



What **next?**

If you have already applied or are thinking about applying to university or college this year, you have an opportunity to review your choices and options before you make your final decisions. There is lots to think about this year due to the coronavirus pandemic. Here is a guide to help you think everything through, both while you wait for any results you're expecting and once you've got them.



**Discover
Uni**

While you are waiting for your results

1. Check your chosen university or college's plans for next year.

It's really important to find out whether your chosen university or college has changed the way it plans to deliver courses you've applied for or are considering. Courses due to start in autumn 2020 may involve some online delivery, especially in the first term. Start dates and course content may also change.

Check the university or college website, and make sure you look for information about your specific faculty, subject area and course. For example, lab-based work or work placements may be pushed back until later in the year, delivered in a different way (e.g. through small group teaching), or even moved to next year.

2. Get prepared for Clearing.

Whether or not you're planning to use Clearing, it's a good idea to look at other universities and courses as a back-up, in case you don't get the grades you need or you get higher grades than you expected.

Draw up a shortlist of alternative courses you might be interested in.

3. Have a look around.

Many universities and colleges have virtual campus tours available on their websites. You can also sign up for virtual open days and online discussions. UCAS keeps a list of virtual events on [its website](#).

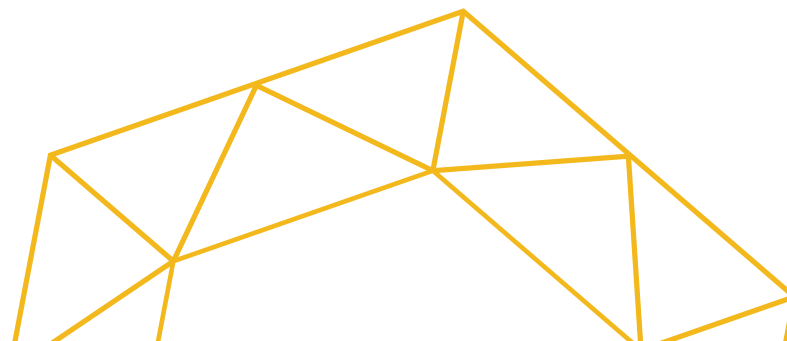
4. Make sure support is in place.

If you have particular requirements, inform the universities or colleges you've applied to. For example, if you are a care leaver or you have a disability, look for support on their websites and ask what they can offer you.

5. Talk to other students.

Talking to current students is a great way to understand what university life is really like at the moment and how your university or college is adapting to the pandemic.

Sign up for [Unibuddy](#) and [The Student Room](#) to hear from other students like you. Your university or college may also include information from current students on their websites or social media.



You can also look at the course information on Discover Uni – it includes surveys from students who've done the course and information on what they've gone on to do. Check out our [short video](#) to help you understand the statistics that are available through Discover Uni.

Where to find information

- Check your university or college's website for information. They are the first point of call for information about everything from course content to accommodation.
- You can search for, bookmark and compare courses on the [Discover Uni](#) website.
- [Prospects](#) or [What Uni](#) can help with ideas based on your A levels or other Level 3 qualifications if you want to think about your options for Clearing.

How to research options

It's important that you research your options for university or college thoroughly this year, and you'll need to look at a range of factors. You could use a table like this one to help you see which university or course can offer the things that are most important to you.

	Option 1	Option 2	etc.
Entry requirements Do they fit with your actual or predicted grades? Remember to consider different options – why not include some courses that are above your grades, some that match and one that is lower as a backup.	BBB – match	AAB – higher than predicted	
Course content Does the course subject and content match your interests and potential career aspirations?			
Work experience Does the university or college offer placements or internship opportunities? How will these opportunities be affected by the pandemic?		Sandwich years on hold	
Assessment How will the course be assessed? Think about whether you prefer exams or coursework and check how modules are assessed.	No exams	Mix of exams and coursework	

	Option 1	Option 2	etc.
Delivery methods How is the course now being taught? Is it online, face-to-face, or a mixture? How long will any changes to teaching methods last – just for the first term, or the whole first year? What teaching methods would suit your preferred learning style best?	All online		
Location Where is the course based? Consider whether you want to be closer to home or further away, and what kind of campus you would like to attend.	3 hour train ride		
Fees and costs Are there are any additional costs you may have to pay for the course, such as for materials or field trips?		£200 field trip in first year	
Financial support Are there any scholarships or bursaries available for the course?			
Additional support Does the university or college provide any additional support that you may need? For example, if you have a disability, how will the university make sure the course is fully accessible to you? Or if you are a care leaver or estranged from your family, is the university able to offer year-round accommodation?	Guaranteed accessible accommodation in first year		

Withdrawing or deferring

If you do not want to apply to higher education anymore, you can cancel your application via Track. You should remember that you can't get a refund unless your application has been cancelled within 14 days of being submitted to UCAS.

