

USEFUL RESOURCES FOR 16+

We've pulled together a range of useful 16+ resources to use as a starting point when exploring your options at this level.

Whatever you choose to do, this section of your planner should give you some food for thought, all in one place. For more information on the 6 areas below go to www.oodlesof.info

Promote yourself

CV help

Gap year advice

Making decisions

Useful post-16 websites

UCAS guidance

PROMOTING YOURSELF IN PERSON

First impressions count. Whether getting ‘suited and booted’ for a job interview or meeting with a careers advisor, the people we encounter read us instantly. Here are some quick tips to help you create the right impression:

Appearance?

Your clothing, posture and speech are very important because impressions are made within seconds. Ensure that your appearance is appropriate for the situation.

Attitude

Employers want to see enthusiasm, so be positive in the way you speak and open with your body language. Smile, make eye contact, and show that you have done plenty of research. Prepare questions that you can ask.

Personality

Let your personality shine through, but remember you need to impress. Be sensitive to the needs and culture of the organisation and show them how well you would fit into it.



A close-up photograph of a man with short brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a dark grey suit jacket over a light blue shirt. He is looking down at a document he is holding in his hands. The background is a blurred office setting with vertical blinds. A large purple rectangular overlay covers the right side of the image, containing the title and list.

PROMOTING YOURSELF ON PAPER

Applications

- Follow instructions about how to complete forms very carefully
- They may include a guide on what needs to be included. Don't underestimate its importance.
- Make sure details are accurate. Information like your qualifications may be checked and errors won't act in your favour.
- A supporting statement is your opportunity to promote your skills and persuade the reader that you are the best candidate. Don't be shy about yourself but don't lie.
- Read, read and read again. Get others to read it for you, it's easy to overlook errors you have made.
- A deadline is a deadline. The likelihood of an application being accepted after the closing date is very slim.

CVS

When writing a CV or filling in an application form, it is essential that you get it right. Small mistakes will show up to a discerning reader who may reject your application as a result.

CVs should include:

- **Personal information:** Name, address & relevant social media presence.
- **Hobbies & interests:** Genuine hobbies that have given you demonstrable skills.
- **Education & training:** Schools/colleges you attended and the qualifications attained.
- **Skills summary:** A useful section for highlighting your best attributes.
- **Employment:** Start with the most recent first. Include role details.
- **Referees:** Two people who are happy to write references for you. A tutor and employer are good choices.
- **Voluntary work:** What skills has it helped you to develop?

Layout & Presentation:

- Print it on good quality paper.
- Don't adorn it with pictures or fancy borders.
- Keep sentences short & factual.
- Don't include information like height, ethnicity or parenthood status.
- Don't include testimonials from other people.
- Be honest about your skills and achievements.
- Make sure the layout is clear and flows in a logical order.

Sample CV

Dan Matthews

20 Oakham Avenue, Westham WO20 6TY

T: 01999 212232 M: 07201 144417

E: dan.matthews@matthews.info

Twitter: @danmatthews

Education:

Westham High School:

GCSEs: Maths B; English Literature B; English Language C; Biology B; French A; History A; Geography B; ICT A; Art and Design B; Music A*

The College, Westham:

A Levels: History A; Music A; Economics B

Awards: I gained Grade 8 in Guitar in 2012; Perfect Attendance (3 years running – 2009-2012); Westham Award for Contribution to Live Music 2011

I am planning to undertake a Guitar Teaching Diploma in the near future.

Employment and work experience:

- 2014-present: assistant in Buy the Book, independent bookseller (weekends) – skills developed include: responding quickly to a range of challenging enquiries; researching and ordering new stock for the music, psychology and history sections; and working with authors to promote their work to the local community
- 2011-2013: assistant in Guitarman, music shop (weekends) – skills developed include: advising customers on appropriate instruments; sourcing sheet music to sell; maintaining an information board for local bands and music teachers
- 2012-present: blogger on Musomadness, blog for young performers – skills developed include: writing copy to deadline; responding to readers comments

Voluntary work

- Worked on the Kids Make Music project for disadvantaged children in Westham during the Summer of 2014 tutoring children and preparing them for their concert
- Volunteer for Westham Theatre working on front of house duties for major events – 2011-present

Hobbies and interests

Music is important to me and I play at local live events on a regular basis with my band. I also keep fit by running and have taken part in sponsored 5k & 10k events.

