apply

The form filling process starts in July 2011 when you collect the "buzzword" from your Form Tutor. You can then start to fill it in, and in September you submit your form via the internet.

Applications can be submitted to UCAS by the Universities department from September 1st. It is important to be aware that Oxbridge, Medical and Veterinary applications must be completed very soon after the start of the Autumn Term, and that the sooner all applications are completed, *the more likely you are to get offers*. Do not wait until the official deadlines.

Any applications submitted after the UCAS deadline will be considered at the discretion of the universities and colleges, but it is highly unlikely that there will be any offers at this stage on popular courses, and your application will have "Late" stamped across it.

How to apply

All King David High School applicants use the UCAS APPLY System.

Apart from details about you and your course choices, your main task is to complete your [Personal Statement](#). This tells admissions tutors why you want to study the course you have chosen, and also gives you a chance to tell them something about yourself. *It is a crucial part of the application*, and you should devote a great deal of time to it.

When you have completed the form, you will have to SEND IT TO YOUR REFEREE, THE PERSON WHO WRITES YOUR REFERENCE. This is done over the internet, but is not sent to UCAS at this stage. The reference is then added, it is given a final check, and then it is sent electronically to UCAS.

The registration fee must be paid BY CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD ONLINE. Please make sure to arrange this with your parents. If you have any difficulties arranging this, let us know; we may be able to arrange payment by cheque. This sum is paid to UCAS to cover the costs of your application.

What does UCAS do with the form?

UCAS then passes your form on to your chosen universities, and sends you an acknowledgement letter. This contains an application number, personal details and the list of courses you have applied for. You *must* check this information immediately and let your Form Tutor know if there are any mistakes. You will also get a password to enable you to check your offers online.

If the application is received at a busy time, it may take several days before you receive the letter.

Should you want to add more information after sending in the form you should write direct to the institutions concerned. If you want to withdraw your application you will find a withdrawal slip at the back of the *Advice for Applicants* book which UCAS will send you.

Decisions by Universities

UCAS is not involved in any decisions about your application: the universities and colleges make the decisions and tell UCAS who then pass the information on to you. Decisions may come quite soon after you make your application, but you may find that the final decision does not arrive until April.

You may receive a rejection: bearing in mind that on popular courses with say 2000 applicants, an admissions tutor may only have places for 200 of them, it is clear that rejections are not unusual. If you are not rejected, it is most likely that you will receive a *conditional* offer (in very special circumstances, or if you are applying post A-Level, you may receive an unconditional place). This offer will specify the grades you require to gain a place on the course. It may specify certain grades in certain subjects, or you may get a [UCAS Tariff](#) offer. If you do not understand an offer, you should contact the institution immediately.

What if I receive no offers?

UCAS "Extra" allows you to contact universities, one at a time, to see if they have a place. If they do and they are interested, you send your "Extra" form and await a decision. This can happen as many times as you need it to. If it fails and you are left with no offers in June you can enter "Clearing"

Decisions by you

It is best to wait until you have heard from all your chosen institutions before making any decisions. If you accept or reject offers before then, you cannot then change your mind.

After receiving the final decision, UCAS will then send you a Statement of Decision letter and a reply slip. What you do next depends on the number of offers you have received:

If you only get one offer you can accept it (and thus commit yourself to that place if you get the grades) or reject it and go into clearing, or reapply in September. **If you get two or more offers** you can *only* accept two. One is your firm choice and the other your insurance choice in case you do not get the grades for your firm choice. Do not accept an offer as an insurance choice if it asks for the same grades as your firm choice (unless the offers are based on different

subjects). Nor should you accept an offer as insurance if you wouldn't be happy taking up the place. You are *committed* to your firm choice if you get the grades, or your insurance choice if you only make the lower grades.

You should visit the college or university, and the relevant department, before accepting any offers. You do not have to reply immediately - but replies must be made by the date stated in the letter, usually towards the end of April.

If you later reject a place that you have accepted you must drop out of the UCAS procedure and reapply for the following year.

