

St Martins Comprehensive School

University, College and Apprenticeship Information Booklet

2020 Entry



This Information Booklet is designed and aimed to provide guidance and support through your next stages throughout and after A-levels.

From the Sixth Form Team at St Martins Comprehensive School

University

UCAS Process

1. Register Online with code provided
2. Research, Research, Research!
 - <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate>
 - Research Courses (Topics you will study, exam, coursework or practical based)
 - Research Entry Requirements (check grades, UCAS points and Welsh Baccalaureate)
 - Research Universities and Colleges
 - Research Open Days and Events (speak to course tutors to find out further details about the course, topics and further options you may not be aware of)
 - Research Key Dates for deadlines (different courses have different deadlines)
 - Research application process (some courses require exams, interviews and/or portfolios)
 - Start writing your personal statement
 - Choose a reference (aim to find a strong, professional and relevant reference)
 - Apply for your chosen courses (upto 5) at your chosen Universities and Colleges
 - <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply>
 - Track your applications online (Watch out for offers, replies and results)
 - <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/track-your-ucas-application>
 - Research the different types of offers: <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/ucas-undergraduate-types-offer>
 - Changes-Read the rules and regulations regarding any changes on your application (results, choices, offers, replies, access, withdrawals)
 - <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/making-changes-your-ucas-undergraduate-application>
 - Choose your first and insurance university options
 - Await confirmation
 - Clearing options (See Clearing Page)
 - Adjustment options
 - After University Confirmation-Accommodation and Finances (See Accommodation and Finances Page)

Types of Degrees and Courses

Bachelor's degree

Bachelor degrees usually last either three or four years (or longer) if studied full time. You can concentrate on a single subject, combine two subjects in a single course (often called dual/joint honours) or several subjects (combined honours). Most courses have core modules which everyone studies, and many courses allow you to choose further options/modules to make up a course that suits you E.g. Business Management Course: Core Modules may include Accounting, Marketing, People in Organisations and Option Modules may include: Ethics of Business, Advertising Marketing, and International Human Resources.

Four Year 'Sandwich' Degree

A sandwich degree is a Bachelor's course with an additional year 'sandwiched' between your second and final years of study. During your third year, you will go on a relevant work placement to put what you have learned into practice and test your skills.

Within some courses, a minimum 30-week work placement is mandatory. However, all of our undergraduate students have the option to undertake a work placement as part of their course.

Integrated Master's degree

An Integrated Master's degree is a four-year course (or five years with placement) which combines undergraduate and postgraduate study. You will graduate with a Master's level degree.

Foundation Year

Some degrees offer a foundation or qualifying year (year zero) as the first year. They are generally one year, full-time courses delivered at a university or college, and can be offered as a 'standalone' course or as part of a degree. You will be treated as a full time undergraduate student. If your grades weren't suitable, or you studied combinations of subjects at school or college meaning you do not meet the entry requirements for your chosen course, a foundation year could be perfect. Not all universities and colleges offer foundation years.

Diploma in Foundation Studies (Art and Design)

This is a one year qualification and is a primary route to gain entry into some of the most prestigious art and design degree courses. The learning is tailored to a student's specific area of art and design subject interest so they can progress to study that area at degree level. For funding purposes, this course is classified as a further education course, so student loans (for tuition and living costs) are not available, even if you take the course at a university or college. However, UK students under the age of 19 on 31 August of the year of entry will not be charged a tuition fee. As a result, many students choose to take this course straight after school or college, in their home town or city.

Foundation Degree

Foundation degrees are usually two-year courses (longer if part-time), that are equivalent to the first two years of an undergraduate degree. They are not the same as a foundation year.

These can be a good destination for school leavers at 18, as they offer a qualification that can help gain degree entry. This route is a good option for students who need a course with lower entry requirements and fewer examinations, would prefer a vocational degree/to study while they work, or are not yet ready to commit to three years at university

Foundation degrees often combine academic skills and knowledge with workplace performance and productivity. They may have been designed in partnership with employers, and therefore focus on a particular job role or profession, enabling you to gain professional and technical skills to further your career. They can be used as a standalone qualification for employment, but are more commonly used as

the basis for progression to a final 'top-up' year, leading to a full bachelor's degree. The final year may be taken at a different university or college

Top-up degree

If you already have a Foundation degree, or another relevant qualification like a HND, you can complete just one year of study on a Top-up degree, which allows you to achieve a full Honours level qualification and graduate with a BSc (Hons) or BA (Hons).

Degree Apprenticeship

This is a new type of higher level apprenticeship, which can lead to a bachelor's degree as part of an apprenticeship. It is important to check the full details of a given job and apprenticeship with the employer and training provider. These courses are a good fit for students who want to gain work experience rather than studying full-time at university, but would like to achieve the same degree status.

Students need to be highly committed – competition can be fierce and entry qualifications can be high. If you're considering this option, you may want to keep your options open by making an application to a full-time bachelor's degree through UCAS at the same time.