Referees

Mr David Walton, Head of Music, The College, Westham WO21 3ER

Mrs Annie Mason, Owner, Guitarman, High Street, Westham WO22 5RT

TAKING A GAP YEAR

Not everyone wants to go straight into higher education or employment after finishing school.

Every year lots of young people decide to take gap years, usually between finishing school and starting at university or work.

You might want to travel abroad and experience different cultures, or alternatively stay close to home – the choice is yours...

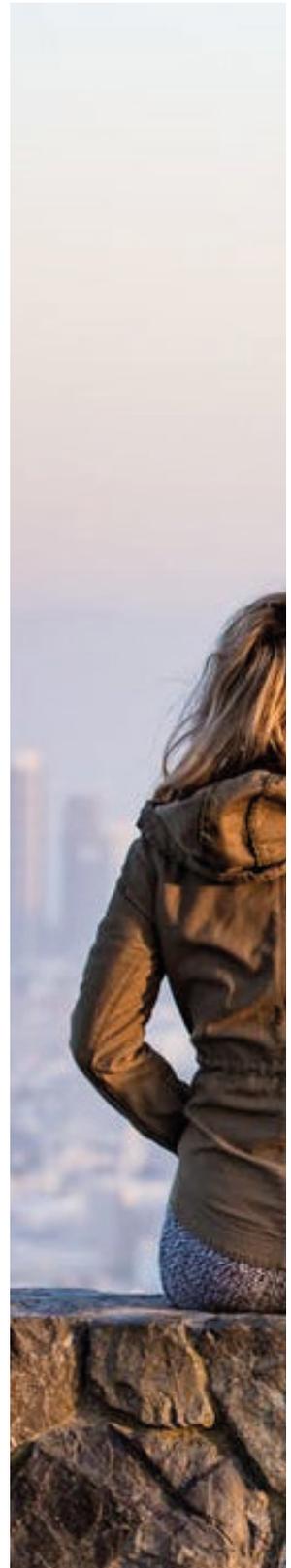
What can I do on a gap year?

All sorts! You can gain new skills, volunteer or work abroad, start a new hobby, learn a new language, raise money for charity... the possibilities really are endless:

- Cultural programmes – you could think about teaching the arts in underprivileged schools.
- Work with animals – consider working in animal surgeries or shelters.
- Environmental work – conservation projects could give you the chance to work with endangered wildlife, protect rainforests and more.
- Youth work – think about donating your time to social work in schools or orphanages. Community projects can really make a difference.

Teaching English abroad:

- You won't normally need a degree for this, a good grasp of the English language is usually enough.
- Consider volunteering in schools beforehand or gaining a TEFL qualification to build up experience.
- Each country has different requirements for its TEFL teachers so make sure you carry out appropriate research to find out what you'll need to do.





Can I afford a year out?

There are all sorts of ways to pay for your gap year, including:

- Getting a part-time job
- Fundraising – particularly effective if you'll be doing charity work during your gap year
- Selling items you no longer need
- Taking a bank loan – make sure you're aware of exactly how much interest you'll pay and the repayment deadline

Remember to finish paying for any monthly standing orders or direct debits before you leave!

Other things to consider:

- If you're planning to travel, make sure you've got adequate coverage when it comes to travel insurance.
- Will you be joining friends on your gap year? If so then you may need to adapt your plans accordingly.
- Play to your strengths – pick an activity that makes use of the skills you already have, so you can build on them.
- Think ahead. Will a year out give you relevant skills and experience for your desired career path?

Will it affect my chances of getting a job?

- A fulfilling gap year can be a great way of making your CV stand out.
- Drawing on interesting examples of new skills learnt could give you something different to talk about during an interview.
- Bear in mind that if you haven't put much thought into your gap year plans then it could be seen as a negative gap on your CV.