Replying to Offers

You must reply to each offer in one of the following ways:

- Firm acceptance (F)
- Insurance acceptance (I)
- Decline (D)

Firm Acceptance

- You can only accept one offer firmly
- If you firmly accept an unconditional offer (UF), you must commit yourself to that course and turn down all other offers. You don't need insurance offers as you've got the grades.
- If you firmly accept a conditional offer (CF), you will be guaranteed a place on that course if you achieve the required exam grades. You are committed to the course and cannot go elsewhere.

Insurance Acceptance

- If you receive two or more conditional offers and you **firmly** accept an offer, you must also decide whether to accept a second conditional offer as insurance (CI). If you choose a conditional offer, you should normally choose one which requires lower grades than for your firm offer.
- If you do not meet the conditions of your firm choice, but you do meet the conditions of your insurance choice, you are guaranteed a place on your insurance choice. You are committed to the course and cannot go elsewhere., unless you pull out of the system and reapply in September.

Decline

When you have decided on your firm and insurance acceptances you must decline (D) all other offers. You *can* decline all offers, and then go through [clearing](#) from the middle of June, or reapply in September.

If you have received some offers and know which ones you want to accept, you do not *have* to wait for all the decisions to come through. Complete the CNC slip at the back of the *Advice to Applicants* booklet and send it to UCAS, or ring UCAS and tell them you want to withdraw from certain institutions from whom you have not heard.

Contacting UCAS

Make sure you have your application number.

**By post; UCAS
PO Box 28
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL52 3ZA**

By phone: 0870 1122211, 8.30 am to 5pm weekdays only. By fax: 01242 544961

By email: enq@ucas.ac.uk. Online: Using your unique password, check the progress of your application at www.ucas.com.

How To Use APPLY

- You can use APPLY wherever there is access to the internet, and it contains full instructions and detailed online help at the touch of a button.
- In June/July you will be given a 'buzzword' which is unique to the school, and then go to the UCAS website - www.ucas.com - where you register online. Unless we tell you otherwise, this will be **kingdavid2012**. As soon as you have done that, you can start filling in the form. The buzzword links your application to King David High School.
- When you first visit the APPLY section of the UCAS website click **'REGISTER' - don't try to fill in the user name and password at this stage - you need to register first**. You will be asked your name and address etc. and will also be asked to choose a password and a memorable phrase. Make sure you choose something you'll easily remember. Then you'll then be allocated a username. Keep them all safe because you will have to get in touch with UCAS if you forget them. Once you have your user name you can get started!
- Do not start more than one form - edit the one you've started. Otherwise you will find that your Form Tutor / Referee will not know which form to paste your reference into, and it will delay your application.
- The software will check for obvious mistakes (such as impossible dates of birth, or non-existent course codes or universities), but when you come to the section on Personal Statements, we strongly recommend that you type them on a PC and cut and paste them into the APPLY application. There is no spell-check in the APPLY software, so make sure it's perfect before you paste it in.
- Your Form Tutor and other relevant staff will be able to view the progress of your form as soon as you have registered, so we will have a good idea where you have got to with the application.
- Your Referee can paste your reference on to your form at any time once you have registered, although you will not be able to see it. It is **CRUCIAL** that you liaise with him/her over the timing and content of your form. He/she will also need to read it through and check the relevance of his reference against your personal statement.
- Applications are saved at UCAS, and cannot be saved to disc, although you can print it out and keep a copy for yourself. The UCAS site automatically saves and changes you make, so you do not get different versions.

- When you have filled in all the sections, and your form is complete you will click 'send to referee'. This does not mean that it has been sent to UCAS, it merely means that it has been submitted to your referee. We will send the form to UCAS when it has been thoroughly checked, and approved by the UCAS Co-ordinator (Mr Frankell.).
 - Once you have submitted your form to us you cannot make any more changes. If there are things that we feel need changing we will contact you and 'unsubmit' the form back to you, and you will then be able to access it again. Your referee can paste your reference on to your form at any time once you have registered, although you will not be able to see it. It is CRUCIAL that you liaise with him/her over the timing and content of your form. He/she will also need to read it through and check the relevance of his reference against your personal statement.
 - Good luck! The software can sort out most of your queries, but if there's anything you're not sure of speak to your Form Tutor, Mentor, or other member of staff involved in the Sixth Form.
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Entrance Tests

Entrance tests are now a fact for some courses, and will increasingly become a familiar part of the admissions landscape.

