

Parents' and Carers' Guide to Higher Education



Anna Young
Director of Progression Guidance

Tuesday 11 March 2025

Tonight's programme

- Work experience partners – 8 Billion Ideas 'The Internship'
- Applying to university from Esher Sixth Form College:
- Context – Higher Education in the UK 2025 - *Anna Young*
- How to support your student to choose a university and course
– *Paul Drinkwater, Schools and Colleges Liaison Officer, Southampton University*
- The process at Esher Sixth Form College – *Anna Young*
- *We can take quick questions at the front at the end*
- *Slides will be sent out to all parents*



04/05/06 JUNE

THE INTERNSHIP ²⁰²⁵

MEET 3 INFLUENTIAL GUEST
SPEAKERS OVER 3 INSPIRING DAYS



Tickets available NOW on College Shop

Ali Zahoor - 8 Billionideas

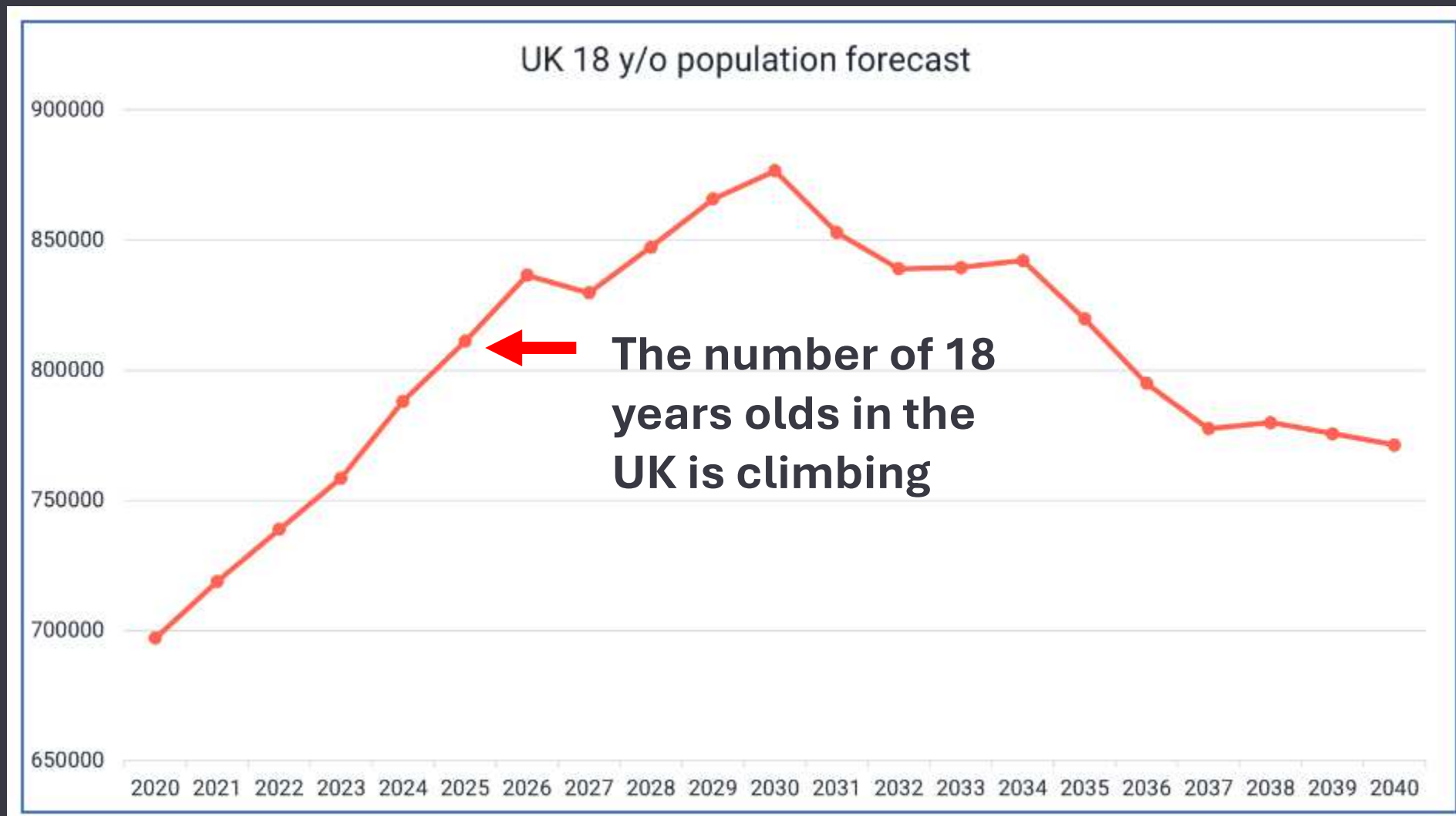
Higher Education in 2025: Context



Anna Young

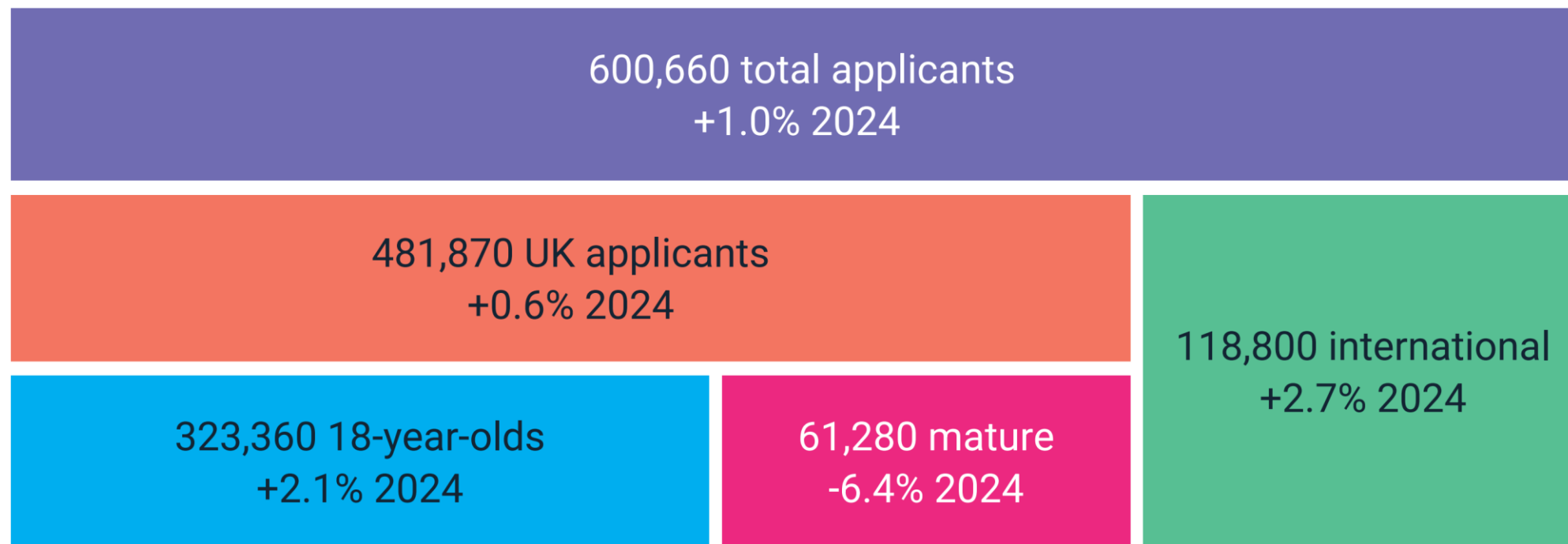
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The current Higher Education climate