HNC's and HND's

The Higher National Certificate (HNC), a one-year work-related course, is equivalent to the first year of a university degree programme. The Higher National Diploma (HND) is a two-year, work-related course, which is equivalent to the first two years of a bachelor's degree. As with a foundation degree, it is possible to progress from these courses to complete a full bachelor's degree at a university, either through a specific top-up course, or by directly entering a degree in year three.

If you wanted to study a degree in stages, or exit after one or two years of study, the following qualifications may also be suitable. They don't directly lead to a degree, but you may be able to go on and join the second or third year of a full degree (perhaps at the same university/college, or elsewhere) if you change your mind and want to graduate with a bachelor's degree after all.

- One year of a degree – a Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)
- Two years of a degree – a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)

Please see below links for further information

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/what-and-where-study/ucas-undergraduate-what-study>

Further Degree Type Information

Bachelor degree

A Bachelor's degree is the most common type of undergraduate degree – and can be studied straight after finishing higher education. It's classed as a level 6 qualification.

Master's degree

A Master's degree is the most common type of postgraduate qualification, and involves a more in-depth level of study than a Bachelor's degree. They're designed to focus on a specific area of a wider subject – and they can either be taught or research based courses. It's classed as a level 7 qualification.

PGCE

A PGCE is a level 7 postgraduate certificate in education, which combines practical placements with teaching theory. Types of PGCEs include early years, primary, secondary, and further education. It's a popular route for graduates who want to use their expertise to teach others.

How long will it last? PGCEs can be completed in just nine months if studied full-time, with part-time courses taking longer.

What are the entry requirements? Generally, you'll need to be qualified to degree level, with a minimum of a 2:2 to start a PGCE. If you choose to study primary teaching, a national curriculum subject will be beneficial. Those wanting to become secondary teachers are required to have a degree in the subject they're looking to teach.

What qualifications will I get? You'll get a PGCE qualification, which will allow you to start teaching straight away. Many graduates find permanent employment at the school they did a placement at.

PhD

A PhD is the highest level of degree (level 8). It involves independent and original research into a specific field or subject – which is used to write a lengthy thesis that's worthy of publication.

How long will it last? Full-time PhDs will usually take three to four years to complete, while part-time courses are likely to last around six years.

What are the entry requirements? Most universities will require you to have both a Bachelor's and a Master's degree to get started with a PhD. However, people who only have a Bachelor's degree are often still accepted. This might involve initially registering to study for a Master's, to be upgraded to a PhD partway through studying (based on your progress).

What qualifications will I get? You'll receive a Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) on completion of the course. Other types of Doctoral degrees include Higher Doctorates, New Route PhDs, and Professional Doctorates.

Degree Abbreviations

Degree	Abbreviation	Other abbreviations
<u>Bachelor of Accountancy</u>	BAcc	B.Acy, B.Acc., B. Accty.
<u>Bachelor of Applied Science</u>	BASc	B.AS., BAS, BSAS, B.ASc., BAppSc
<u>Bachelor of Architecture</u>	BArch	B.Arch.
<u>Bachelor of Arts</u>	BA	B.A., AB or A.B.
<u>Bachelor of Business Administration</u>	BBA	B.B.A.
<u>Bachelor of Clinical Optometry</u>	BOptom	
<u>Bachelor of Dental Surgery</u>	BDS	BChD, BDentS
<u>Bachelor of Design</u>	BDes	B.Des., B.Design
<u>Bachelor of Divinity</u>	BD	BDIV
<u>Bachelor of Economics</u>	BScEcon	BEc, BA(Econ), BScEcon, BSc(Econ), BSSc(Econ), BBA(Econ), BEconSc
<u>Bachelor of Education</u>	BEd	B.Ed
<u>Bachelor of Engineering</u>	BEng	B.Eng.
<u>Bachelor of Finance</u>	BFin	

<u>Bachelor of Fine Arts</u>	BFA	BFA, B.F.A.
<u>Bachelor of Health Science</u>	BHSc	
<u>Bachelor of Laws</u>	LLB	LL.B., B.L
<u>Bachelor of Medical Sciences</u>	BMedSci	BMedSc, BMSc, BSci(Med)
<u>Bachelor of Medicine</u>	BM	
<u>Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery</u>	BMBS	MBBS, MBChB, MBBCh, MBBChir(Cantab), BMBCh(Oxon), MB,BChir
<u>Bachelor of Midwifery</u>	BMid	BMidWif
<u>Bachelor of Music</u>	BMus	B.Mus., Mus.B., Mus.Bac.
<u>Bachelor of Osteopathy</u>	BOst	BOstMed
<u>Bachelor of Science</u>	BSc	BSc, B.S., BS, B.Sc., Bc, S.B., SB, Sc.B.
<u>Bachelor of Social Science</u>	BSocSc	B.Soc.Sc., B.Soc.Sci.
<u>Bachelor of Social Work</u>	BSW	
<u>Bachelor of Technological Education</u>	BTechEd	
<u>Bachelor of Technology</u>	B.Tech.	
<u>Bachelor of Theology</u>	BTh	B.Th., Th.B., BTheol