More information is available on [the UCAS website](#)

BMAT

The BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT) is for entry into Medicine and Veterinary schools.

UKCAT

The UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) is another admissions test for medicine and dentistry. In some cases you will need to take both the BMAT and UKCAT.

HAT

The History Aptitude Test (HAT) is for entry to Modern History and a joint honours degrees involving Modern History at Oxford University.

MML

The Modern and Medieval Languages Test (MML) is for entry to Modern and Medieval Languages at the University of Cambridge.

LNAT

The National Admissions Test for Law (LNAT) is for entry into law. An increasing number of universities now ask for this, including Manchester Metropolitan.

STEP

Sixth Term Examination Papers (STEP) are for entry to Mathematics at the University of Cambridge.

TSA

The Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) is for entry to Computer Science, Natural Sciences, Engineering and Economics at the University of Cambridge. Further information on the nature of the test, including sample questions and a test paper can be accessed <http://tsa.ucles.org.uk/about.html>.

Personal Statement

Why is this important?

The personal statement is vital because it is the main place where you can sell yourself and make yourself stand out from the crowd. The content, style and presentation are all important but you must find a way to express your personality. You must build up a convincing and interesting picture of yourself which will make the admissions tutor WANT to offer you a place. This is why **you** must write your own personal statement, not someone else. Above all else show **your** enthusiasm for **your** subject and show how you can demonstrate it by books you've read, places you've visited, and work experience you've done (not necessarily in that order).

General advice

- It's very important to look at the **departmental websites of the universities** you are thinking of applying to; there is often **clear advice** about what the admissions tutors like to see in personal statements. This is especially true for medicine and law.
- Take your time. You cannot turn out a polished personal statement on your first try. You will go through many drafts and ask many people what they think.
- Try to think clearly about your own personality, aims and aspirations. Why do you want to study your chosen subject? Think about the reading you have done and are doing - what do you find interesting? What about your other interests and activities? Write a list of your main activities and interests, and identify what you have achieved that is worthy of note. How can you build this up into an interesting self-portrait without going over the top?
- You can write up to about 550 words. Do it in "Word" in the first instance so that it can check your grammar and spelling, and so that you can work at it wherever you are. When you are a good way down the road, paste it into your APPLY form. If it is too long, it is no good changing the font (Times New Roman 12). There is nothing you can do: reduce the length.

Section 1 – Your Chosen Subject

Your **top priority** is to write about the subject(s) you want to study; this will take up more than half of your personal statement.

Look at it from the point of view of the department. You will much prefer a student who has a genuine passion for the subject and wants to learn. How can you convince the admissions tutor of your interest in the course? You should write about:

- Why the subject appeals
- *Evidence* of your interest in the subject
- Knowledge about new developments in the subject
- What qualities and experience you can bring

Remember, this is a *personal* statement. Generalities such as "I want to do Geography because it is interesting" will get you nowhere. Be *specific*. Start off by analysing *why* you want to study your chosen subject, for example:

"My objective in studying Geography is to expand my knowledge of physical geography, especially Oceanography, Ecology and Meteorology. These science based areas link well with my personal interests and also with issues which, I feel, may well affect the future of the planet. "

This application for economics shows a good understanding of the underlying theories and political context of the subject:

"The monetarism of the Thatcher government highlighted Britain's constant struggle between unemployment and inflationary policy priorities. This subject interests me greatly and stimulated further reading, such as "A State to Come", by Will Hutton, which presented me with a more Keynesian approach to policy making. "

So your first paragraph (which can be divided into sub-paragraphs for ease of reading) concentrates on your chosen subject: your objective is to justify your choice of course, and explain what you will contribute.

The second section - your achievements and aspirations

Move on to details about your academic achievements, your career aspirations (if known) and subject related activities such as work experience and field trips.

- Mention pleasing results, prizes and successful participation in competitions.
- Show evidence of pursuing your interest in the subject outside school - especially in areas such as work experience
- Explain how the course might be relevant to the career you want to pursue. What research have you done in this area?
- What have you *learnt* from work experience, field trips.
- If you are taking a Gap Year, say why. Explain how the experience will be useful to you.
- What *skills* have you acquired (or might you acquire through a gap year activity) which will benefit you and the university.

