

APPLYING TO UK UNIVERSITIES

Notes for students applying in 2018-19, to start in September 2019

DEADLINE: We recommend applications are complete by November 30th 2018
(For Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine by October 1st 2018)

APPLY ONLINE: at home or school, through www.ucas.com/apply (*choose 2019*)
Applications open in May, for submission after September 1st. A sample UCAS application is on the school website, alongside other useful documents.

COST: £24 by debit/credit card, paid online when you submit your application

BUZZWORD: You must use the school buzzword: *hipolito*

COURSE CHOICES

Choose your subject or subjects, making a coherent set of choices. There are a vast number of subjects, and combinations, to study in the UK. Often you don't need prior knowledge of the subject. Most UK jobs are open to all graduates: your choice of subject is of secondary importance to your general ability, skills, motivation and personality. Going to a prestigious University is also very important in terms of future career prospects. If you're returning to Spain or another country later, choose a course with a straightforward title which another country will understand and accept. Some students take a 'gap year': they can apply in 2018-19 for a place for 2020, or they can wait for their BAC mark and make a post-BAC application. UK Universities are very happy about 'gap years' as students often make a better choice of course and are more mature.

UNIVERSITIES

You can only apply to FIVE University courses. Make a shortlist of five Universities, usually FOUR which you really like, and ONE which is a reserve if you get low grades. Consider location, prestige, facilities, size, costs, exchange programmes, specializations, etc.

PREPARATION

Start by using Course Search on the www.ucas.com: there are links from here to all University courses. Courses give an indication of the marks required in the European Baccalaureate but you may need to search carefully). Follow the useful Unistats links too. You may also visit some Universities and Open Days, often in late June and September. You can consult 'League Tables' but their value depends on their methodology and guessing whether the rankings will change or not. Look at The Guardian Guide on guardian.co.uk/education, or at The Times. Both also rank individual faculties. If you write to, phone, or email individual UK Universities they will send you a copy of their prospectus, and they also answer questions.

POINTS SCORE

Your choices should require a BAC score of roughly what you expect to get – and one choice should be a lower (reserve) choice. The school will not support unrealistic applications. In past years, final BAC grades have differed from Yr 6 final grades by an average (downwards) of 1%. Remember: students are selected for their overall ability, experience, motivation, and profile: just getting the exam points is not enough (they are not *notas de corte*).

REFERENCE

Choose an Anglophone teacher to be your referee. They prepare a 500 word reference in support of your application highlighting your good points. They also give your predicted marks, based on teacher estimates and your Yr 6 final marks. The reference is 'open'.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

This is limited to around 600 words, and can be pasted in from Word. Content includes:

1. Your motivation for the degree course and future career ambitions
2. Your academic interests and books read to show your motivation and preparation
3. Relevant work experience and what you gained from it
4. Why you want to study in UK (if you're not a UK national)
5. Participation in activities, leadership roles, and why you're a nice person

TESTS (mainly Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, and Law students)

Register for BMAT and Oxford / Cambridge tests through Mr Roe (exams on Oct 31st in school).

For UKCAT (Medicine) and LNAT (Law) you must make your own arrangements this summer

INTERVIEWS

Most courses no longer interview students, for logistical reasons. But you can expect interviews for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Nursing, Teaching, and some Art and Design courses.

GRADE COMPARISON

<i>BAC</i>	<i>A LEVEL</i>	<i>UCAS POINTS</i>	<i>RANGE OF UNIVERSITIES</i>
8.5+	AAA/A*AA	360+	Oxford, Cambridge, most medical schools
8.0	AAB	340	Other top Universities
7.7	ABB	320	Other top Universities
7.5	BBB	300	Other top/middle ranking Universities
7.3	BBC	280	Middle-ranking Universities
7.0	BCC	260	Middle-ranking Universities
6.5	DDD	180	Lower-ranking Universities
6.0	DD	120	Lower-ranking Universities

BUT NOTE that this not a legal or a mathematical calculation. It will differ from one University to another. In some courses, you will also be asked for specific scores in specific subjects. But, as you can see, if you pass the BAC you will get a place somewhere in the UK.

LEVEL OF ENGLISH

Most Universities accept L1 and L2 from European Schools as sufficient evidence of English. They may ask for a specific mark in L1 or L2, such as 7.5. L3 Written is often acceptable.

CONDITIONAL OFFERS and ACCEPTANCE

Each University will make you an offer, or reject you: the offer is normally based on overall BAC mark, but may include grades for particular subjects as well. By May, you usually hold two offers: one firm, one as insurance (lower mark). Your 'firm' university will always sort out accommodation for your first year. In July, you get your BAC mark, send it to the University and off you go! If you fail to reach your offer, apply through 'Clearing' for the empty places.

FINANCE

Fees for 2019 are still to be confirmed. Currently, if you are an EU resident, you will pay £9250 p.a. in England, half this in Northern Ireland and Wales, and nothing in Scotland. Most people take out a Student Loan for the fees: apply in April/ May. You are billed for the fees at the end of your course, and you then begin repaying the loan when you earn an average UK wage, currently £25,000 per annum. Your total overall living expenses will be about £9,000 (11.000€) per year. Almost all students in the UK work part-time and/or in the holidays to help meet this cost. If you are a UK resident or 'returner' who was born, or lived, in the UK: get further advice.