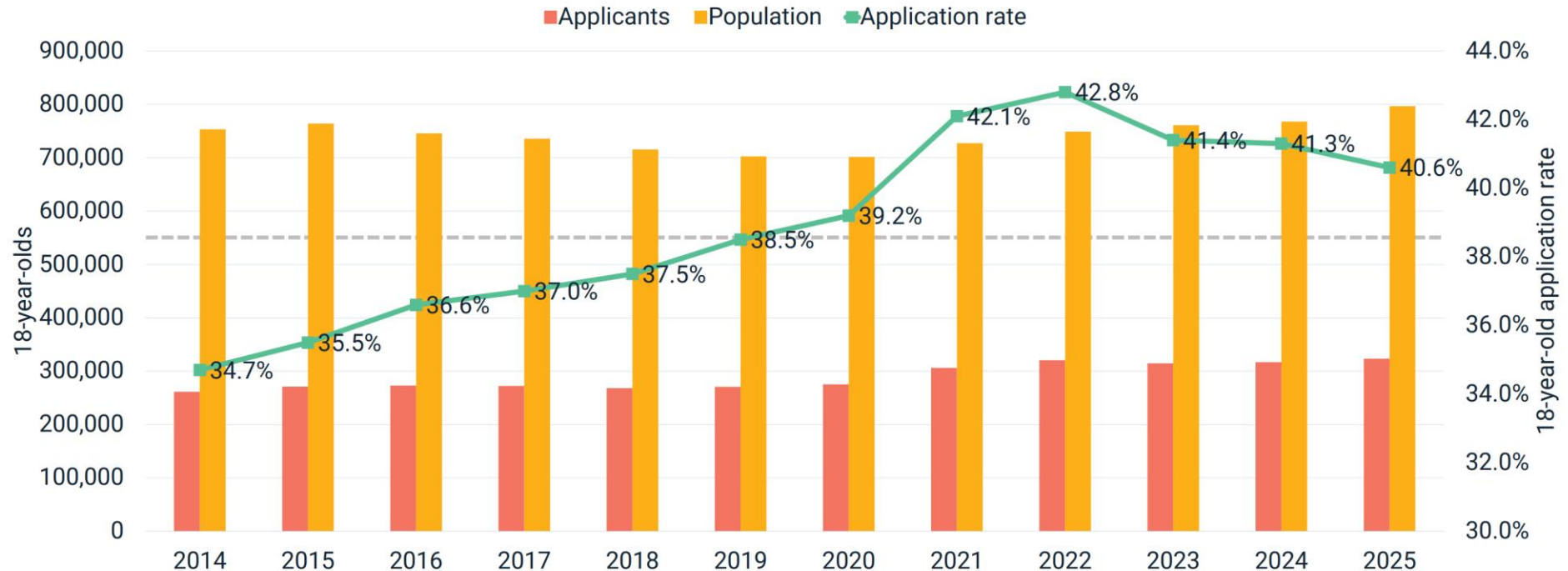
Source: HESA

KEY FIGURES – APPLICANTS



A record high for international and UK 18-year-old applicants.

APPLICATION RATE DROPS WITH POPULATION SURGE



The current HE climate

- A mixed picture!
- UCAS tells us there will be 45,000 extra applications each year until 2030
- Project 'Journey to a Million' [What is the journey to a million? | Undergraduate | UCAS](#)
- It is likely that university applications will gradually become more competitive until 2030
- Downwards pressure – cost of living pressures – not a straightforward picture
- Medium / lower tariff “recruiting” universities - more of a buyer’s market
- Competition for places at top universities will remain as tough as ever

Why Go To Uni?

- There are many careers which still require a degree
- Graduates earn more: HESA reports an average graduate starting salary of £27,340
- You enjoy studying and want to continue!