If you want to defer your place or had originally applied for deferred entry and no longer want to defer, you will need to check with your chosen university or college for information about their deferral process.

You can also withdraw your application completely and apply for university or college next year, but please keep in mind there is no guarantee you will get an offer or place then.

It is important for you to think carefully before you decide to defer. Consider what you would do in the intervening year and that there may be fewer opportunities for employment or 'gap year' travel this year.

I could use the year to travel

There may be travel restrictions for some time to come

I am worried about living away from home in these difficult times

You could look for a university closer to home

I'm worried I might miss out on the social side of university and won't get to experience Freshers' Week

We are learning new ways of socialising via the internet and with social distancing measures

I could use the year to work

Employment opportunities may be limited with more people applying for fewer jobs

I have considered all of my options and have decided to defer this year

If you have considered all of your options and your university or college will allow you to defer, that's fine!

The pandemic has negatively affected my mental health and I'm not in the right headspace to go to university or college this year

That's fine if that is your decision - look after yourself and go to university when it's the right time for you. Make sure to check in with the university or college you've applied to on their deferral policy.

I am worried I will feel isolated wherever I study

It's natural to feel worried at the moment, but social distancing may change and universities and colleges will adjust

I want to move into student accommodation and meet new people

You may still be able to move into your accommodation this year, even if it is not right at the start of the term

When you get your results

International Baccalaureate results come out on **6 July 2020**.

SQA results (Scotland) come out on **4 August 2020**.

A level results come out on **13 August 2020**.

BTEC results come out on **14 August 2020**.

GCSE results come out on **20 August 2020**.

For information on other results, check with your school or college, contact the qualifications body in your country (listed in the A-Z at the end of this guide) or see the [UCAS website](#).

1. Your application

If you have applied through UCAS, your application will continue as normal through the admissions process. UCAS will still receive your grades and will forward them to your universities.

If you are applying as a private candidate (i.e. not through UCAS), you will need to get in touch with the universities or colleges you have applied to for information on their admissions processes.

If you are applying as a private A Level candidate (i.e. you are self-teaching and were only taking your A level exams at a centre),

your centre should have now submitted your assessments. Universities and colleges have been asked to be flexible in their admissions for private candidates, so do make sure to contact them and have a look at their websites.

2. Your results

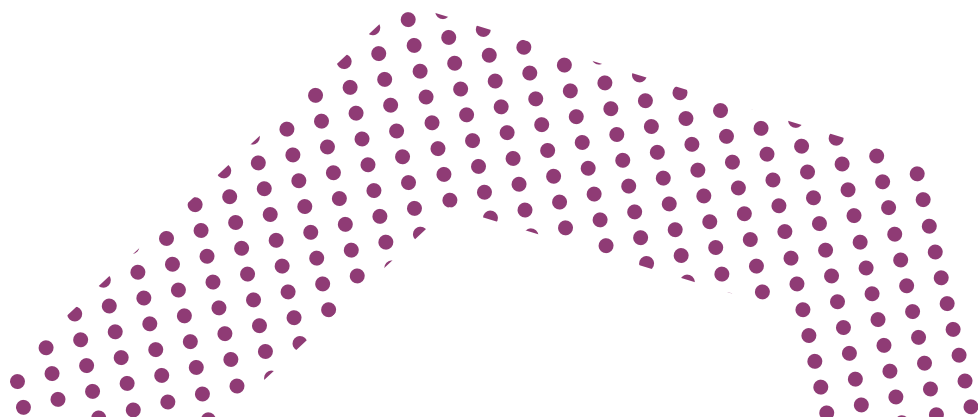
If you've got the results you need to get a place you're happy with, congratulations!

If you did better or worse than expected, there are other options.

3. If you haven't yet applied or are unplaced

If you haven't applied yet or have not received any offers, you can apply through Clearing.

This is where any research you've done will help as you may have some universities, colleges and courses in mind you'd like to apply to.



4. If you did better than expected

You will have an opportunity to reconsider your options if you achieve better grades than you were predicted.

You can register for Adjustment through your Track account. Make sure to discuss Adjustment with any universities you are interested in to see if there is sufficient space for you on the course.

5. If you have changed your mind

If you have an offer but you have changed your mind, you can release yourself from this choice to be automatically placed into Clearing. Think carefully before you do this and make sure you have done plenty of research, as you will lose the place once you release yourself into Clearing.

