

THE CHALFONTS

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

UCAS INFORMATION PACK

2020/21

UCAS



- [Key Dates](#)
- [How to apply via UCAS](#)
- [Entry requirements for higher education](#)
- [How to write your Personal Statement](#)
- [Examples of Personal Statements](#)
- [University Interview Advice](#)
- [Russell Group Universities](#)
- [Top 100+ Universities](#)
- [Useful websites](#)

M Way BEd (Hons)
Leader for Sixth Form



Success is an Attitude.

KEY DATES

Schedule for this academic year

- June 18th Virtual UCAS launch to students – M Way
- June 18th onwards Students log on to UCAS Hub and explore
- June 25th Virtual UCAS Parents' evening – Amanda Hall (Brunel University)
- June 25th to end of term Students start writing first draft of personal statement
- July 17th (at the latest) Students have emailed first draft of personal statement to tutor for checking

Continue writing your personal statements over the summer.

Schedule of dates for the next academic year

- September UCAS sessions with Tutor until Christmas
- September 11th Second draft of Personal Statement to Tutor
- September 21st Subject teachers to have completed references
- October 15th Deadline for the receipt at UCAS of applications for all medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and veterinary science courses and for all courses at Oxford / Cambridge. You will need to register with UKCAT/BMAT; information can be found on the following websites:
<http://www.ukcat.ac.uk>
<http://www.kaptest.co.uk/ukcat/course>
- October 22nd Final draft of personal statement on the system
- November 2nd Tutors to have completed references
- December 1st Students to have 'sent' applications to UCAS

This final date gives the 6th Form Leader time to proof read all applications/references, and the Sixth Form Administrator the time necessary to process all applications before the UCAS deadline of January 15th. Many students finish their UCAS application by the start of November and completed applications will be processed and sent off on a first come, first served basis.

NB: Please note that some Art Foundation/Performing Arts/Drama courses may have a different deadline date to UCAS; further information is available on the UCAS website.

HOW TO APPLY VIA UCAS

UCAS Application – 2020/2021

Completing your undergraduate online application.

Go to <https://www.ucas.com/students>

You are now in the student sign in area. Click on “undergraduate”. This is the area for first degrees (as opposed to Masters, PhDs and other ‘post graduate’ courses).

Click on ‘Apply’ in the ‘2021 entry’ section. If you have not already done so, visit the ‘Hub’ before or after you apply. There are some excellent tools and resources here to help you with your course and university search.

1. Registration

Before you can log in you must first register. This is free and will take approximately 5-10 minutes.

You will only need to do this once. If you apply more than once in a cycle your application fee will not be refunded. If you have already registered but cannot remember your login details, please use the ‘Forgotten login?’ link on the login screen to access your details.

Registration is a process of entering your personal details, for example, name, date of birth, address, mobile no., email address etc.

Tip: The email address you provide will be used to communicate updates to your application by UCAS and your prospective universities. Make sure this is an address you have constant access to and if you don’t have a ‘sensible’ email address it might be a good idea to create a new one before continuing the registration process.

You will be asked to create a password and enter some security questions. Once you have completed the registration, a username will be automatically generated.

Tip: Please make a note of these details as you will need them to log back in to your application later.

If you have completed all of the above successfully you will be invited to ‘continue to log in’ or ‘close’ and return later.

2. Log in

As you are applying through the school, you will be asked to use the buzzword. This year it is “chikara21”. You will be asked to verify that you have selected the correct school before you can proceed any further.

You will now be issued with your personal ID number (XXX-XXX-XXXX) **Please note this down for future reference.**

You will need to verify your email address before proceeding. Click this option and a verification link will be sent to your email address. Enter this code and you will be returned to the Welcome section.

Tip: Watch the short video here that explains the rest of the process.



Welcome	
Personal details	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Statement	<input type="checkbox"/>
View all details	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pay/Send	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help	
Options/Opsiynau	

Key

- ☒ Completed
- ☐ In progress
- ☐ Not started
- ☐ Help

You now need to complete each section as shown on the left hand side of the 'apply 2021' area. Once you have started a section, green dots will be displayed and when a section is completed fully you will see a red tick in the box.

Some of these sections can be completed quickly but others will need you to think carefully: i.e "**Choices**" and some may need several drafts until you get them how you want them i.e "**Statement**". You will need to check with your parents/guardians about student finance to pay for course fees and/or maintenance loans and you may need to check your passport for some of your **personal details**. As with all applications, the information you supply must be correct. Don't be tempted to fabricate **employment** or qualifications in the **education** section as all these details may be checked and verified.

Once you have entered your application details, and marked each section as complete, you can Pay/Send. The application fee for this service is £25 for more than one choice or £20 for a single choice. You will need to pay this by credit or debit card online.

You will not be able to Pay/Send your application until all the relevant sections have been marked as complete.