Not all of these will apply to everybody - you may not have had work experience which relates in any way to your chosen subject, and it is quite likely that you do not know what career you wish to pursue. But you must show interest in your experiences and a willingness to learn from them. These are all sentences from applications for Law:

“I was also the winner of the internal Maths Presentation Contest. Here the requirement to master and then convey theories to an audience was a valuable experience. “

“For my work experience I spent time at a firm of solicitors where I was involved in the immigration department, dealing with finding homes for refugees from Kosovo. Although I was only at the firm for two weeks, I saw how demanding the profession was yet also how personally satisfying the eventual results were. “

This comment comes from an applicant for Biology:

“I am looking forward to a trip to the Philippine islands to work for a month with the Reef and Rainforest Conservation Foundation next summer. The project involves mapping the marine grazes of coral reefs and logging the data onto survey forms which can then be used to keep a tag on the endangered parts of the reefs.”

The third section - your strengths and qualities

Finally, a golden opportunity to present your individual strengths and qualities, but this last section should not take up more than about 20% of the whole. Nor should it be simply an interminable list of achievements. Appeal to your reader, interest him or her in what you have to offer and give any evidence you can of leadership positions, of responsibilities you have taken on, of enterprise and originality. They like to see that you are going to mix well, and make the most of opportunities on offer. They want to know you will get involved in university life. They want to know that you have the stamina to take on a course lasting three or more years. So, think about the following (whether in school or out):

- Positions of responsibility, and what they involved
- Events/activities you have organized
- Sporting/artistic interests and how they have been realized
- Charity work, or work for local/national organizations
- Evidence of your ability to work independently and manage your time
- Can you work under pressure? Evidence?
- Will you be able to adjust being away from home?

You won't have a lot of space, so pick three or four of the best and write a couple of sentences on each. You should also include (although not necessarily in this section) any personal circumstances which might affect your exam results or your application (eg: disability, family bereavement, illness).

The final sentence

Your final fling to impress the reader of your application - so try not to finish your statement on a downbeat note, or with an anticlimax.

"I look forward to the challenge of a university course, and to making a significant contribution to university life" sounds reasonable, but it is very general and formulaic. You will probably find such a sentence at the end of 70% of personal statements, and it may well provoke a yawn.

Your final sentence should be a memorable encapsulation of you, and why your chosen university wants you. It should be eye catching, individual, personal, honestly meant and short if possible.

"I hope I have risen to all the academic challenges of the sixth form, and intend to continue to do so in the wider environment at University" sound keen but vague; "I aim to excel in all I do, but History comes first" creates a positive impression. "I feel that I have only begun to learn about the huge topic of Management and I look forward to furthering my knowledge at university" shows enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.

Be yourself

Try to move away from stock sentences and formulaic sentiments which don't really tell the reader anything about you. You may end up with something slightly quirky, but that's not a problem if it is well done. It *is* a problem if it becomes self-conscious ("look at me - I'm the eccentric you want to select"), so it is important to get other people's reactions to it. One admissions tutor wrote:

"It's a pleasure (although a surprisingly rare one) to read a statement where the candidate's voice comes over clearly."

That should be your aim.

A SUMMARY OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ADVICE

Do

- **use a personal style and express a personal interest**
- **refer to relevant life experience, relating it to your subject**
- **give a coherent explanation of why you are interested in this particular subject**
- **express intellectual curiosity and an interest in real world problems**
- **make specific and precise references to what you have done**
- **evaluate your experience and show evidence of learning**
- **express a wide-ranging interest in your subject area**
- **give as much evidence of success as you can**
- **have a clear structure and neat presentation.**

Do Not

- give a dull description of your experience without any conclusions
- drop names and try to sound knowledgeable without knowing what you are talking about
- use irritating exaggeration (“superb”, “fantastic” etc)
- make unsubstantiated and unconvincing claims about your teamwork and communication skills
- waffle in a dozy and unfocused way about hobbies and interests
- race through a hundred things without a clear structure.