<u>Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine</u>	BVetMed	BVMBVS
<u>Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery</u>	BVMS	BVM&S
<u>Bachelor of Veterinary Science</u>	BVSc	BVSC, BVMedSci
<u>Business and Technology Education Council</u>	BTEC	
<u>English Language Teaching Management</u>	ELT Management	
<u>Legal Practice Course</u>	LPC	
<u>Teaching Qualification (Further Education)</u>	TQFE	
<u>Top-up degree</u>	Top-up	

Personal Statement

Key Facts

- 4,000 characters
- 47 lines
- 600 words (approx. with spaces)
- You do not attach your Personal Statement on UCAS, instead copy and paste, therefore the word limit and paragraphs will need to be checked!
- Spell check and grammar on word first as UCAS does not have spell check!

What is a Personal Statement?

A Personal Statement is 4,000 characters stating why you have chosen a particular course to study at university. You must state why the course suits you and why you suit the course. As well as, your achievements, experiences and inspirations; what you have achieved, what you're currently working towards to achieve and what you hope to achieve in the future (past, present, future).

What to do:

- Be your best self
- Be original and stand out
- Do your research
- Be prepared to write a couple of drafts and make alterations
- Ask for feedback, but remember it is YOUR personal statement

What not to put in your Personal Statement:

- Do not enter your grades/potential grades
- Do Not plagiarise
- Do not be negative
- Do not show off/brag
- Do not write endless lists
- Do not include slang or 'chatty' language:
 - E.g. I like going to the cinema a couple of times a week
 - E.g. My greatest achievement was restoring my car engine
- Do not abbreviate e.g. university to 'uni' or Welsh Baccalaureate to 'welsh bacc'
- Do not be humorous - not everyone has the same sense of humour
- Do not negatively name a company or person
- Do not feel the need to specifically name everything e.g. 'I coached a netball team in a primary school from ages 8-10 as opposed' to 'I coached a younger children in the years 4,5 and 6 from ages 8-10 in St James' primary school which I also attended and developed good relationships with the teachers who also taught me'.

Where to Start:

Start with the following questions to help assist you in your Personal Statement:

- Why have you chosen to study that particular course? What is it about the course that appeals to you? What influence or experience led you to this decision?
- What is it about this subject/course that interests you to commit to studying and working in this career/field of work?
- What is your understanding of this course/subject
 - E.g. Business- A Business includes a variety of elements, I have previously studied the various marketing techniques businesses use to drive in customers, but I am intrigued to study further elements such as the human resources and logistics behind this.
 - E.g. Geography- I feel this course will allow me to explore fields of Geography which I have not yet had the opportunity to, such as Oceanography which I have always had an interest in.
 - E.g. Psychology- The scientific theories behind psychology is what interests me the most as to why we arrive to the conclusions we do.
- What opportunities do you think this course will offer you?
- What have your current studies contributed towards your interest and applying for this course? Why are they relevant to this course/subject?
 - Comment on each subject's contribution to the course
- What have you achieved towards this course? Experiences?
 - In school (coaching, clubs, fundraisers, prefect etc.)
 - outside of school (work, volunteering, coaching, clubs, qualifications such as first aid, Duke of Edinburgh)
- What skills have you gained from your studying and extracurricular activities?
 - Commitment, Dedication, Discipline, Perseverance, Resilience
 - Social skills-communication
 - Transferable Skills
 - Time management and Organisation (help to assist in university life)
 - Enthusiasm, motivational, proactive
- What are your future goals in relation to taking this course? Where do you want to be in the future? What are your plans after university?

Guidance for: Personal Statement/ Application Forms/ CV's

*Please note the below guidance can be used for any form of application for: Universities, Colleges, Jobs or Apprenticeships

Experiences, jobs, skills, volunteering, social activities, hobbies, subjects to assist in your personal statement

Sports Roles/Activities/Hobbies

- Ability to unite people
- The rules and guidelines teach you a level of discipline which cannot be taught in other environments
- Appreciate the hard work, dedication that goes into each sport
- Sport pushes the body but also teaches you limits which can be transferred into other areas
- Looking forward to playing sport at a higher level at university
- I hope to bring my skills to a new teams to support and represent teams and the university
- I coached a team of...this motivated me to pursue a career in...
- Achieve maximum performance in their chosen sport
- Develop teamwork/communication skills
- This has provided me with a sense of responsibility
- My aim is to pass on my knowledge to help others

Hospitality

- Caring for others
- Understand the needs and wants of clients in relation to company standards
- Importance of organisation and time management to achieve the best results
- Specific attention to detail is key to gaining maximum outcomes
- Self-motivation is a key skill I have learned
- Often face challenges which have motivated me to think outside the box to problem solve