Send in this instance means send your application to your referee (Leader for sixth form). The sixth form administrator will check your application carefully and return it to you if necessary for amendments. Check your email for messages. Then your reference and your predicted grades will be added to your reference and then the complete application will be sent to UCAS on your behalf. It is your responsibility to ensure that your school sends your application to us by the relevant deadline.

3. Personal Details

The personal details you entered when you registered will be transferred into this section. Check that your names, address, date of birth and contact details are correct. You will be asked for further information that universities and colleges require, like your nationality, residential status and any disabilities, or criminal convictions you may have.

Tip: Choose the appropriate nationality by clicking **See list**. Your nationality should be stated in your passport and should not be confused with your ethnic origin. If you have dual nationality are in any doubt about what to put here, please check before completing this section

You only need to enter *required information. Click on the ? if you need clarification on any point.

Tip: Student support – Fee code * Select this option if you think you *might* wish to apply for a student loan to pay for course fees. You will not be committed to this decision. If in doubt, check with your parents/guardians. is if you definitely don't require a loan.

If you do select **02**, the Student support arrangements box will be shown. Click on the See list button; most of you should select "Buckinghamshire" (Bucks County Council will pay for your loan).

4. Course Choices

Enter the courses and universities and colleges that you're applying to. You can choose up to five (all now or some later) in any order - Apply will store your choices in alphabetical order. For each choice, you say whether you'll be living at home or in student accommodation, and when you want to start the course. Your universities/colleges won't see where else you've applied until after you reply to any offers you get.

If you are applying for medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or veterinary science you can only apply for a maximum of four courses.

If you are planning to apply for either the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge be aware that you can only apply to one course at either. (Some applicants will need to complete an additional application form to apply – visit the University of Oxford (link is external) and the University of Cambridge (link is external) websites for more information.)

If you are planning to make a deferred entrance, make sure you've checked that the university or college accepts deferred entry applications for the course. (They may not be offering the course the following year, may be changing it or prefer students not to have a gap in study before they start their degree.)

- If you wish to amend any of the information displayed click **Edit** and change as desired.
- If you change your mind and wish to delete a choice please click **Remove** next to the choice you wish to delete.
- Once you have added all your choices tick the **Section completed** box at the bottom of this page and click **Save**.

5. Education

Please state the highest level of qualification you expect to have before you start your course – the answer to this is **Below honours degree level qualifications**

Add your school [Click Find and then enter "Chalfonts..."] and enter the correct start and finish dates. For most of you these will Sept 2014 and July 2021. Then add your **completed** qualifications. Check that you have included **all** relevant qualifications. Use your GCSE results printouts or certificates to help you, or ask Mrs Darvill to print out your qualifications. For certificated qualifications UCAS recommend that you include details of all units with a separate result/grade, but which are incorporated into the overall qualification grade.

Tip: Do not include subjects you got a U grade in.

The date to use for most of your GCSEs will be June 2019.

Completed qualifications

GCSE = General Certificate of Secondary Education A*-G or 9-1 – most should be dated June 2019

ICT = OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Certificate - dated June 2020 (You can add grades later if you haven't got them yet)

You should also add in other qualifications achieved, such as music, drama, dance, DofE. Use the Search if

you can't find the qualification listed. Some qualifications carry UCAS points. If in doubt, ask your tutor or the 6th form office for help.

Then add your **future qualifications**

These should be shown as June 2020 – 'Pending' under qualifications. Do **NOT** add grades to future qualifications as these will be added by the 6th Form Office when your reference is attached.

A Level = GCE Advanced

Music = RSL L3 Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners

BTEC Sport = BTEC Extended Certificate in Sport (Single), BTEC National Diploma in Sport (Double), BTEC Extended Diploma in Sport (Triple)

IT = OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Introductory Diploma

Performing Arts = BTEC L3 National Extended Certificate

Entering unit details for AS or A levels is optional.

6. Employment

In this section, you fill in the details of your work history and employers. If you've not had any jobs, you can leave this section blank, but you'll still need to mark it as complete to continue with your application.

Voluntary or unpaid jobs (including any work experience) should be included in your Personal Statement rather than here.

7. Personal statement

UCAS ask you to complete a personal statement, which tells your universities and colleges why you're applying for the course(s) you've chosen and why they should want you as a student. This statement helps them to know more about you as a person.

You will be given guidance in how to complete this throughout Personal Development time with your Tutor Group. The school expects you to complete your final draft by October 18th 2019.

8. View all the details

See if you need to make any edits, then mark it as complete and save it.

Once you've marked all previous sections as complete, you'll be able to read and agree to the declaration – which allows UCAS to process your info and send it to your chosen universities/colleges. You'll then be able to move on to the final sections.

Declaration

Once each section has been marked as complete, you'll be asked to agree to the declaration. Please read the information carefully and, once you've agreed to its terms, you can go to the payment section.