MAKING DECISIONS AFTER GCSE'S

Making decisions can be particularly difficult when you're at the 16+ stage.

Even if you know exactly what you want to do in life, there will still be decisions to make along the way.

Feeling unsure? Ask yourself the following:

- Do I want to do further study?
- Do I want to do some training for a particular job?
- Do I want to train or study alongside working?
- What will give me the most options in the future?
- Do I know what all my options are?
- Can I currently afford to do what I want to do?

Afraid of making the wrong decision?

Don't worry! If you ask for help, you won't miss any opportunities. Talk through your decisions with someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent and you'll have the chance to go over all the pros and cons.





POST-16 SITES...

There are loads of great online resources offering help for all aspects of post-16 life. Try some of the below as a starting point...

www.oodlesof.info

... is the place to find out about your next steps.

www.ucas.com

...is full of info about courses and applying for uni

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

...has advice & suggestions for anyone not going to uni

www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

...can help you decide what to do next

www.themix.org.uk

...a support service for young people in the UK.

www.prospects.ac.uk

...is full of career and work experience guidance.

natwest.mymoneysense.com/home

... has important financial information tailored to young people.

www.vinspired.com

...volunteering opportunities to help you make your mark.

It's time to explore your options



Apprenticeships



Internships



Gap years



University



College



Study abroad



Employment

Discover the right path for you at
ucas.com/what-are-my-options



UCAS

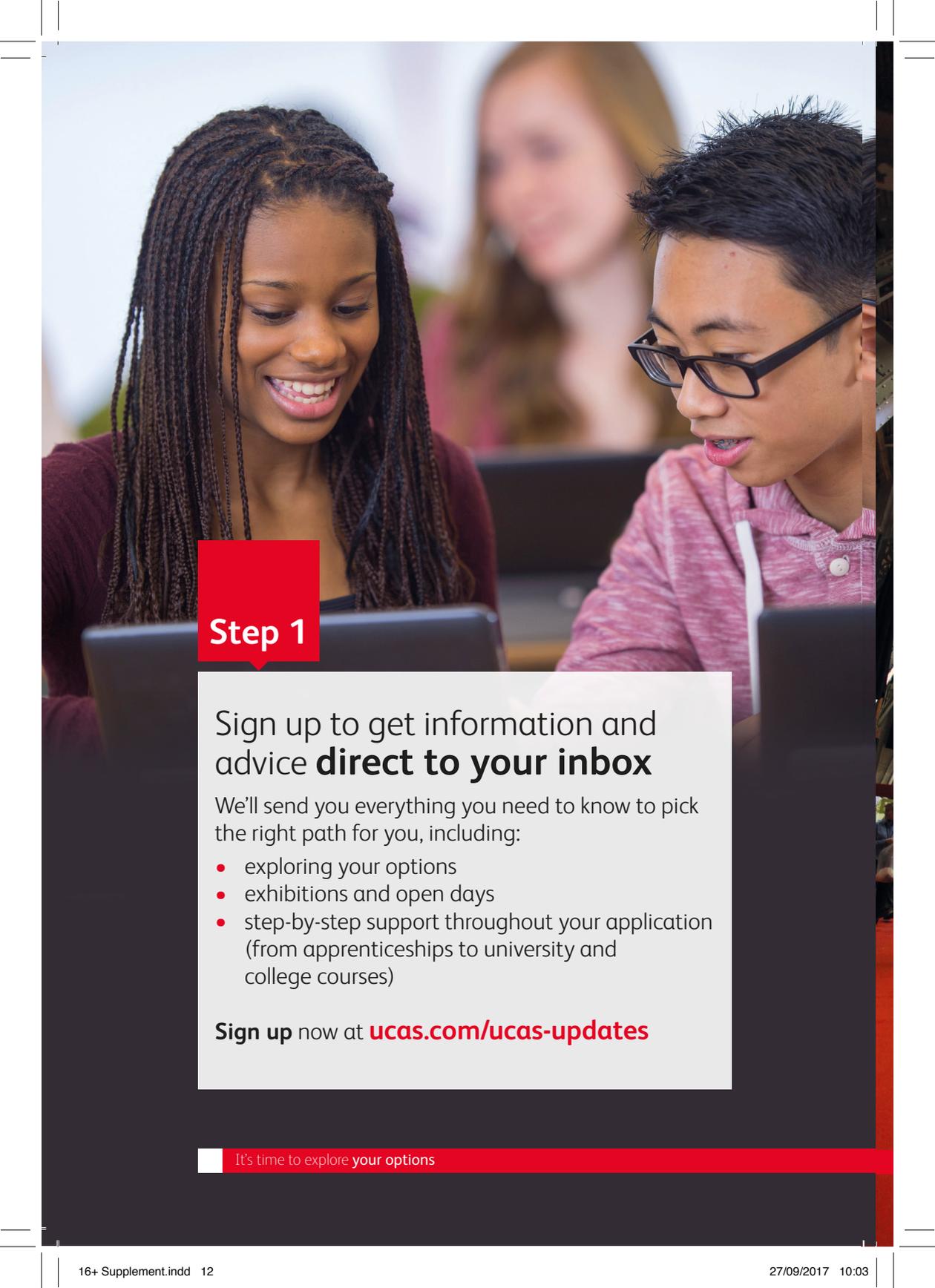
My personal statement timeline

Start your journey to a winning personal statement



Now relax

Give yourself time to plan and write your personal statement



Step 1

Sign up to get information and advice **direct to your inbox**

We'll send you everything you need to know to pick the right path for you, including:

- exploring your options
- exhibitions and open days
- step-by-step support throughout your application (from apprenticeships to university and college courses)

Sign up now at ucas.com/ucas-updates

It's time to explore **your options**



Step 2

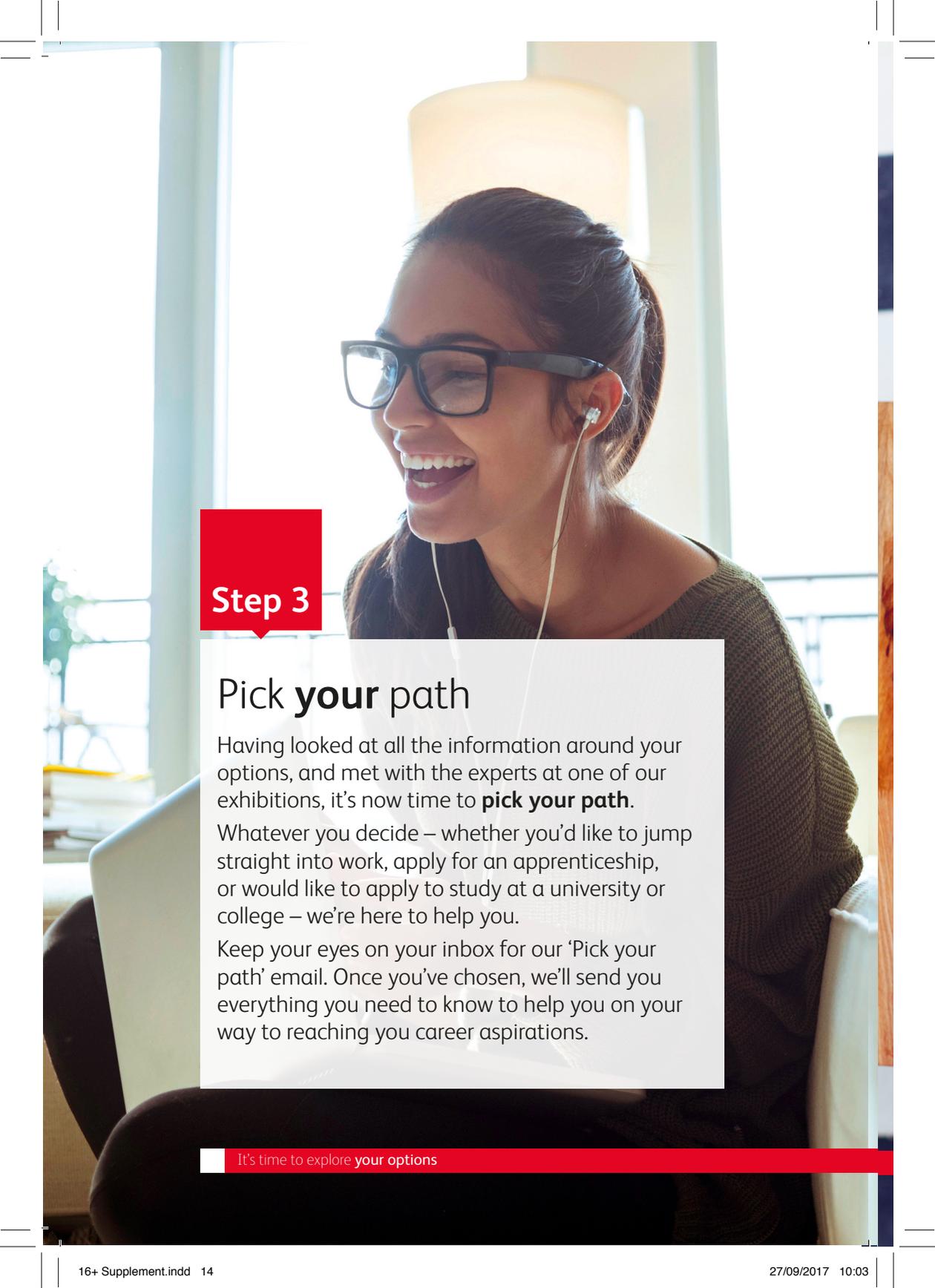
Go to an exhibition – they're free!