Retail

- Varied job role requires a willingness to learn new tasks
- Working in a team requires key communication skills
- I often made recommendations which I based off the customers' needs and wants whilst staying in line with company standards
- I received training on procedures, rules and regulations which ensured the efficiency of the company

Coaching/Tutoring/Teaching

- Tutoring has provided me with a sense of responsibility
- Motivate the class to ensure the work was enjoyable and a fun way of learning
- I want to make a difference to help make learning fun and interesting, through new techniques, strategies and solutions

Subjects/Courses

Religious Education

- I wish to gain a further understanding of different religions, and cultures
- Exploring and understanding new cultures is important to understand the world we live in.
- It is important to fully understand each element of cultures to advance in a peaceful progression that allows us to live harmoniously amongst one another.
- Travelling has provided me with a new way of thinking and an insight which a textbook could not teach.
- The sense of spirituality, equal perspectives and illustrated uniformity that I experienced was indescribable and I aim to travel further to gain further knowledge and awareness's.
- Analysing the similarities and differences between.....
- Analysed articles from Amnesty International which I hope to study further at university and become a part of an Amnesty International group.
- We live in a complex world where our differences affect our ways of living.
- My interest in Human Rights is what motivates me to pursue a career in.....

Business

- I have always been intrigued by the way Google runs its company, through their creative working techniques and working practices whilst achieving some of the world's best solutions.
- I also enjoy studying local independent businesses, what is involved in the start-up stage but also in the day to day running. My work experience in the local coffee shop has allowed me to study the day to day running of a business from stock counts to human resource management.
- A specific area of interest is calculated risk and how businesses make suitable decisions based on statistics whilst maintaining employee wellbeing and profit margins.
- I feel my A-levels of Maths and English will help accommodate me in this course based on the variety of topics that will be studied.

Law/Criminology

- The law has always been of interest to me, it is the way the world is run.
- The legal field of... (criminal/business...) is what I have enjoyed studying the most, the theories behind the laws and the cases in which they are used.
- Criminology has allowed me to understand current news affairs that are released in the newspaper and online.
- Laws and Regulations change over time based on society and the cases that occur.
- I have always had an interest in the care and welfare of people, and how this can be improved in the community and society.
- The opportunity to attend court was offered to me where I experienced a fraud case where I witnessed a dismissal of the case due to insufficient evidence.
- I am a keen reader of books, where the study of Charles Dickens' 'Great Expectations' touched upon aspects of the Victorian Legal system and Malorie Blackman's 'Noughts and Crosses' heavily displayed the critical issues of society and the legal system.

Design/Art

- Inspired by architecture/interior design/Moroccan art/modern Japanese technology....
- University will provide many opportunities to exercise my artistic flare
- I have always been a visual learner, through my creative revision notes and canvases displayed around my house, which has led me to.....
- My admiration for art developed further once I travelled across Europe and Asia. The architecture alone was enough to captivate me into entering the various buildings of churches, galleries, factories and hotels.
- We live in a modern world where design and art is at a constant change...

- I had the opportunity to redesign the office work space in my part time job where I utilised the work space to ensure everyone had the best ergonomic design to achieve efficiency.

Engineering

- The structure and composure of how products/buildings are built has always been a fascination to me.
- The logic, processes and mathematical engineering behind each product is both challenging and impressive.
- I took the time to conduct work experience in an architectural firm which provided me with an insight into the technological advances that is used today to ensure the safety and durability of projects.
- The application of scientific theories behind design to ensure durability, safety and ergonomic efficiency is....
- Problem solving through challenges is what has always appealed to me. I have always chosen the hardest puzzles to solve, or have taken the advance exam paper to push me out of my comfort zone and learn at the same time.

English

- Words have a sense of power and influence which is heavily relied upon, especially with the advancement of social media.
- I felt obliged to share my experiences and knowledge of travels which I decided to portray on an online blog, which has allowed me to share my creative flare and love of writing.
- Words have an honesty about them which I have analysed in depth throughout my studies to gain a sense of emotion and feeling.
- Specific authors, poets, books that you have studied
- I have experience in writing different modes of articles, reports, poems and essays, but my favourite is....

Maths

- The art of Maths is the logical processes to follow, which lead to a desired outcome which further leads to problem solving.
- I have often felt that Maths is a pivotal subject which many other subjects depend upon, such as Physics and Chemistry.
- The independence of problem solving is a valuable skill which Maths has taught me.
- Studying Maths at A-level has provided me with the theories and science behind each algorithm which I have always been intrigued by, and would like to understand this further which I feel University would teach me.
- Many formulas can be used and applied into other areas of work which I feel is a key transferable skill to have.
- A specific area of interest has been statistics, where the endless routes, non-standard problems which require a significant amount of thought assist in communication skills.

Geography

- Geography includes many topics which helps us understand the complex world we live in.
- Specific events that may have spiked your interest - E.g. Amazon Rainforest, Hurricanes, Tsunami's, Earthquakes
- Analysing patterns to help protect the earth in instances like Disaster Management
- Both Human and Physical factors have played a part in current issues such as climate change, which has created a new area of Geography of protecting the earth in different approaches such as the use of reusing materials through recycling and putting policies in place to guide people to protect the environment.