Pay and send

You pay the application fee online using a credit or debit card; the cost for 2020/21 UCAS applications is £20 if you're applying to just one course, or £26 for multiple courses and for late applications sent after 30 June.

Once this section is complete, your application is automatically sent to the 6th form office where it will be checked thoroughly. If there are any changes that need to be made it will be sent back to you with an email to explain what needs to be done. Once you made the amendments, save and resend it: click Pay/Send – you will not be charged again. **In order for the school to have time to proof read all applications/references and process all the applications before the UCAS deadline of 18:00 January 15th 2021, we expect students to finish the above application process by December 1st 2020 at the latest.**

Reference

Your application will get a combined reference from your tutor, subject teachers and year leader who know you well enough to write about you and your suitability for the course. Your predicted grades will be added by them too. Please talk to your subject teachers before you complete your application to find out what your predicted grades will be. Once the reference and grades are added, the completed application can be sent to UCAS.

Once UCAS receive your application, they'll process it, send it to each of your chosen universities and colleges and send you a welcome email, which explains what happens next.

You can only send UCAS one application in each year's application cycle. If you send a second application, it will be cancelled and you will not receive a refund.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

You will receive offers or messages via the email address you have given UCAS. Further information will be available via UCAS Track. If you are unsure of what the offer means, speak to the 6th Form Office or call the university admissions office directly quoting your personal ID number (XXX-XXX-XXXX).

Wait until you have received ALL your offers before accepting or rejecting them. You usually get until May to make a decision but it may be worth accepting early so that you can apply for student accommodation. Every university is different though and you will be sent information from them about this once they have sent you an offer.

You can only accept a maximum of two offers: one 'Firm', one 'Insurance'. Be careful to think carefully as you will not be able to change your offers easily.

If you don't receive any offers, you may be eligible for UCAS Extra. Ask the 6th Form Office about this.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Many universities will quote their entry requirements as grades, e.g, ABB. However, some institutions will use the UCAS tariff and ask students to have a certain number of points instead of specific grades. The UCAS tariff points for September 2019 entry equate to grades as shown in the table below.

Grades/Qualifications	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
AS	-	20	16	12	10	6	0
A2	56	48	40	32	24	16	0

- The AS is worth 40% of the points for an A level
- If a student is predicted to achieve BBC at A level, this equates to $40+40+32= 112$ Points

BTEC Qualifications (Double Award)	D*D*	D*D	DD	DM	MM	MP	PP
	112	104	96	80	64	48	32
Equivalent to →	A*A*	A*A	AA	BB	CC	DD	EE

D-Distinction M-Merit P-Pass

You need to make five choices on your application form and it is recommended that you have a balance according to your predictions.

Ideally, you should include one choice which is just above your tariff score/predicted grade, three choices that are exactly on the tariff score/grades, and one which is just below your predictions to be certain of a safe reserve.

For instance, if you are predicted BCC (104 points) then you might consider one application in the BBB-BBC range. Three applications should be entered at BCC and one application should be CCC or slightly lower.

NB: Please be aware that some universities don't recognise an A* as being worth more points than an A grade.

If you have any queries regarding the above, please see your Tutor, Mr Way or Mrs Darvill for clarification. You can also use the UCAS website to check the entry requirements for each university.

Table for your calculations

Subjects	Predicted Grades	UCAS points

HOW TO WRITE YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

Your statement will be the most important two sides of A4 that you ever write (4000 characters – 47 lines) so you need to get it right.

What are the Universities looking for in your Statement?

Communication Skills

The statement gives admissions officers an insight into your ability to communicate information concisely and clearly, as well as looking at your grammar and sentence structure.

Analytical Skills

Students often list or describe what they have done/are doing, but forget to say **how** this has benefited their development, what they have learned from it and how the skills acquired will help them at University and beyond.

Maturity

A good statement provides evidence that you are mature of thought, responsible and can adapt to any environment.

What should I include and how should I structure it?

While there is more than one way to structure the statement, as a general rule there should be a section on each of the following themes:

- At least 60% of your statement should be subject-related
- Why do you want to study and what first sparked this interest?
- What makes you 'tick' as a person / future plans / career aspirations
- Details of any other qualifications that you have not included elsewhere on the application form e.g. Duke of Edinburgh Award, Young Enterprise, etc.
- Extra-curricular interests, part time work along with any positions of responsibility held.
- Work experience/voluntary work.
- Personal qualities e.g. organised, conscientious etc.
- Concluding paragraph e.g. what you have to offer a university, what you want to get out of the experience and career aspirations.