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° ũŕĒi yzšĀĀĒŭĀ ĀĒĀv° yzî

Paul Drinkwater,
Southampton University

The UCAS application process at Esher Sixth Form College



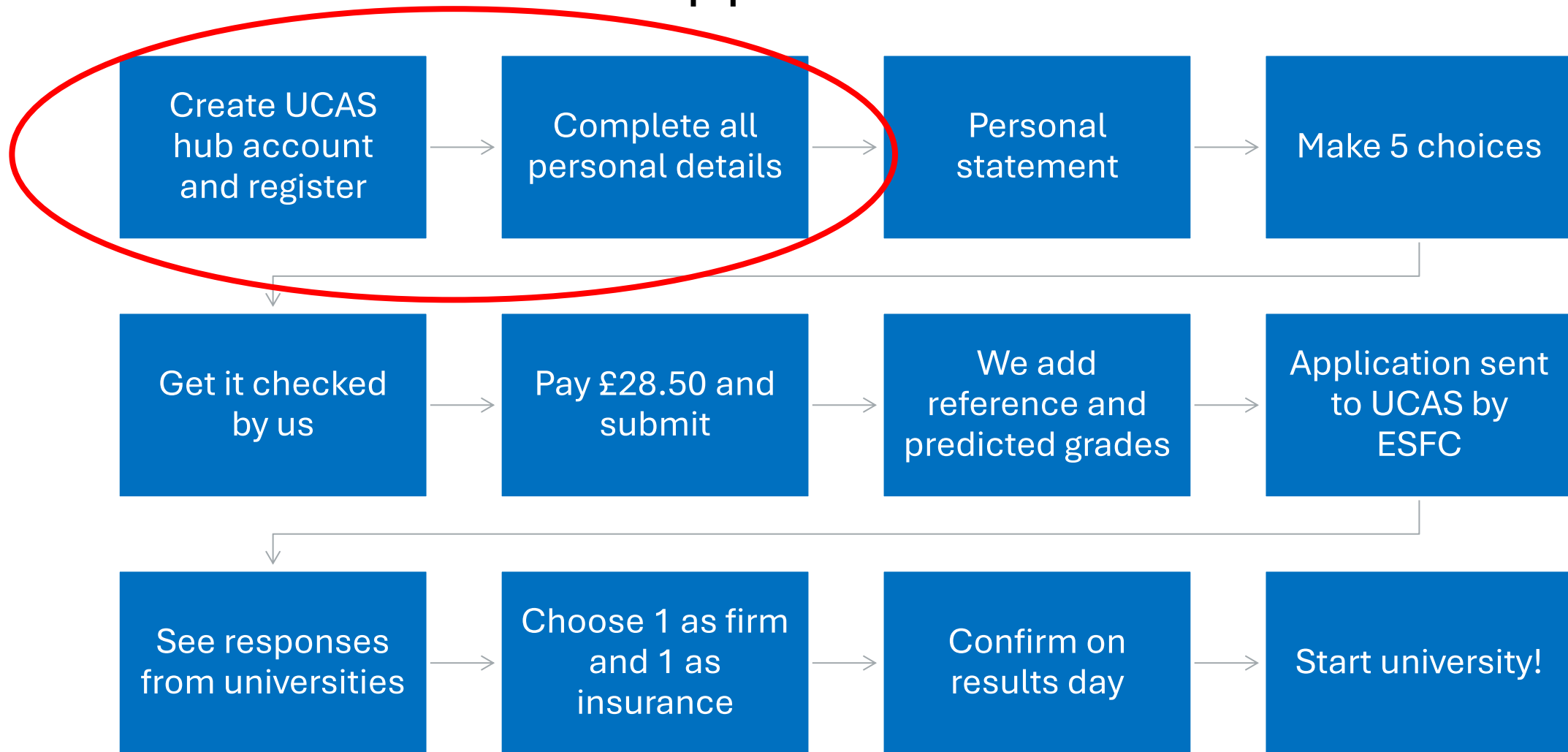
Anna Young

Director of Progression Guidance

Create UCAS hub account and register

- On After Esher Day (24 June 2025)
- Create a UCAS hub account
- Link application to ESFC with a buzzword
- Complete all personal details (*harder than you think!*)

How does Esher SFC support students?



Personal statement

- New personal statement guidance for 2026 entry. Guidance on the UCAS website: [The new personal statement for 2026 entry | Undergraduate | UCAS](#)
- Little/no material difference in content, but students are being given more help with structure
- Use personal statement tool on Unifrog (destinations platform)
- Every draft saved so tutor can see it to give feedback
- Students will get input on this on After Esher Day (24 June)
- First part of 6.2 autumn term tutorial sessions are focused on PS

New style personal statement

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New style personal statement

The new personal statement questions:

- Question 1: Why do you want to study this course or subject?
- Question 2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?
- Question 3: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

What do universities want to see in the PS?

- Have they chosen the right subject for the right reasons?
- Do they know what studying the subject actually involves?
- Do they have real academic or vocational interest in the subject – evidence?
- Are they motivated and committed and can they study independently?
- Do they possess good numeracy and literacy skills?
- Do they possess relevant 'soft skills' – team work, leadership, resilience, problem solving etc?
(Work experience or The Internship will provide excellent evidence for these.)
- Students also learn a lot about themselves by writing it – it is part of the process

Beware!



Do not be tempted to 'buy' a personal statement – plagiarism software will detect

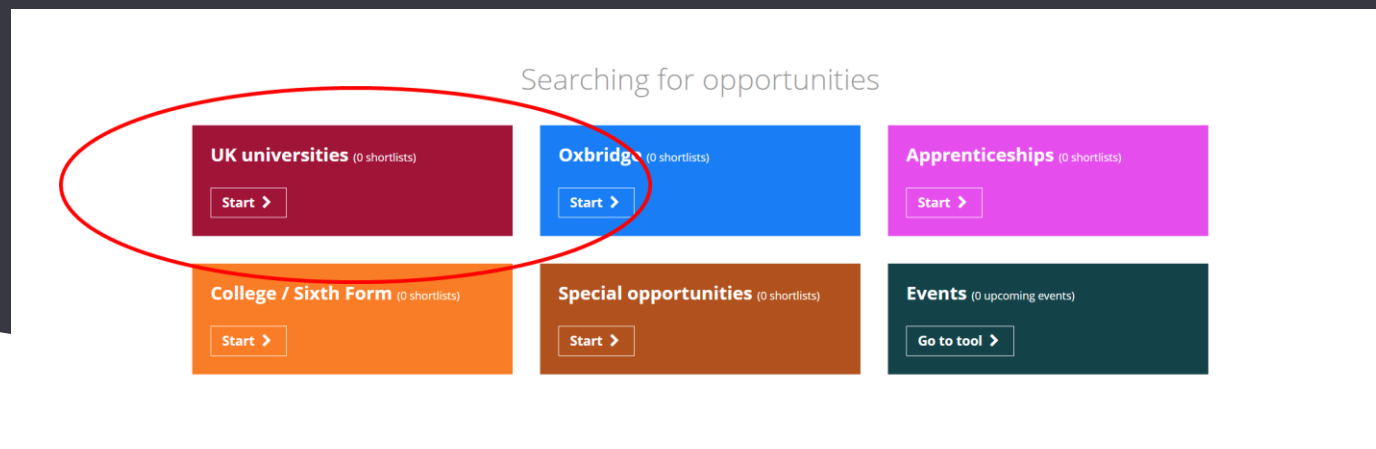
AI can be used responsibly to provide a framework – however it can produce vague, inaccurate material