- I would like to further my experiences beyond textbooks, which I feel university would offer.

ICT

- We live in a modern world which is becoming increasingly dependent on technology.
- The constant improvements and upgrades on technology may be increasing and difficult to keep up for the majority of people who only focus on smartphones, but these upgrades are improving medical practices and safety management at the same time.
- The individual components that make up a computing system is what first caught my attention.
- I have always had an interest in technology and always keep up to date with the latest products and gadgets that have made people's lives easier
- I am constantly impressed with the latest products and applications from Apple, Google, Microsoft and its ability to be used and distributed worldwide.
- I am a prominent user of social media and have used my interest to gain work experience by supporting local businesses through marketing and promotion. I have learned many new skills and gained an understanding of the power of social media and technology as well as the reliance both people and organisations have on technology.

Architecture/Design

- There is a healthy competition in the design industry which includes a balance of combining both historic and modern design, which creates modern structures.
- Specific designers/artists/buildings.....
 - A visit to Paris to see the world wonder of the Eiffel Tower inspired me from a young age to pursue a career in the design industry.
 - The opportunity to study Gaudi's design in Barcelona was an incredible experience which I always draw upon when designing.
- The difference between time periods is inspiring in itself to see the change in structure, elements, shapes, colours and form.
- I regularly visit new cities to discover the variations in design which textbooks and the internet cannot provide.
- I worked on a variety of projects in my placement from interior design to structural engineering which provided me with an insight into the different stages that are involved.

Chemistry

- I believe Chemistry is a handbook, a body of knowledge of everything that surrounds us.
- The constant element of discovery and surprise in this field is exciting and is what has motivated and inspired me to study this subject further.
- I enjoy helping people and I feel the continuation of this course will allow me to do this.....
- The constant new challenges are what inspire me to study in depth analysis and provide solutions to challenges.
- Specific topics, elements, theories, metals compositions, molecules.....
- My further subjects have further supported my interest in Chemistry (e.g. the logic and statistics behind maths, allows for the formulation of theories to be applied)
- I have conducted work experience in (laboratory/hospital/surgery) which provided me with an insight into the everyday tasks that are involved.

Nursing/Adult/Child Nursing

- My part time job has allowed me to develop the necessary skills needed for nursing, such as social skills through listening to people's problems and finding the best solution in efficient time scales.
- The ability to make a difference to those in need and have an impact on people's lives is the reason I would like to enter the field of nursing.

- I have gained experience shadowing nurses in the local hospital where I saw the outstanding care that was provided and the power to have a positive impact on patients.
- Working on the children's ward opened my eyes to the emotional aspects involved which I understand is challenging, but I also saw the exceptional rewards of parents being able to take their healthy child home. The high quality of childcare I experienced was inspiring and motivated me further to study nursing.
- I learned that each child requires a tailored quality of care, such as different learning techniques of technological and practical. An example of this is where I explained the importance of taking medication through toys and storytelling, which resulted in a positive and effective solution to the child who was too scared to take their medication.
- My understanding of nursing involves a high level of resilience, problem solving and patience, but is balanced by good teamwork and high rewards.

Media/Film/Television

- I am inspired by the active role media plays in the world and the dominant effects it has on people.
- Media is a catalyst for change and I want to be able to use the different forms of media to have a positive effect on people through topics of mental health awareness, importance of education, international aid.
- I found the courage to start my own blog two years ago, where I share my.....
- The most powerful form of media today is social media. I have enjoyed learning about the benefits and dangers of it and the best way to make the most of it. I have found an effective outcome is the balance between visual aid and providing accurate information.
- I have undertaken extra-curricular activities to help assist my study and ambition of media. I volunteered to promote areas where the school struggled to reach parents and external sources such as EMA for parents, where I produced a presentation explaining the requirements and regulations. As well as, promote the school's drama production where I designed posters to display around the school to encourage auditions and ticket prices. My biggest achievement was creating a trailer in video form for the school production which was posted on YouTube and gained interest from surrounding theatre companies.

Further Personal Statement Support-Layouts. Words and Phrases to use:

Words/Phrases

- ...provided the opportunity...
- I was assigned/presented with...
- ...this allowed me to develop/concentrate....
- This will enable me to...
-variety of opportunities...
- I managed/undertook/progressed/analysed/examined/organised/conducted/ portrayed/
- I was inspired/convicted/influenced
- Succeed/Achieve
- Invite/Promote/Gain
- aim/strive
- Influential/significant
- I look forward....
- Aspire/desire/ambition/fascination
- I take great pleasure in...
- I have pursued an interest in...

Start

- Subject Name
 - E.g. Art is a subject that has always fascinated me...
 - E.g. Chemistry is a body of knowledge on the world that surrounds us.
 - E.g. Media is an evolving art which....
 - E.g. Mathematics is a fundamental tool....
- I have always admired the.....
- The study of.....
- I believe.....
- In today's world/Living in.....