General advice

- Don't just say what you have done; also state what you have learned from those experiences, e.g. skills, lessons learned etc.
- Try to come across as bright, interesting, mature and eager to learn
- Keep to a structure; have a theme for each paragraph and don't jump around!
- Don't worry about filling up all 47 lines; rambling is likely to be counterproductive. However, only writing 25 lines would not be a good idea either.
- Don't unnecessarily repeat information that already appears on the application form.
- Get someone else to read it through as it is often difficult to spot your own mistakes.
- A good personal statement will go through at least 4 or 5 drafts.
- Sell yourself in as positive a light as possible, but be honest as well.
- If you were highlighted as being on the Gifted and Talented register then include it.
- Try to grab the reader's interest immediately. A quote, a funny incident from childhood, a defining moment are all good ideas **BUT** they are only effective if they are relevant and not too 'sickly'.

More specific advice

- If you are applying for a creative/performing arts course, or a vocational course such as nursing or teaching, your personal statement is even more important. Say what you have done or seen to inspire you in that field.
- If you are applying for courses in vocational areas such as teacher-training, medicine, veterinary science, dentistry or physiotherapy, you should have been on some form of work experience in that field. Include this information with locations and dates.
- If you plan to take a gap year, give a reason for this in your statement.
- If you are a sportsperson, don't just say what you play and at what level; say why you play that particular sport, and what commitment you have had to show to perform at that level.

Interview a partner to stimulate your thinking/planning for the personal statement (or a letter of application for a job)

Questions to ask them:

- Which course(s) or areas of work are you interested in?
- Why are you interested in this area?
- When did you first become interested in this area of study/work and why?
- Has anyone inspired you to be interested in this area of study/work? If yes, how did they inspire you?
- What would you like to be doing as a career in 5 years' time?
- What have you been doing for personal development and what have you learned from it?
- What skills do you have – what are you good at?
- What are your best qualities as a person?
- Do you have a part time job? If yes, what have you learned from it?
- Have you held any positions of responsibility or leadership in/outside of school? If yes, what did you learn from it?
- Have you done any volunteering/charity work? If yes, what did you get out of it?
- What extra-curricular activities do you do? Why do you enjoy them and what have you learned from them?
- Give an example of where you have learned from your mistakes and have changed as a result?
- What plans are you going to put in place now to get you to where you want to be:
 - This time next year?
 - Who can help you to do this?
 - In 5 years' time?
 - Who can help you to do this?

EXAMPLES OF PERSONAL STATEMENTS

DRAMA

As a child I was very shy and self-conscious. When this started to become an issue affecting my work in primary school, my teacher suggested that I take drama classes in a bid to boost my confidence. When I started the classes, it was like a door had opened in my life. Drama transformed me from someone who hardly talked at all to a confident, collected person. It has really helped me to come out of my shell.

However, it wasn't until I started landing professional acting roles that I considered a career in the performing arts. In the West End I have done three musicals and a Brian Friel play. I revisited my character in *The Full Monty* when the producer requested that I be in the national tour. My most notable screen credits are a prime time comedy series and a TV film. I feel honoured to have worked with so many talented performers. They are an inspiration to me. I have also performed in amateur productions at school and with a local youth theatre. What I love about acting is that you can transform yourself into different people. To escape from myself and pretend to be someone else is something that I have a great passion for. I thrive off the buzz that I get when I am on stage and getting a reaction from the audience.

This year I was selected out of more than 4000 people to be in the National Youth Theatre. The NYT acting course was the best two weeks of my life. Successful acting practitioners and industry professionals taught us techniques such as peripheral vision, moving as an ensemble, mask work and voice. It was this course that confirmed to me that I should pursue my ambition to become an actor, as I loved every minute of it. Now that I am a member of NYT, I am more confident in my ability to succeed in the profession. After primary school, I was offered a place at the Arts Educational and a scholarship at Ravenscourt Theatre School, but I decided to get a grammar school education.

At school, I was recognised as being a mature and responsible person that students look up to, and after a gruelling interview process I was awarded Senior Student (Prefect) status. I was also in the choir. For A level, I am doing English Literature to expand my knowledge of drama texts and how to analyse them. With A Level Drama I have learnt to explore classic texts and devise my own work, whilst also gaining background knowledge of the origins of theatre and practitioners such as Stanislavski and Mike Leigh. In Performing Arts I get to devise work, perform it and learn about the performing arts industry.

I am constantly thinking of my career in my spare time; I go to the gym regularly – because you are required to be fit as an actor. I watch TV dramas, films and go to the theatre to expose myself to the maximum amount of acting as possible. I try to absorb techniques of the great actors in the media. My friends and I went to an acting master class by Maxine Peake. I make comedy videos with a friend and we hope to take our material to the Edinburgh Fringe festival. I took classes in ballet, tap and modern dance for about 3 years and I take singing lessons; I have won singing festivals and I am doing my grade 7 singing exam next year. I play piano at a basic level.