It is a **personal** statement



Help to choose

- 5 choices – except for medicine and vets (4 +1)
- Cannot change your mind once form is submitted (*note – 14 day cooling off period*) until Extra opens in Feb
- Advice: 2 or 3 aspirational, 1 or 2 solid and 1 safe
- If you are very aspirational you might be disappointed
- Historic entry grades data can be very useful as is the Unifrog 'UK Universities tool'
- Subjects and institutions vary – research is essential



UCAS Historic entry data tool

Biomedical Sciences at Bath

A level - Typical offer

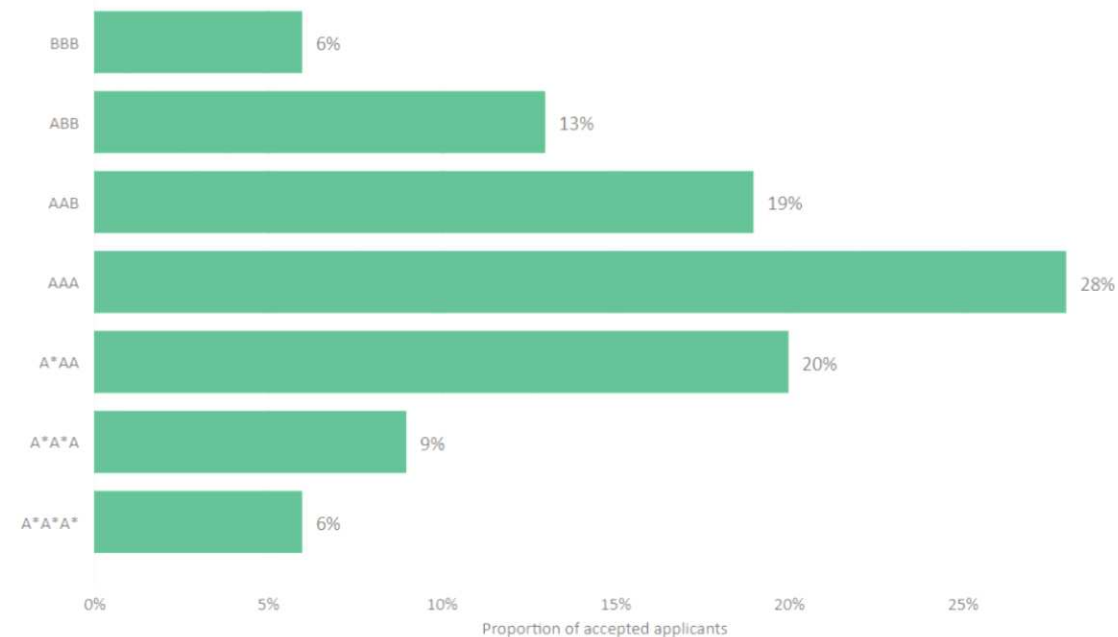
AAA or A*AB

AAA or A*AB in three A levels including A in Biology and A in Chemistry

A level - Alternative offer

AAB

Most of our students will join us with three A levels, but you may have study beyond this (such as a project qualification or additional study in maths) which demonstrates your individual talents that will help you with your degree. We recognise these studies through our alternative offers.



Qualification type: A level

[Change course selection](#)

Minimum grade held by accepted applicants (excluding outliers):

BBB

Most common grade held by accepted applicants (mode):

AAA

Maximum grade held by accepted applicants (excluding outliers):

A*A*A*

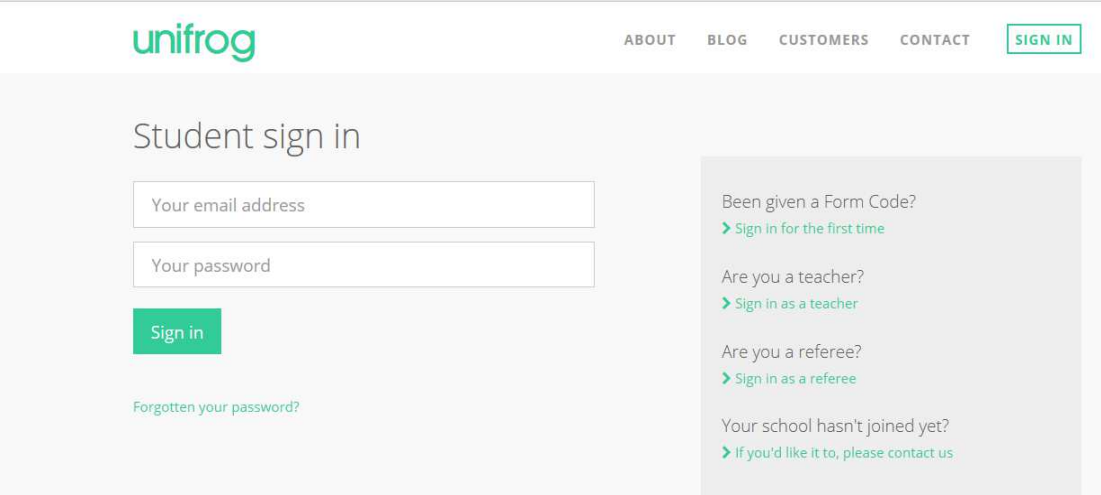
*To remove outliers the top and bottom 5% of accepted applicants have been removed.