Sample Extracts from Personal Statements

(Please bear in mind you *must not* copy these directly or you will fall foul of UCAS’ anti-plagiarism software)

1. Medicine

“Over the summer holidays, I worked as a volunteer in the MacMillan centre at Edith Cavell Hospital, Peterborough, which is a daytime centre for cancer patients. There I had the opportunity to work with patients and nurses, and to learn some of the effects of cancer on a patient and the effects of chemotherapy first hand. The MacMillan centre has reinforced my desire to pursue pharmacology, and has confirmed my interest in medical science and pathology. I am currently trying to organise more work experience, hopefully in Huntington Life Sciences, in order to understand better what a medical-related career entails.”

2. Law/Service to School

- “I thought it a wise move to pursue an insight into how the law works in reality. I successfully applied to become a Berkshire Witness Service Volunteer and thus embarked on an in-depth training course. This incorporated an introduction to the functions of the Crown Prosecution Service and discussions of the skills required to work with people from many social backgrounds. My responsibilities mainly involve providing emotional support for witnesses throughout their trials, this has helped me develop an

appreciation of what the law represents to someone from outside the court system and how deeply it can impact on their lives.

- In order to gain a different perspective of the law, I obtained a work experience placement with a local solicitor's firm. My work evolved from basic office duties, such as filing, faxing and answering telephone calls, into accompanying solicitors to court and liaising with barristers on behalf of the firm. The opportunity to work alongside people who have dedicated their lives to the law has strengthened my resolve to study law and given me the confidence to make a well-informed decision.
- Throughout my school life, I have maintained an independent, self-motivated approach to my studies. Having studied a broad range of A Level subjects, I feel I have acquired a wide variety of skills: from Mathematics and Physics I have learnt the art of questioning the world around us and developing a keen sense of intellectual curiosity; from English Literature and General Studies I have understood the importance of expressing myself clearly and concisely through words; whilst from ICT I have developed a sound understanding of an area which is playing an increasingly important role in society.
- My role as Deputy Head Boy has helped me gain a sense of responsibility and maturity; tasks such as organising large numbers of people, arranging important school events and making speeches to large audiences have helped me develop strong personal and communication skills. These have been further strengthened through my duties as a sixth form mentor for the lower school pupils, where I provide support and advice for younger pupils who are struggling to cope with the pressures of school life. I have also held positions on the student council, presenting my views and those of my peers to the senior school staff. Above all else, I have learnt the rewards of making a positive contribution towards school life in more than an academic sense and think I can take this understanding with me to university."

3. Business/Management

- "Having acted as Managing Director on a Young Enterprise Team whilst doing my 'AS' levels, I came up with innovative ideas that made a very successful company. Having held management positions within Human Resources, Operations, and Finance, I

quickly realised that pursuing a management degree at university would be ideal for me.

- After my GCSE's, I held a temporary job as a junior in an Insolvency practice, in order to gain work experience. Having to work to tight deadlines taught me how to work independently as part of a professional team. I learnt that in business, if one person lacks productivity, then everyone else can suffer, and also how to motivate others as a means of preventing such issues. I used the skills learnt to enhance my role as the Managing Director of my young Enterprise company, particularly methods of motivation and delegation, and the significance of being accountable for others. Having spent nearly three years working part time in a Health food shop alongside my studies, I developed my communication skills, with both colleagues and customers, and proved to be a trustworthy employee."

4. Media/English

"Language is common to all people. By its nature, it is something that links us all together, yet our use of language is a major factor in defining us all as individuals. For something that comes so naturally to all of us, language can hold great power and influence. Even this personal statement is a perfect example of how language can be constructed in order to influence the opinion of others. My decision to study English Language is based on my desire to further my understanding of the language that I and the people around me use and encounter on a daily basis, and through this, understand our society a little better. The study of Linguistics will complement this, giving me the chance to apply precise analysis to language data. As something I have never directly studied before, I see this area as a new way for me to look at language, with a more precise and scientific approach.

Within school, I am part of the editorial team for the school magazine. I really enjoy the chance this gives me to write for an audience, and it has greatly improved the confidence I have in my own work. It has been a learning experience in other ways too, as I have gained valuable experience in working both as part of a team and as an individual in order to produce the finished piece. Due to my role in the presentation of the magazine, my ICT skills have also improved. Last year, I volunteered as a library assistant within the school library. Again, this was something I greatly enjoyed, as I was able learn more

about how a small library is run, as well as working closely with students of all years.”