I am also passionate about caring for the environment and I do lots to reduce global warming. I also campaign for Friends of The Earth, Greenpeace and PETA. A drama course will help me to find myself and unearth who I am as an actor. I want to be stretched, challenged and pushed to the limits.

From what I have read and studied about acting, I have learned that the majority of working actors have received formal professional training.

All of the actors I have worked with have trained at drama schools, and I want to follow in their steps. I want to get the best start in the acting world and be trained by the best teachers. I have passion, determination and motivation and I will stop at nothing to achieve my goal.

GEOGRAPHY

My interest in Geography stems from my fascination for the dynamic physical and human processes that shape the earth, both past and present. I wish to pursue Geography and further expand my knowledge at University.

My enthusiasm for Geography first developed during family holidays when I experienced aspects of physical geography. In Crete, I walked part way through the Samaria gorge and saw how water cut deeply through the rocks and substratum. From a distance, I could see the folds in the mountains. In Tobago, I walked through a tropical rainforest and experienced its distinct micro climate from the rest of the island. I find these different features and landscapes intriguing and captivating. As such, I am keen to learn about the processes that have shaped our world and continue to shape it today. I have also enjoyed Geography Fieldtrips: from investigating patterns of the River Chess, to examining the beach profiles at Hengistbury Head. Through team effort and cooperation, my group successfully carried out a geographical enquiry including planning the methodology, presenting, analysing and drawing conclusions from the data we collected.

Throughout school, I have consistently been recognised as hard working and enthusiastic. I have volunteered to help edit the fashion section in the new school magazine. My team-working ability is shown in the production of the Sixth Form school prospectus, where my ideas contributed towards the cinematography and editing. Recognised as a friendly, approachable person, I was nominated to lead the making of the video for the prospectus. In 2010, I volunteered to assist at the Year 6 Open Evening and I gave tours of the school and advice to parents and students. These experiences have enhanced both my social skills and my confidence. I see these skills as important to the study of Geography; liaising, coordinating and collaborating with others in order to successfully achieve high quality research.

I was a Prefect and Curriculum Leader for Drama where I successfully managed younger years through clubs and events. I was then nominated and selected as a Senior Leader for Drama, Physical Education and Music, but this time leading and motivating the Year 10 Prefects. Being a 'role model' increased my confidence and leadership skills and has further improved my communication skills. I was also shortlisted for the role of Head Girl at Sixth Form.

Beyond education, I have a part time job at Waitrose which has enhanced my time management and interpersonal skills. At a recent one to one review I received positive feedback on all aspects of my work ethic. In primary school, I learnt to play the recorder and then progressed to the flute in 2006. I am now studying for Grade 6 flute and I am determined to continue playing to improve my technique. Weekly flute lessons have expanded my organisation skills as I play and practise around school work and my part time job; I intend to join a musical society at University.

Studying English at A-Level has taught me to write fluently and proficiently, and to be critically analytical. In Media Studies, my practical coursework has expanded my creativity, while the theory has made me understand our postmodern society and the way we live with media. In Geography, I am broadening my knowledge through wider reading and I have started read the publication 'Geography Review' to strengthen and expand my understanding.

I am a determined individual and I have a great enthusiasm for Geography. I am excited about the prospect of embarking on a course at University and I am looking forward to the challenges it will bring.

MIDWIFERY

As the eldest of four children, I have always been surrounded by children and babies. As I watched my mother go through the stages of pregnancy, I was intrigued with all aspects of pregnancy and the miracle of childbirth. When the community midwife visited my sister, I became inspired to research her role and my desire for midwifery was sparked. Midwives provide care for a diverse range of women throughout pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period by giving support and advice. Being the first point of contact, the relationship a midwife builds with women and families appeals to me, as well as the challenging and jubilant moments midwifery entails. From reading Maria Anderson's 'Tales of a Midwife', I understand more about a community midwife's role and I would feel very privileged to work in this type of caring and supportive position. I regularly read articles on the Royal College of Midwives' website, as well as forums on StudentMidwife.Net; these have exposed me to the recent issues which challenge this field of medicine like the shortage of midwives in Britain.

My ability to communicate ideas clearly and confidently is an essential skill as it forms the pivotal role between the mother, midwife and other medical professionals. These relationships built on trust can be the most important in the mother's labour experience. As a Geographer I have a broad understanding of how lifestyles and cultures influence people's behaviour and perceptions. This will benefit me when working within areas of contrasting wealth and race, where midwives must be accepting of the circumstances in which women live. I recently read an article entitled 'Reading level linked to pregnancy' (RCM), which gave me an understanding of the impact that race and poverty have on teenage pregnancy, a field that particularly interests me.