UCAS Historic entry data tool

- Published entry requirement may be different to grades on entry
- Modern Languages at Leeds: offer ABB; only 42% of students starting gained this grade or above
- Maths at Imperial College, London: offer A*A*A; All students met or exceeded this (80% of students had A*A*A*!)
- Fashion Marketing and Comms at AUB: offer 120 Ucas points; 52% met or exceeded this
- Use UCAS historic entry grades data tool or Unifrog UK Universities too to help

Unifrog – our destinations platform

- Unifrog is our main research tool
- Unifrog was launched to students before Christmas
- Unifrog parent form code: *COJBparents*
- Students can research options and record what they have done to help with PS



The screenshot shows the Unifrog website's student sign-in interface. At the top left is the 'unifrog' logo. To the right are navigation links: 'ABOUT', 'BLOG', 'CUSTOMERS', 'CONTACT', and a 'SIGN IN' button. The main heading is 'Student sign in'. Below it are two input fields: 'Your email address' and 'Your password'. A green 'Sign in' button is positioned below the password field. A link for 'Forgotten your password?' is located below the sign-in button. On the right side, there is a grey box containing four questions with corresponding links: 'Been given a Form Code?' with a link to 'Sign In for the first time'; 'Are you a teacher?' with a link to 'Sign in as a teacher'; 'Are you a referee?' with a link to 'Sign in as a referee'; and 'Your school hasn't joined yet?' with a link to 'If you'd like it to, please contact us'.

UK universities (0 shortlists)

Start >

The screenshot shows the uniLOG application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the uniLOG logo and links for HOME, SHORTLISTS, LOCKER, APPLY, HELP, and TEACH. Below the navigation bar is a progress bar with five steps: 1 Start (highlighted), 2 Subjects, 3 Longlist, 4 Shortlist, and 5 Complete. The main content area contains a question: "What are the **best grades** you're likely to get by the time you leave school / college?". Below the question is a form with six rows, each representing a qualification. Each row has two dropdown menus: one for the qualification name and one for the predicted grade. The first row is labeled "* Qualification 1" and has "A Level" selected in the first dropdown and "B (40 points)" in the second. The second row is labeled "Qualification 2" and has "A Level" and "B (40 points)". The third row is labeled "Qualification 3" and has "A Level" and "C (32 points)". The fourth row is labeled "Qualification 4" and has "Extended Project (stand alone)" and "B (20 points)". The fifth row is labeled "Qualification 5" and has "--- please select a qualification ---" and an empty dropdown. The sixth row is labeled "Qualification 6" and has "--- please select a qualification ---" and an empty dropdown.

* Qualification 1	A Level	B (40 points)
Qualification 2	A Level	B (40 points)
Qualification 3	A Level	C (32 points)
Qualification 4	Extended Project (stand alone)	B (20 points)
Qualification 5	--- please select a qualification ---	
Qualification 6	--- please select a qualification ---	

1 Start

2 **Subjects**

3 Longlist

4 Shortlist

5 Complete

What do you want to study at university?

* Subject

psychology









next ▶




or go back


Rank ▾ Filter ▾ Search ▾

Aspirational (117)




 **Psychology - 3FT BSc (Hons)** 
 University of Birmingham
RG A Level: A,A,A

 **Psychology - 4FT MPsych** 
 Lancaster University
TT A Level: A,A,A



 **Psychological Sciences - 4FT MPsycholSc** 
 University of Liverpool
RG A Level: A,A,A



 **Psychology with a Placement Year - 4FT BSc (Hons)** 
 University of Kent
A Level: A,A,A



 **Psychology - 4FT MA (Hons)** 
 University of St Andrews
TT A Level: A,A,B



 **Psychology - 4FT BSc (Hons)** 
 University of St Andrews



Solid (189)

 **Psychology and Sociology - 3FT/4SW + Abroad BSc (Hons)**
 Keele University
A Level: A,B,C-B,B,B

 **Psychology - 3FT BSc (Hons)**
 University of Gloucestershire
A Level: B,B,B

 **Forensic Psychology - 3FT/4SW BSc (Hons)**
 University of Portsmouth
UCAS Points: 120



 **Psychology - 3FT/4SW BSc (Hons)**
 University of Portsmouth
UCAS Points: 120



 **Criminology and Criminal Psychology - 3FT BSc (Hons)**
 University of Greenwich
UCAS Points: 120



 **Psychology and Criminology - 3FT**



Safe (180)



A Level: B,C,C

 **Criminology with Psychology - 3FT BA (Hons)**
 De Montfort University
UCAS Points: 104

 **Psychology/Criminology - 3FT BA (Hons)**
 University of Northampton
A Level: B,C,C

 **Criminology with Psychology - 3FT BA (Hons)**
 University of Winchester
UCAS Points: 104-120

 **Criminology with Psychology - 3FT BA (Hons)**
 Leeds Beckett University
UCAS Points: 104

 **Sociology/Psychology - 3FT BA (Hons)**
 University of Northampton













[next ▶](#) or [go back](#)

org/student/universities/long-list?course=254397&frog=2








Rank ▲ Filter ▼ Search ▼

Entry requirements	Average points	% Graduate jobs	Fees	Starting salary	Dropout rate	Hours of lectures	Hours of tutorials
Hours of workshops	% Satisfaction	% Application success (Overall)		% Application success (UK)		Size of uni	% international
Guardian rank	Guardian Psychology rank	Guardian Education rank	QS world rank	Accommodation cost	Distance from home	Social life	
Spend on Access							









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 Psychology - 4FT MA (Hons)  University of St Andrews TT A Level: A,A,B	
 Psychology - 4FT BSc (Hons)  University of St Andrews	

Solid (189)