5. Psychology

“ Earlier this year I was involved in a car accident, and as I sat among the wreckage I was shocked to see not one person stopped to help me. Didn’t anyone care enough to help? If it weren’t for the science of Psychology, this and so many other questions about human behaviour would go unanswered. I find the insights Psychology gives into human behaviour very exciting, and have been fascinated by it for a long time. Working in the Child Protection Unit of Cumbria Social Services has further fuelled my interest; every day I see aspects of human behaviour that could have come straight from a Psychology textbook. It is Psychology brought to life, and has made me realise more than ever how much I want to move my interest in Psychology from my hobby to my career. “

6. Computer Science

“Computer Science has quite naturally come to be my chosen field. At the age of 7, I took to playing the piano, which planted the first seeds of my interest in defined logical patterns and structure. My introduction to computing was via the logic of spreadsheets, but I then progressed to using BASIC for several applications outside lessons, including programming my own version of ‘Logo’ and an analogue clock. A major recent achievement of mine has been designing a database-driven website for my school’s Maths department, including multi-format homework question publication and report generation. This is extensively used by the department, and other departments have approached me to provide them with similar websites. This project w“My three major interests and passions are Computer Science, Maths and Music, and I believe as nominated and then short-listed for the final ten of the New Statesman’s “New Media (Educational)” award.

I look forward to studying Artificial Intelligence, and have made my own minor foray into this area by designing and developing a computer-powered Connect 4 player using a complex ‘minimax’ procedure. I also investigated ‘recurring function execution’ to simulate the ‘fill’ function of a paint package, an algorithm of which was used to develop a ‘random maze’ generator. Such mathematical-based logic led to an increased appetite especially for researching the use of computing with mathematics - I extensively investigated ‘perfect numbers’, determining the 8th perfect number (2305843008139952128).”

Filling in your UCAS Apply on-line form – some Key Points

The 'buzzword' which you will need the first time you register is **kingdavid2012** **unless we tell you otherwise.**

UCAS will give you a username when you register it. You will then give a password which must have 6 to 14 characters and include at least one number and a memorable phrase.

Remember your username, password and memorable phrase.

1. **Section 1.**
 - a. Straightforward. It's helpful if you include your mobile phone number and email address in case we need to contact you urgently.
2. **Section 2 – further details**
 - a. Scottish Candidate Number and BTEC registration number – not applicable.
 - b. Student Support Arrangements – Manchester, Salford, Bury, Trafford or as appropriate
 - c. Fee Code – for most students this is 02 LEA, SAAS, NI, Ed/Lib Boards, DfES; some courses are fully funded by the Government
 - d. Area of Permanent residency – for most students this is Greater Manchester. Some might live in Leeds or Sheffield etc.
 - e. Residential Category – for most students this is "A UK Citizen/EU National" – check if you are unsure
 - f. Country of Birth – for most this is England but if it is Israel, Ireland, Belgium or wherever make sure you say so
 - g. Nationality – for most students, this is British (if you have another nationality or dual nationality you must state this)
3. **Section 3 - Applications.**
 - a. You can have up to 5 choices but you only have 4 choices for medicine, veterinary, dentistry and only 1 choice for Oxbridge.
 - b. You don't need to use up all your choices if you don't want to.
 - c. Campus code is sometimes needed if the university has more than one location for its courses; otherwise you will probably need to select a simple hyphen (-) to show there is no campus code!