I have secured voluntary work at Wexham Park Hospital's maternity unit which will commence in November. I will be a Breast Feeding Support Worker for UNICEF'S Baby Friendly Initiative, which will include two days training by midwives to prepare me for the role. I am excited by this opportunity and hope to develop my interpersonal skills. In December I will begin volunteering at the Chalfont Sure Start Centre (in a Tiny Toes class- a session focused on parents under 21 years old.) I will be trained for this role and I look forward to building relationships with young mothers to help them adjust to their parental role.

I currently volunteer at Childlink Learning Centre, looking after and encouraging the learning of babies; I enjoy witnessing the growth in their development. I also work at Waitrose and have previously worked at Explore Learning. Both jobs involve responsibility, team work and working under pressure - the skills needed for a midwife. Being employed has taught me to manage my time; in the same way midwifery will demand me to work early, late and night shifts. It has also taught me to be flexible as well as objective, which will enable me to be a strong advocate for women, and be adaptable to their individual needs.

In school I am responsible for running the school magazine and the student council. I am part of the student cover scheme and was nominated for Head Girl, reflecting the respect that teachers have towards me. I also assist in learning support. Being involved in extracurricular activities reflects my caring and interpersonal qualities. In my free time I enjoy trampolining, where I train and compete for a club. This enables me to keep fit and healthy and work towards new goals and achievements.

I am excited by the prospect of being able to care for women of all ages, circumstances, religions and cultures, and to share the precious moment of delivering a new life into this world. Although midwifery will be testing, I believe that overcoming this will be part of what makes the career so rewarding, and I look forward to the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

MEDICINE

Medicine strives to give the best quality of life to patients. However, these disciplines pose the ethical question: "Just because we can do something, should we?" My grandmother took the decision to refuse further treatment on a clinical trial for cancer and to start palliative care. The actions of the healthcare professionals gave her back what no clinical treatment could; dignity! This highlighted how medicine requires compassion and empathy, not just a determination for clinical excellence. I strive to become a professional who could achieve this balance.

Work shadowing in hospital departments including surgery and radiology have helped me to understand how a hospital operates. Sitting in on multi-disciplinary team meetings provided me with an understanding of the importance of teamwork and communication between all of the agencies who contribute to the successful diagnosis and treatment of patients. I was fortunate to learn about physiology from the surgeons in the operating theatres, as well as having close contact with nurses and terminally ill patients. This gave me an insight into the emotional pressure of a career in medicine and I witnessed the importance of warmth, kindness and a good sense of humour. I was amazed at the diversity of issues that doctors face, but it confirmed that medicine is still the career for me. Accompanying a registrar during orthopedic ward rounds, I observed him employing effective communication skills to develop trust with patients. Shadowing a general surgeon at a hospital in India and Zurich, the experience of working in a foreign environment though daunting, emphasised that despite race, creed and circumstance the fundamental nature of human emotion does not change. Working in a dental practice, opticians, chiropractors and the National Society of Epilepsy have also given me further opportunity to gain knowledge in associated fields of practice. The PreMed Course provided an insight into a career in medicine, and being one of the first students in the UK to use the da Vinci Si Surgical System at Wexham Park Hospital further stimulated my passion. Volunteering at Bourne End playgroup involves working with disabled children. Creative group activities are challenging because students' concentration can be very limited. However, exposure to several disabilities has widened my understanding of how the needs of each individual must be respected and responded to.

Being a tutor at Explore Learning and mentoring GCSE students has shown me how to adapt to individuals, and the importance of a trusting relationship. While volunteering at a care home and a hospice, both patients and relatives highlighted the value of understanding human nature and my patience and empathic skills were enhanced; these experiences have further cemented my desire to become a doctor.

I am the captain of a regional netball club, enabling me to develop excellent organisational, team building and problem solving skills, and since Year 7 I have represented my school in Netball, Basketball and Athletics. In addition, taking part in a Special Olympics Programme gave me the opportunity to pass on my expertise in Netball by coaching young people with disabilities. This helped me to appreciate the impact of illness, the importance of physical activity on well-being, and also to understand my own desire to care for others. Being a volunteer for the Sikh society involved organising a Youth Camp in Seattle which broadened my cultural awareness. This has been highly rewarding and illustrated that hard work leads to success. My World Challenge expedition to China developed my skills in leadership, team work and determination. While there I participated in the refurbishment of an orphanage, and climbing Mount Emei Shan taught me the value of resilience and will power.

Understanding that commitment and perseverance are essential to becoming a doctor, I know that I have the tenacity and enthusiasm required to face this challenge.

PHYSIOTHERAPY

My decision to pursue a career in physiotherapy is motivated by personal experience. My grandmother suffered a spiral fracture of her humerus requiring plate surgery and physiotherapy rehabilitation. I felt great satisfaction in assisting with the home exercises and in seeing her mood lift as she regained movement and strength. After she washed her own hair for the first time again, I found it impossible to ignore the huge sense of achievement we both felt in this simple act and knew I had found a rewarding vocation.