A Level: B,B,B
 Forensic Psychology - 3FT/4SW BSc (Hons)  University of Portsmouth UCAS Points: 120
 Psychology - 3FT/4SW BSc (Hons)  University of Portsmouth UCAS Points: 120
 Criminology and Criminal Psychology - 3FT BSc (Hons)  University of Greenwich UCAS Points: 120
 Psychology and Criminology - 3FT

Safe (180)

 (Hons)  University of Northampton A Level: B,C,C
 Criminology with Psychology - 3FT BA (Hons)  University of Winchester UCAS Points: 104-120
 Criminology with Psychology - 3FT BA (Hons)  Leeds Beckett University UCAS Points: 104
 Sociology/Psychology - 3FT BA (Hons)  University of Northampton

next ▶

or go back

Rank Filter Search

All distances | 10 miles | 20 miles | 50 miles | 100 miles | 200 miles | 300 miles | Big cities | Scotland | Wales | City | Campus

All modes | Full time | Part time | Sandwich | Foundation | No Foundation | Full degrees | **W/ study abroad** | W/out study abroad

All types | Russell Group (RG) | Top Third (TT) | Art Foundation | Joint Honours | No unis that prefer A levels, IB, Pre-U | TEF Gold | TEF Silver

TEF Bronze

All entry requirements | **No courses out of my range**

Aspirational (4)

Solid (11)

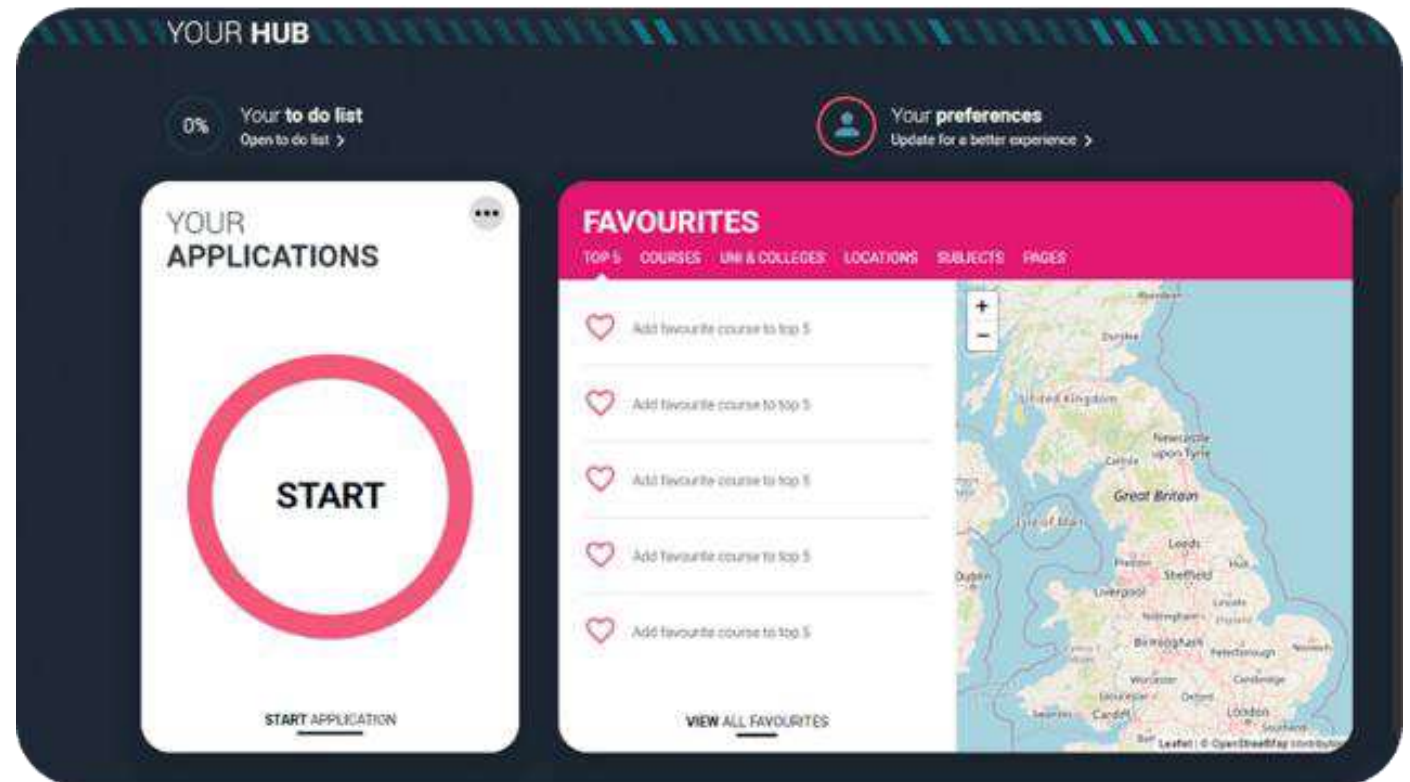
Safe (1)

Psychology with a Year Abroad - 4FT + Abroad BSc (Hons) University of East Anglia UEA TT A Level: A,B,B	Psychology - 3FT/4SW + Abroad BSc (Hons) Keele University A Level: A,B,C-B,B,B	Psychology with Science Foundation Year - 4FT + Abroad BSc (Hons) Keele University Foundation year UCAS Points: 64
Cognitive Psychology with a Year Abroad - 4FT + Abroad BSc (Hons) University of East Anglia UEA TT A Level: A,B,B	Criminology and Psychology - 3FT/4SW + Abroad BSc (Hons) Keele University A Level: A,B,C-B,B,B	
Psychology - 4FT + Abroad BSc (Hons) Northumbria University, Newcastle	Psychology and Sociology - 3FT/4SW + Abroad BSc (Hons) Keele University	

next or go back

UCAS Hub

- An invaluable source of information, as well as the method by which applications are made