End

- Transition from sixth form to University
- Work hard, dedication, achieve a degree
- Proactive in this field of work
- I feel I can positively contribute to
- I am excited to explore this field further
- I am looking forward to.....

Tips

- Careful if using quotes-ensure it is accurate and relevant. (not too theoretical or emotional)
- Aim to have a different start to every paragraph
- Use evidence to back up claims/statements
- Aim for structure:
 - Start: Why do you want to study that subject? What has inspired you to study?
 - Your subjects that you are studying to help assist you in your chosen course. Why are they relevant? How do they link? What have you learned?
 - Your experiences. Jobs, work experience, volunteering, coaching, prefect, extra-curricular activities.
 - End: Why you feel you're a good fit for the course? Your thoughts on University?

References

A reference is another section of your UCAS application that will be filled in by your subject and sixth form teachers and submitted by them.

What are the steps involved for a reference:

1. St Martins Sixth Form Team will let you know when and how to pay your application fee.
2. The Sixth Form Team will write and collate your references for your application.
3. The Sixth Form Team will read through your references with you and confirm.
4. You and the Sixth Form Team will submit your reference and send to UCAS.

What will be included in your reference?

- Accurate, Honest and Precise descriptions
- Comment on successful elements/units
- Comment on:
 - Academic skills
 - Communication skills
 - Presentation skills
 - Presenting Arguments
 - Practical Skills
 - Independence of thought
 - Class Engagement and Contribution,
- Concise, Clear and Relevant
- Predicted Grades- Realistic predicted grades and may include any reason why a student may not meet the entry grades.
- Explain any gaps in education or poor performance. It is better to state these instances rather than ignore as the university will assume the worst.
- Improving student-Evidence of this
- Special Considerations
- Exceptional Qualities

External References

External references may be used subject to the relevance to the course. Examples of this would include:

- If a student has gained work experience in a nursery and wishes to study primary education
- If a student has volunteered at a vets, farm, zoo and wishes to study zoology
- If a student has worked part time in a sports club and wishes to study Sports Education

*Please note the student will have to discuss with the Sixth Form Team first.

Offers and Replies

Offers

There are two types of offers: conditional and unconditional.

There can be varied combinations of these offers. See below:

- Unconditional firm (UF) – You're in!
- Conditional firm (CF) – You're in if you meet the conditions.
- Conditional firm (CF) and conditional insurance (CI) – You've made a first and second choice – you'll be in at the first if you meet the conditions. If not, you might have met the conditions of the second – if so you'll be on that course instead.
- Conditional firm (CF) and unconditional insurance (UI) – You've made a first and second choice – if you meet the conditions of the first you'll be on that course. If not, you'll definitely be on the second

Replies

- You must reply to any offers by the date stated. This can vary depending on each offer.
- Please see key dates section on the next page
- When you choose which offers to accept you can choose **two** universities.
 - **'Firm'** choice – the place you want to go if you get the grades in the offer. This will be the higher grade entry requirements.
 - **'Insurance'** – the place you will go if you don't meet the requirements of your firm offer.
 - Double check the Welsh Baccalaureate for each course
 - E.g. Psychology BSc (Hons)
 - 1st: Firm Choice: Cardiff University AAA
 - 2nd: Insurance Choice: University of South Wales BCC
- Please see links below for further details
- <https://www.ucas.com/connect/blogs/think-carefully-when-you-reply-your-offers>
- <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/types-offer/replying-your-ucas-undergraduate-offers>
- <https://www.ucas.com/connect/blogs/replying-offers-%E2%80%93-your-questions-answered>

Key Dates for Applications, Deadlines, Results and Adjustments

Deadline for Oxbridge or Medical Based Courses

- Tuesday 15th October 2019
 - Most Oxbridge and Medical Based courses require interviews, exams and tests previous to this deadline

Deadline for Majority of Undergraduate Courses

- Wednesday 15th January 2020
 - This is the final submission date for undergraduate courses. Please aim to apply earlier than this as you do not want to risk course closures or problems with the UCAS site e.g. slow site or site closing down due to high intake.
 - Course Closures can and will occur if a university's intake for a course has exceeded a limit and they feel they have sufficient applications and no longer need to accept further applications. (Read the course intake description tab on the university's website)

Further dates

- Tuesday 25th February 2020
 - Extra Options Open Day-If you've used all five choices, and you're not holding any offers, you'll be able to add another choice using Extra.
- Results, Deadlines and Confirmations for application made on the following dates:
 - •If you receive your last decision on or before **31 March 2020**, your reply date is **5 May 2020**
 - •If you receive your last decision on or before **6 May 2020**, your reply date is **4 June 2020** (not applicants using Extra to find a place).
 - •If you receive your last decision on or before **4 June 2020**, your reply date is **18 June 2020** (except if you're using Extra to find a place).
 - •If you receive your last decision on or before **13 July 2020**, your reply date is **20 July 2020** (including Extra choices).