I arranged my Year 10 work experience at Wexham Hospital in the pediatric ward. As a Care Assistant I was largely assigned to a child in traction, but was able to observe the work of visiting Physio and Occupational therapists. After a week I felt empathy for all the children, admired their courage and was confident in my choice of career. In February 2011, I obtained a placement at Chalfont Hospital Physio Unit, providing musculoskeletal and neurological outpatient services. During this week, I observed a range of manipulations for acute muscle injuries and was particularly interested in the use of acupuncture, a practice I had not previously associated with physiotherapy. More recently (September 2012), I secured a week of shadowing in the Physio Unit at Wexham Park Hospital, covering several rotational areas. In outpatients I participated in several classes for ankle and hand injuries where group task setting techniques were used. I witnessed examples of evidence based practice by way of joint mobilisation and soft tissue therapy; one patient had damaged his ulna nerve and palm surgery had left him with a claw hand. Ultrasound was used to break down the scar tissue allowing more movement. I noticed how closely the physio and occupational therapists worked, demonstrating the importance of a multidisciplinary approach. I enjoyed the hydrotherapy sessions, combining my interests in physiotherapy and swimming. It was clearly obvious how beneficial this treatment was to post-surgical joint replacement patients.

The A levels I am studying support my career selection. Biology is the most challenging and rewarding, particularly the human anatomy overlap with PE. Maths has improved my problem-solving techniques whilst Drama has improved my communication and teamwork skills. I enjoyed peer mentoring in Year 10, successfully completing the CSLA course in Year 11. I was also proud to be one of eight girls nominated by the teaching staff for the position of Head Girl.

I have participated in many sports but especially cherish my swimming achievements, all gained at a local swim school which I still attend for weekly squad endurance training. At fourteen, I joined the staff as a Poolside Assistant monitoring safety, aiding instructors and dealing with parent queries. At sixteen I completed an ASA Level 1 teaching award and have since worked as a swimming Instructor teaching eight hours of classes per week. This requires patience and is physically demanding. It has taught me many motivational techniques, the value of concise instructions and improved my ability to interact with all ages. At thirteen I began Scuba Diving with the BSAC and am now a qualified Sports Diver. Diving is high-risk and has reinforced the value of careful planning, risk assessment and teamwork.

Having watched my grandmother's rehabilitation, I know that the role of a physiotherapist reaches beyond simple manipulation. I have always been commended for my cheerfulness, diligence, academic determination and willingness to help others, and I believe that these strengths, together with those gained through personal experience will allow me to become a valued student of physiotherapy.

UNIVERSITY INTERVIEW ADVICE

- **Always** dress smartly for a **formal** interview
- Think about your body language:
 - shake hands
 - sit up, lean forward
 - maintain eye contact.
- Make sure you have a good knowledge of current affairs, particularly that week:
 - read a “quality” newspaper for that day/week
 - know about the issues/debates which are topical in your field of study.
- Don’t be thrown by a question – if you don’t understand it, ask them to re-state the question. If they ask a question with no obvious answer, ask for time to work it out – they are testing your problem solving skills.
- Know your statement inside out; this is part of what got you this far, and the interview will probably be based around it.
- Show passion for your subject, not just in **what** you say but **how** you say it.
- Make sure you have some work experience for areas such as teaching and medical courses.
- Know a little bit about the history of the university, and about the course details in depth.
- Have an answer to the question, “Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?”
- Other potential questions: “What are your strengths/what are your weaknesses?” Don’t be **too** honest with the second one.
- Have some questions for them at the end of the interview.
- Shake hands when you leave.

RUSSELL GROUP UNIVERSITIES

The following 24 universities are part of the 'Russell Group' of universities. These universities are considered by many to be the elite universities, with higher levels of academic excellence in terms of both teaching and research. We are increasingly getting more students in to these universities and we would like to continue that trend. In general, you will need to be achieving grade A's and B's across all of your courses to be successful with an application to one of these universities.

- University of Birmingham
- University of Bristol
- University of Cambridge
- Cardiff University
- Durham University
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Exeter
- University of Glasgow
- Imperial College London
- King's College London
- University of Leeds
- University of Liverpool
- London School of Economics & Political Science
- University of Manchester
- Newcastle University
- University of Nottingham
- University of Oxford
- Queen Mary University of London
- Queen's University Belfast
- University of Sheffield
- University of Southampton
- University College London
- University of Warwick
- University of York

TOP RATED 100+ UNIVERSITIES

(The Complete University Guide)

The Complete University Guide produces tables that rank UK universities by: **entry standards, student satisfaction, research quality and graduate prospects**. The university with the best overall score across these four areas is in first place but some universities may have higher scores in different categories.