Biological Sciences University of Aberdeen

Main Site

- BSc (Hons)
- 4 years
- Full-time
- 15/09/2025

BBC
A Levels

Related courses >



Biological Sciences Aston University, Birmingham

Main Site

- BSc (Hons)
- 4 years
- Sandwich
- 15/09/2025

BBB - BCC
A Levels

Related courses >

2 course options




Biological Sciences University of Birmingham

Main Site

- BSc (Hons)
- 3 years
- Full-time
- 29/09/2025

AAB
A Levels

Related courses >




Biological Sciences
University of Aberdeen
Main Site

🎓 BSc (Hons) ⌚ 4 years
📅 Full-time 📅 15/09/2025

BBC
A Levels

Related courses >




Biological Sciences
Aston University, Birmingham
Main Site

🎓 BSc (Hons) ⌚ 4 years
📅 Sandwich 📅 15/09/2025

BBB - BCC
A Levels

Related courses > 2 course options



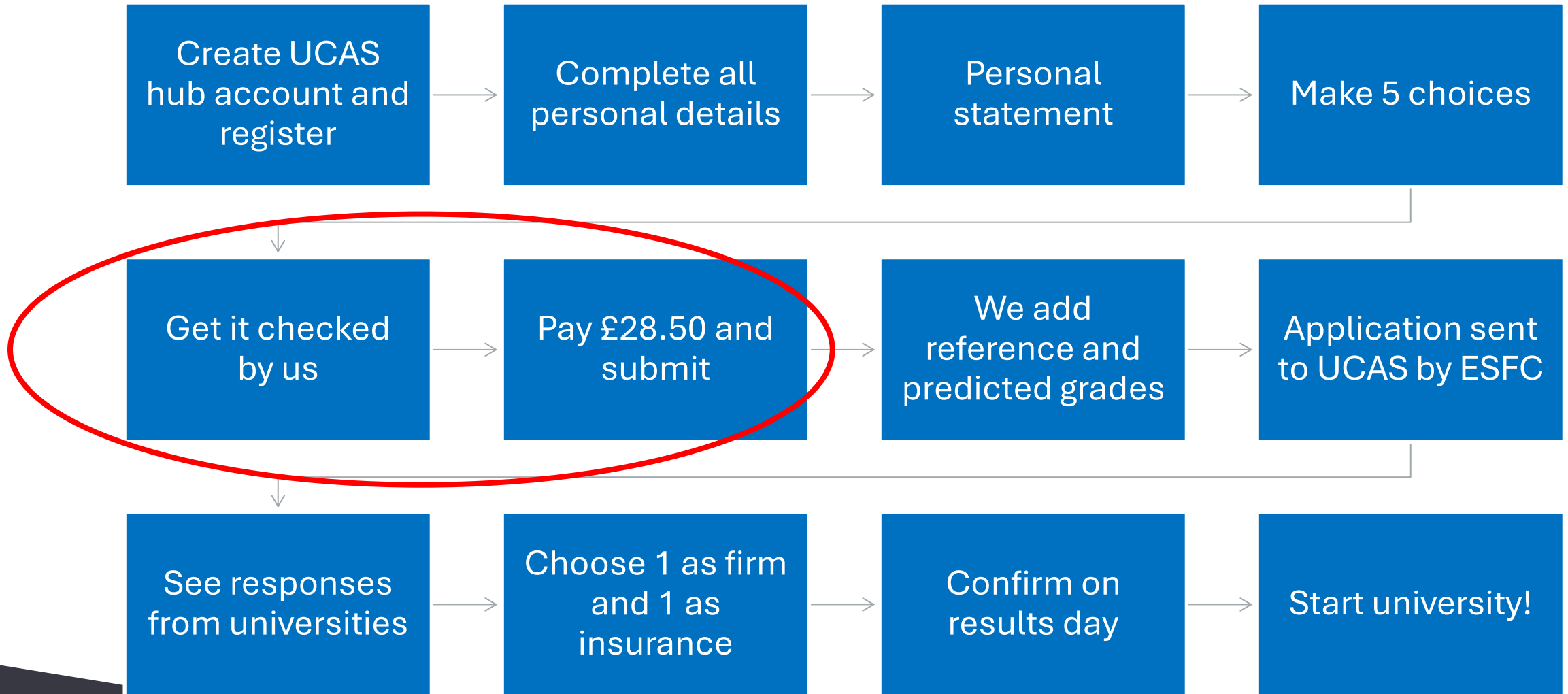
Biological Sciences
University of Birmingham
Main Site

🎓 BSc (Hons) ⌚ 3 years
📅 Full-time 📅 29/09/2025

AAB
A Levels

Related courses >

How does Esher SFC support students?