- d. Further details requested – some courses ask you about this. Check the box on the course description on the UCAS website.
 - e. Point of entry – don't worry about this. It's only for students who are not starting their course in Year 1.
 - f. Home – are you living at home whilst studying?
 - g. Defer – do you want to defer (put off) your entry for a year? Check that the university allows this for your course.
4. **Section 4 – Education.**
- a. Details of your secondary schools (King David High School for most students).
 - b. Full details of all qualifications achieve including GCSE. GCE (AS and A-Level), OCR Nationals, Applied A-Levels and so on
5. **Section 5 – be honest!**
6. **Section 6 – Additional Information.**
- a. This information is not used to judge your application.
 - b. Occupational background – the job of whichever of your parents earns the most.
 - c. Ethnic origin – for most this is category (11).
7. **Section 7 – Qualifications.**
- a. List the qualifications you already have and ones that you are currently studying for. The most likely ones are: GCSE; GCSE Double Award; GCSE Short Course; Part One GNVQ; Foundation GNVQ; Intermediate GNVQ; GCE Advanced Subsidiary (NEW) – in other words AS Level; GCE Advanced Level (this is your full A Level including A2); Applied GCE (6 or 12 Units); OCR Nationals.
 - b. If you have received AS grades, you **must** include them, even if you are re-sitting some units.
 - c. If you declined an AS grade you do not need to include it.
 - d. You do not need to include individual unit results.
 - e. The date to put is the date you received your results – in the vast majority of cases this is March or August.
 - f. The exam centre number is 32355
8. **Section 8 – Special Needs or Support** – complete as necessary.
9. **Section 9 – Employment.**
- a. Include any part-time work, holiday jobs etc.
 - b. Do NOT include work experience – this can be referred to in your personal statement.
10. **Section 10 – Personal Statement.**
- a. See relevant section!

Tuition Fees and Student Loans from 2011-12:
PLEASE NOTE THE INFORMATION PROVIDED
HERE IS LIMITED AND MAY BECOME OUT OF
DATE: KEEP CHECKING www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Tuition Fees

- Most courses in England and Northern Ireland will charge an annual tuition fee of between £6000 and £9000 – probably! We still do not know how the universities will respond to the new rules. It's cheaper in Scotland and Wales.
- Most universities not only offer some kind of bursary to students receiving the full Higher Education grant, but also smaller bursaries to those receiving a partial grant.
- You don't need to pay tuition fees whilst you are studying, but will have to pay any loans back once you are employed and earning more than £21,000 per year.

Higher Education Grant

Some families will get a Higher Education grant to help pay for fees. This does not have to be re-paid. The amount of grant you get depends on family income.

Tuition Fees Loan

You can take out a loan for the amount you are charged for your fees. You pay this back after you graduate

Maintenance Loans to cover Living Costs

- You can also take out a loan to cover living costs
- You don't pay this back until after you graduate

How to find out more on Student Finance

- **STUDENT GRANTS:** www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance
- **STUDENT LOANS:** www.slc.co.uk
- www.nhsstudentgrants.co.uk – for NHS bursaries
- www.dfes.gov.uk/dancedrama for dance and drama awards

Some useful contacts and resources

Courses: as well as **UCAS Course Search**

(www.ucas.com/studentcoursesearch/), try **hotcourses.com** for useful guidance on all university courses.

Finance: DfES Helpline 0800 731 9133 www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport

Health Care Students helpline – 0845 60 60 655, www.doh.gov.uk

NHS Student Grant Unit 01253 655 655

Manchester City Council: www.manchester.gov.uk

General Support: www.heguide.org.uk – very good overview with handy links

Nursing – www.nmas.ac.uk, 0870 1122206

Quality of teaching: www.hero.ac.uk, www.educationguardian.co.uk

Teacher Training Agency – www.useyourheadteacher.gov.uk 0845 6000991

UCAS helpline – 0870 1122211 www.ucas.com

1. GCE Advanced levels

MAIN CHANGES FROM 2008: new A* grade, four assessment units rather than six as the norm

What is your qualification worth in terms of UCAS points?

GCE and VCE (A Levels and older Vocational qualifications)

Grade					Tariff points
GCE & AVCE Double Award	A level with additional AS (9 units)	GCE A level and AVCE	GCE AS Double Award	GCE AS & AS VCE	
A*A*					280
A*A					260
AA					240
AB					220
BB	A*A				200
BC	AA				180
	AB				170
CC					160
	BB				150
CD	BC	A*			140
DD	CC	A	AA		120
	CD		AB		110
DE		B	BB		100
	DD		BC		90
EE	DE	C	CC		80
			CD		70
	EE	D	DD	A	60
			DE	B	50
		E	EE	C	40
				D	30
				E	20

2. OCR Nationals (Newer vocational qualifications)

Grade			Tariff points
National Extended Diploma	National Diploma	National Certificate	
D1			360
D2/M1			320
M2			280
M3	D		240
P1	M1		200
P2	M2/P1		160
P3	P2	D	120
	P3	M	80
		P	40