Click here for: [The complete university guide top 100+](#)

[You can sort](#) the rankings for the area most relevant to you and may find some surprising information. For instance, St George's, University of London comes out first for graduate prospects, while Imperial College, London comes out top for Research quality. You can also find further rankings tables by course/subject area (these are just some of them):

Overall ranking

Accounting & Finance

Aeronautical & Manufacturing Engineering

Agriculture & Forestry

American Studies

Anatomy & Physiology

Anthropology

> Archaeology

Architecture

Art & Design

Aural & Oral Sciences

Biological Sciences

Building

Business & Management Studies

Celtic Studies

Chemical Engineering

Chemistry

Civil Engineering

Classics & Ancient History

Communication & Media Studies

Complementary Medicine

Computer Science

Creative Writing

Dentistry

Drama, Dance & Cinematics

East & South Asian Studies

Economics

Education

Electrical & Electronic Engineering

English

Food Science

Forensic Science

French

General Engineering

Geography & Environmental Science

Geology

German

History

History of Art, Architecture & Design

Hospitality, Leisure, Recreation & Tourism

Iberian Languages

Italian

Land & Property Management

Law

Librarianship & Information Management

Linguistics

Marketing

Materials Technology

Mathematics

Mechanical Engineering

Medical Technology

Medicine

Middle Eastern & African Studies

Music

Nursing

Occupational Therapy

Optometry, Ophthalmology & Orthoptics

Pharmacology & Pharmacy

Philosophy

Physics & Astronomy

Physiotherapy

Politics

Psychology

Russian & East European Languages

Social Policy

Social Work

Sociology

Sports Science

Theology & Religious Studies

Town & Country Planning and Landscape Design

Veterinary Medicine

Please remember that these rankings are just for guidance and individual courses may be better/worse than the overall university ranking suggests.

What do the rankings mean?

Entry standards

The average UCAS tariff score of new undergraduate students.

Where does it come from?

HESA data for 2018–19.

How does it work?

Each student's examination results were converted to a numerical score (A level A*=56 A=48, B=40... E=16, etc; Scottish Highers A=33, B=27, etc) and added up to give a score total. HESA then calculated an average for all students at the university. The results were then adjusted to take account of the subject mix at the university. Students on a foundation year were excluded.

What should you look out for?

A high average score (it is over 200, or more than A*AAA at A level, at some universities) does not mean that all students score so highly or that you need to take lots of A levels to get in. The actual grades needed will vary by subject and few if any courses will ask for grades in more than three subjects (even if some students do take more). Universities which have a specific policy of accepting students with low grades as part of an access policy will tend to have their average score depressed.

Student satisfaction (maximum score out of 5.00)

A measure of student views of the teaching quality at the university

Where does it come from?

The National Student Survey (NSS), a survey of final-year undergraduate students in 2019.

How does it work? The National Student Survey asked questions about a variety of aspects of teaching. The average satisfaction score for all questions except the three about learning resources was calculated and then adjusted for the subject mix at the university. Due to the distribution of the data, and to avoid this measure having an undue influence on the overall ranking, the z-score is divided by three.

What should you look out for? The survey is a measure of student opinion, not a direct measure of quality so it may be influenced by a variety of biases, such as the effect of prior expectations. A top-notch university expected to deliver really excellent teaching could score lower than a less good university which, while offering lower quality teaching, nonetheless does better than students expect from it. A few Scottish universities were not included in the survey and were given the average outcome for all universities in the survey.

Research Quality (maximum score 4.00)

A measure of the quality of the research undertaken in the university.

Where does it come from? The 2019 Research Excellence Framework (REF) undertaken by the funding councils.

How does it work? Each university department entered in the assessment exercise achieved a quality profile which gave the proportion of research in each of four categories from 4* to 1* (with any remaining activity being unclassified). For the research assessment measure, the categories 4* to 1* were given a numerical value of 4 to 1 which allowed a grade point average to be calculated. An overall average was then calculated weighted according to the number of staff in each department.

What should you look out for? Universities could decide who they wanted to return for the REF. In some cases, quite good researchers were omitted as a way of getting the best possible quality profile.

Graduate Prospects (maximum score 100.0)

A measure of the employability of a university's first degree graduates.

Where does it come from?

HESA data for 2018–19.

How does it work? The number of graduates who take up employment or further study divided by the total number of graduates with a known destination, expressed as a percentage. Only employment in an area that normally recruits graduates was included. The results were then adjusted to take account of the subject mix at the university.

What should you look out for? A relatively low score on this measure does not mean that many graduates were unemployed. It may be that some had low-level jobs such as shop assistants, which do not normally recruit graduates. Some universities recruit a high proportion of local students and so if they are located in an area where graduate jobs are hard to come by this can depress the outcome.

USEFUL WEB SITES

www.ucas.com/dashboard

www.whatuni.com

www.thestudentroom.co.uk

www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk

www.realuni.com

www.direct.gov.uk/unistats

www.unipodadvice.com

www.bestcourse4me.com