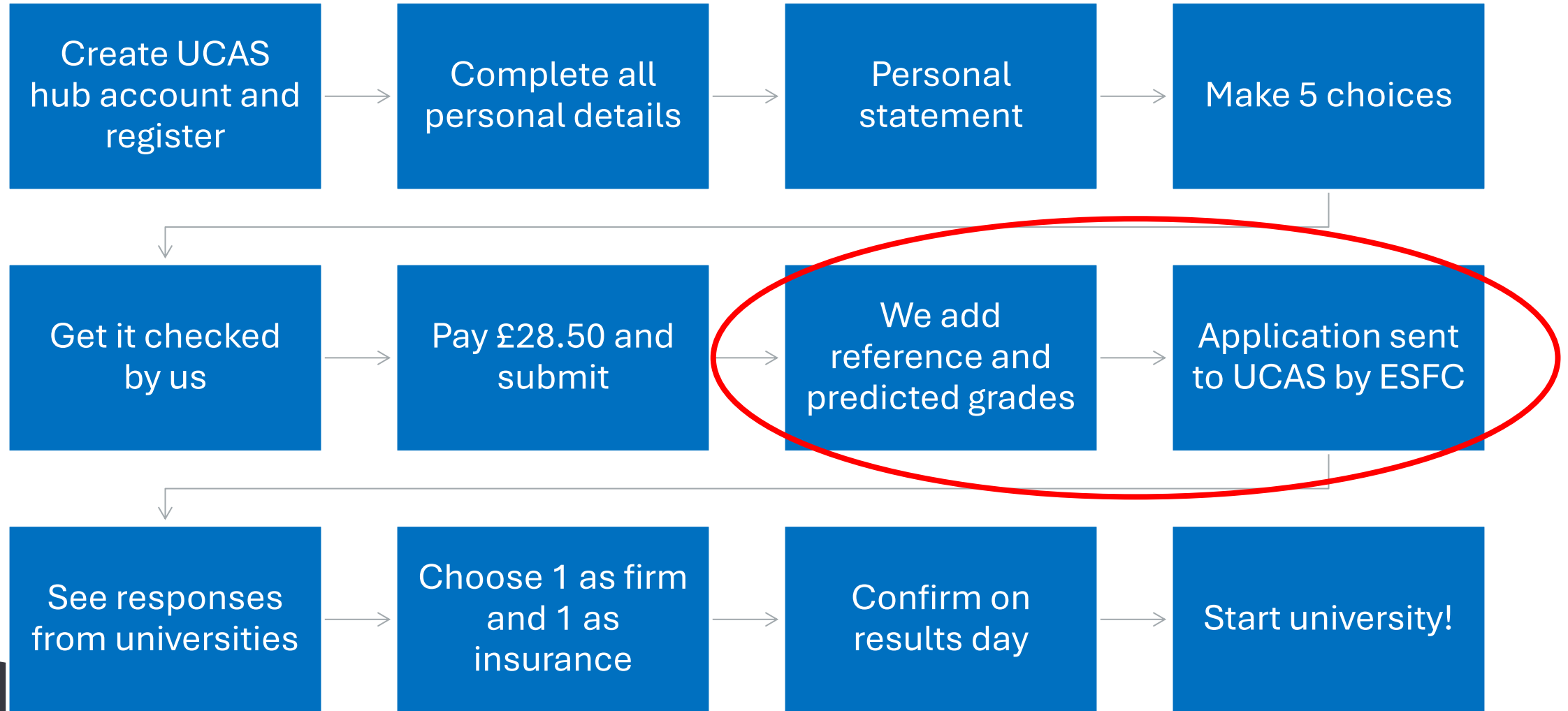


UCAS unifrog

Get it right, get it checked,
get it in!



How does Esher SFC support students?



Reference



Enter a general statement about your school/college
(mandatory for applications sent via a registered centre)



Enter any information about extenuating circumstances which may affect this applicant's performance in examinations or other assessments (optional)



Outline any other circumstances specific to the applicant that you think universities/colleges should be aware of (optional)

UCAS grades

- We add predicted grades (UCAS grades)
- Based on a variety of information, but especially 6.1 Formal Exams
- UCAS grades released on student and parent portal on 13 June 2025
- Opportunity to increase in Autumn term but there will be a deadline (mid October)
- Students should apply aspirationally but not unrealistically!

What happens after universities receive the application?

- Sometimes additional tests, interviews, auditions, portfolios necessary
- Unis make offers or rejections – ongoing until May
- Offers - grades or UCAS tariff points
- Students decide which offers to accept and reject the others – by early June
- Firm offer – top / best / most aspirational
- Insurance offer - usually lower or more flexible

Confirmation and Clearing

- Results issued in mid August; offers are confirmed on Results Day
- If student meets firm offer they go to their firm choice university
- If student misses firm offer but meets conditional offer they go to their insurance choice university
- If they miss both, they are automatically in Clearing
- Students can also enter Clearing by releasing themselves
- Last year there were 30,000 places in clearing including places in Medicine and Law!

Esher College Dates and Deadlines

- All deadlines for 2025 entry are in the parents' information sheet
- Monday September 22 2025 for early deadline applicants
- Monday November 10 2025 final deadline
- They may seem early but...
- Lots of checking of the form necessary
- Almost 900 forms sent from Esher in last cycle
- Most universities will accept late forms but are not obliged to consider them

Oxbridge applications

- Helen Humphreys - Oxbridge coordinator
- Ailis Kane – Deputy Oxbridge coordinator
- Presentation on applying to Oxbridge at Higher Education Day next week
- Encouragement of potential students already taking place
- Online and in-person talks, conferences and visits
- Open Days in July
- Early deadline, tests, interviews etc
- Typical GCSE profile 8 x grades 8-9s
- Typical A level offer A*AA, typical achievement A*A*A

Art / Art Foundation Applications

- James Leonard - Art Foundation Coordinator
- Individual applications to each art college separately
- Foundation course - a one year diagnostic pre-degree course
- Separate system to UCAS and students may apply to both
- No tuition fees for students under 19 at start of course
- Creative Arts Portfolio progression pathway or creative EPQ

Higher Education Day 2025 –Tuesday 18 March



Period 4 (12.40) onwards

12.40: Introductory tutor session before lunch

Afternoon - 4 sessions, rotating

Selecting a 6.2
Extension Studies
option

Student life talk

How to choose
a university and
course talk

Higher Education
exhibition in Sports
Hall and Drama studio

Evening: 6.00 - 8.00 pm including further talks for parents and students

Psychometric testing and competency questions

Mock assessment centre activities

Interview and presentation techniques

Apprenticeship and Employment option



After Esher Day

Tuesday 24 June 2025



University option

Register with UCAS

Using Unifrog to research options

Motivational talks and careers advice from Esher College alumni

Master Class on Personal Statement

Help is available!
Careers advice discussions
(careers interviews) with a
qualified adviser

- Maximise the chances of getting into competitive degree courses
- Explore the best universities for your chosen subjects
- Find out about alternatives to university
- Discuss which careers might be best suited to your personality and interests
- Plan how to use your gap year



Our careers advisers are fully qualified, trained and highly experienced. Please email progression@esher.ac.uk to book or attend your appointment when offered!

And finally.....

- Thursday 13 August 2026 – Results Day
- Please don't be away on holiday!
- College staff available on the Thursday and Friday for assistance with Clearing

Questions?

Please come and see us at
the front or email

progression@esher.ac.uk