There are over **50 exhibitions** all over the UK – from Orkney to Cornwall, via West Wales, Northern Ireland, and East Anglia – so there's bound to be one near you. There's no better place to explore your options and meet:

- universities and colleges
- employers offering apprenticeships
- gap year providers
- current students
- other soon-to-be students

ucas.com/exhibitions

It's time to explore **your options**



Step 3

Pick **your** path

Having looked at all the information around your options, and met with the experts at one of our exhibitions, it's now time to **pick your path**.

Whatever you decide – whether you'd like to jump straight into work, apply for an apprenticeship, or would like to apply to study at a university or college – we're here to help you.

Keep your eyes on your inbox for our 'Pick your path' email. Once you've chosen, we'll send you everything you need to know to help you on your way to reaching your career aspirations.

It's time to explore **your** options



Dive into the **detail**

As well as our **information-packed website**, we also have:

- **videos** – over 1,500 of them, covering everything from work, money, and uni life, to helping you complete your application
- **personal statement advice** – if you decide uni is right for you, we've got video guides, timelines, worksheets, and a personal statement tool, all designed to help you find out how to get started and what to write about
- **social media** – we update our social channels everyday with news, hints and tips, where to find useful tools and info, competitions, and much more
- **blogs** – whether you want to hear from current students, other applicants, or experts on things like student finance, take a look at our blog
- **web chats** – live and interactive, our web chats cover all sorts of topics from personal statements and uni life, to Clearing and student loans
- **case studies** – read about the experiences of dozens of students of all ages and backgrounds

Get connected – **ucas.com/stay-connected**

It's time to explore **your options**

Key dates and deadlines

2017

9 May – You can start searching for undergraduate courses starting in 2018.

23 May – You can start filling in your application for 2018 undergraduate courses.

6 September – You can send your application for 2018 courses to UCAS.

15 October (18:00 UK time) – Application deadline for all courses at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and most courses in medicine, veterinary science/medicine, and dentistry.

2018

15 January (18:00 UK time) – Application deadline for the majority of undergraduate courses.

24 March (18:00 UK time) – Application deadline for some art and design courses.

30 June (18:00 UK time) – The last date for sending UCAS applications for courses starting in 2018. Applications received after this deadline are automatically entered into Clearing.

20 September (18:00 UK time) – Final deadline for applications to courses starting in 2018.