Clearing

What is Clearing?

- You can apply for universities from 6th July to 20th October if you are not holding an offer from a University or College and if the course still has spaces available.
- Please see link below for further details
- <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/results-confirmation-and-clearing/what-clearing>

Who is eligible to apply for Clearing?

- Those who have no offers
- Those who declined offers
- Those who did not meet the conditions of their offer

Clearing Advice

- Speak to someone from your school or a career advisor if you are considering applying through clearing.
- Speak to the admissions team in the university you are applying to, in order to discuss the clearing process
- Explore your options
- Regularly check the available courses as spaces may become available.
- Check the course and its details to ensure it is right for you.

Adjustment

- Adjustment is a chance for you to reconsider where and what to study. If you've had a conditional firm choice accepted – and therefore made into an unconditional firm choice – you could potentially swap your place for one on another course you prefer.
- Adjustment is available from A-level results day (13 August 2020), until 31 August 2020. It's entirely optional, and a lot of competitive courses will be full – but other applicants might have missed their conditions or swapped a course too, so it could be worth seeing what's available.
- Please see link below for further details
- <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/apply-and-track/results/ucas-adjustment-if-youve-done-better-expected>

University Accommodation and Finances

Accommodation

- Check the service provider site
 - Universities have different types of accommodation
 - University Halls
 - Private University Halls
 - Campuses, Flats, Blocks
- Check Private Accommodation (local estate agents who specialise in student accommodation)
- Get in touch with people from your course via social media (e.g. Facebook- Class of 2019 History). This is a great way to meet people and start finding accommodation, sharing with people from your course.
- Read the guidelines and small print
 - Distance from your campus (travel arrangements-is there a university or college bus from your accommodation to your campus)
 - Look out for: Moving in and Moving Out dates (You don't want to move out of your accommodation if you still have exams in the summer)
 - Read the accommodation rules on overstaying and prices
 - Work out the costs of living (see Finance section)
 - Car parking spaces (is there permit available)
 - Check what the accommodation already provides
 - Checks and Audits (all accommodation providers will conduct health and safety and hygiene checks regularly throughout the year to ensure the accommodation is in suitable living condition)

Finances

*Please note: A Student Finance talk will be held one evening during the spring term

- Student Finance
 - Student Finance is different in Wales, England, Scotland, Ireland and abroad
 - Check the requirements and rules for Wales
<https://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/undergraduate-students/new-students.aspx>
 - Check the requirements and rules for England etc. <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance-register-login>
- Monthly costs-Rent, Bills, groceries, shopping and general costs of living, fuel (if you drive)
- Essential Shopping list-check what the accommodation already provides, many provide beds, mattresses, crockery, wardrobes

Alternative Routes of Higher Education Study

Apprenticeships in Wales (* Please see Sixth Form Advisors if applying for apprenticeships in England)

Entry requirements

- 16+ Over
- Living in Wales
- Not in further education
- Five GCSE's at minimum (preferably grades A-C)
- 2/3 A-levels or equivalent (preferred)
- DBS Checks may be needed

How long are Apprenticeships?

- Apprenticeships can vary from six months to three years

What is involved in an apprenticeship?

- Apprenticeship content varies depending on the company and duration
 - Larger companies with a variety of departments may allow you to explore a few different departments, perhaps rotating every 6 months.
 - Some apprenticeships will focus solely on one department, which will provide in depth work and experience specific to your chosen field.

How to find suitable apprenticeships for you?

- Research on job sites (some companies may outsource their apprenticeships on job sites)
- Research on specific company websites (some companies only advertise on their site-applying directly is a great detail to add on application forms)
- Please see links below for further information:
- <https://www.careerswales.com/en/employers/recruitment-support/apprenticeships/>
- <https://beta.careerswales.gov.wales/apprenticeships/employers-who-offer-apprenticeships>
- <https://gov.wales/apprenticeships-skills-and-training>
- https://www.citygateway.org.uk/apprenticeships-training/?gclid=EAlaIqobChMIInZmuoP_K5AIVy7HtCh3fSgj7EAAYAyAAEgKtffD_BwE

Degree apprenticeships

What are Degree Apprenticeships?

Degree apprenticeships are a new type of programme offered by some universities. Students can achieve a full bachelor's or master's degree as part of their apprenticeship. These programmes are being developed by employers, universities, and professional bodies working in partnership.

Degree apprenticeships combine working with studying part-time at a university. Apprentices are employed throughout the programme, and spend part of their time at university and the rest with their employer. This can be on a day-to-day basis or in blocks of time, depending on the programme and requirements of the employer.

They can take between three to six years to complete, depending on the course level. Currently, the scheme is only available in England and Wales, although applications may be made from all parts of the UK.

Network 75

What is Network75?

Graduate from university with a degree, 5 years work experience and no student debt!

Network75 provides students with the opportunity to Work, Earn and Learn. Students work in a local business 3 days per week and attend university 2 days per week. In conjunction with the University of South Wales, all students benefit from some of the very best degrees on offer, state of the art learning facilities, and excellent teaching.

Students choose the Network75 route to a degree because of the experiences that working alongside their degree brings, coupled with the financial benefit of graduating from university debt free.

Companies choose Network75 students because they are proven to become an integral part of the business; upon graduation they have a tailor made employee who knows the company from the ground up.

Please see link below for Network 75 Apprenticeship schemes:

<https://network75.southwales.ac.uk/degrecourses/>

Application Process

- Most companies will state their application process on their website or advert. In the case it is not stated, contacting the company to ask is the best option which will allow you to prepare for interviews.
- Application forms and CV's
 - State your qualifications and grades
 - Your experiences
 - Your interest in the field
 - Why you have chosen this particular apprenticeship scheme

What will you gain from an Apprenticeship?

- Qualifications
- Work experience in your chosen field
- Transferable skills
- Opportunity to be offered further experience, different schemes, further qualifications or permanent position in the company

Colleges

- Many colleges offer higher education courses (See Link below)
<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/what-and-where-study/studying-uk-college>

Conservatoires

What is a Conservatoire?

- They are colleges which specialise in music however a handful offer drama and media courses.
- Please see the link below to research courses that may be right for you, the entry requirements and the application process.
- Entry requirements and application process may include portfolios and auditions.
- <https://www.ucas.com/conservatoires/conservatoire-study-right-me>
- Example of a Film and Production Course: <https://www.wsc.ac.uk/courses/film-and-creative-media-production/274-level-2/4310-film-and-creative-production-diploma-level-2-19vf14032>

Summer Schools-Sutton Trust

What is the Sutton Trust?

- The Sutton Trust is a Summer School which provides the opportunity to study at university in a subject specific area for free.

What does the Sutton Trust offer?

- The Summer Schools offer the following:
 - Subject specific course in one of 13 leading universities
 - Over 40 different subjects to choose from
 - Attend taster lectures and workshops
 - The Sutton Trust will cover travel, accommodation, food and activity so will not have to pay anything.

Who is Eligible?

- The following students would be eligible:
 - Studying in Year 12 in England or Wales
 - Currently attend and have always attended a state funded school or college
 - Would be the first generation of their family to attend university
 - Have been eligible for free school meals
 - Attend a school or college with a below average A-level and/or low rate of progression to higher education
 - Live in a neighbourhood with a low rate of progression to higher education and/or a high level of socio-deprivation
 - Have achieved at least five A or 7 grades at GCSE
- Please see links below for further details
- <https://summerschools.suttontrust.com/>
- <https://summerschools.suttontrust.com/how-to-apply/>

Gap Year

What are the options in a gap year?

- Gain work experience
 - Explore different industries by working a week or two in different fields. This will help you rule different industries and courses out.
 - Many companies offer internships
- Paid work
 - Apply for a job to help you gain experience in the real working world.
 - Both large and small companies allow for work experience. A simple email or phone call could lead to a great opportunity!
- Travelling
 - Travelling can provide you with new skills, exploring new cultures, independent life skills, meeting new people

- Part Time Courses- You can take up in college or online to learn a new skill, language, trade such as carpentry, mechanics or cookery,

Why take a gap year? What will I gain?

- Some may feel confused for their next stages after A-level and may be unsure on what subject route to go down
- It allows for time to recompose yourself to focus yourself on the right path for you
- You may discover the right path for you by experiencing different things in different places
- It will improve your job prospects if you gain work experience
- It allows you to save up money for later university
- It provides you with time to decide what is right for you, university, working etc.
- It will provide you with transferable skills-Social, Communication, Academic
- It allows for personal growth personal growth and perhaps great life experiences

Dangers of a gap year

- Unstructured year- it may not provide you with any value if and can turn into a 'wasted' year, if it is not planned correctly
- It can be expensive and may place you in a difficult financial position
- It may become a distraction from your future plans
- It may confuse you more, by trying things you like and do not like
- It may put you off studying further and therefore result in no higher education qualifications
- Finding a reference may be difficult if you lose contact with tutors and managers

Online courses

- Students can participate in online courses to provide them with further knowledge and qualifications.
- Many online courses are free of charge and can be completed at your own pace.
- Online courses may be useful for later on. Perhaps during or after university. E.g. some jobs require experience or qualification in a certain ICT package. It can simply be completed online.

Please find links below:

- <http://mooc.org/>
- <https://www.reed.co.uk/courses/>

Contacts and Links for you to use

- UCAS
- Careers Wales (They have a phone line to call to discuss career options 0800 028 4844)
- University Websites (Most universities have a web chat available and admissions email address)
- Company Websites (Do not be afraid to send an email to companies to ask for work experience, volunteering, information)
- Speak to your teachers and family and friends who work about your subjects, topics, revision techniques, grades, experience and future career paths
- Sixth Form Team

**Thank you and we hope you find this information
booklet useful**



From the Sixth Form Team at St Martins Comprehensive School