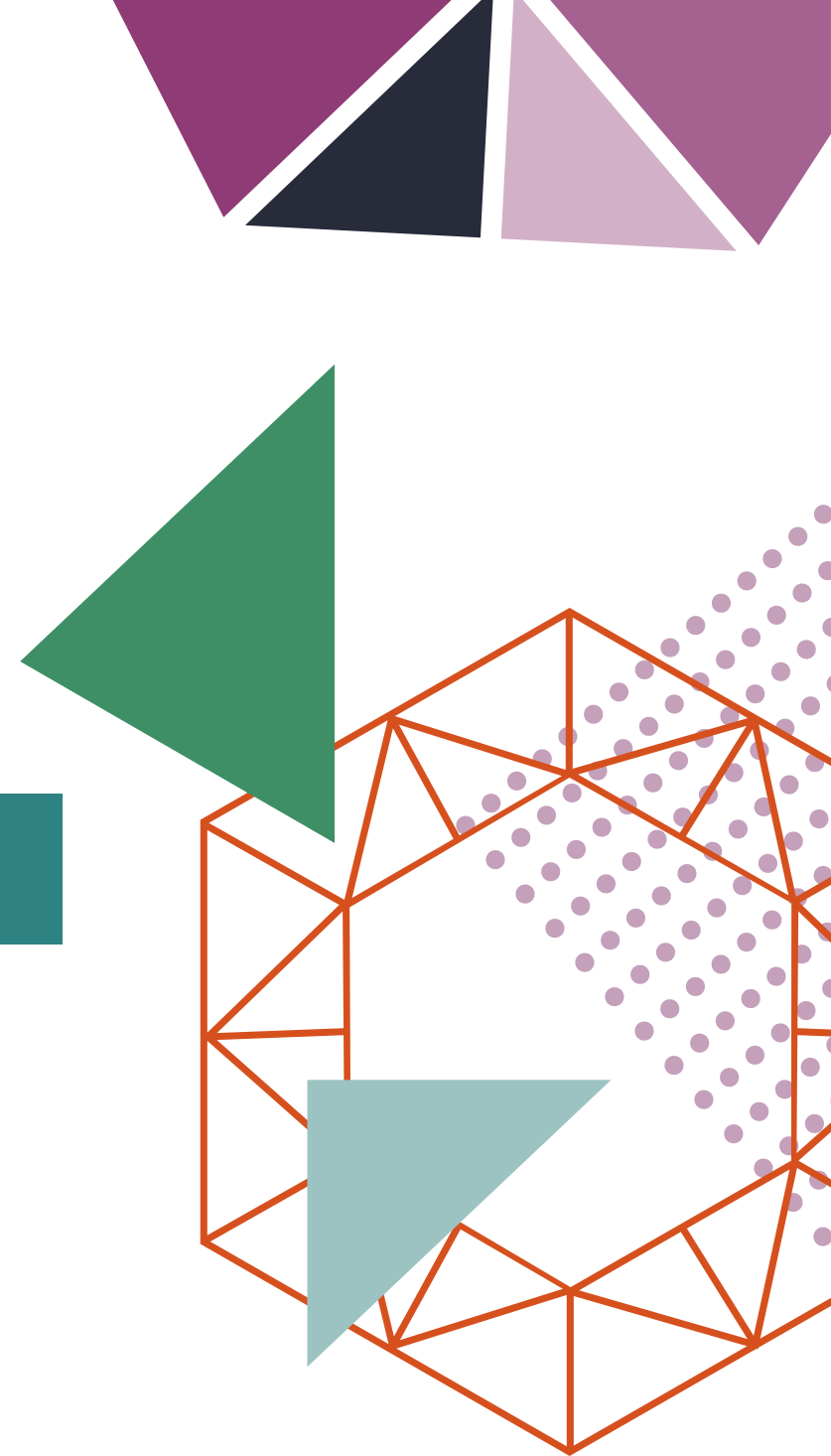
Clearing Plus – how it works

From early July, if you're still looking for a place, you will be given a personalised list of courses that are relevant to you and still have spaces available.

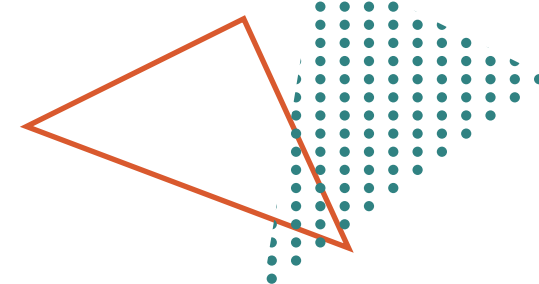
Log in to your Track account and find the 'view matches' button to browse courses.

If you find a course you are interested in, just click on 'I'm interested' to send your details to the university. If they have vacancies and you meet their entry requirements, they may call you to discuss an offer.

You can also use the UCAS Search tool to browse over 30,000 course options.



Your rights



To help you make an informed decision about accepting an offer of a place on a course, universities and colleges are obliged under [consumer protection legislation](#) to make certain information available to you. This includes information about costs, complaints, terms and conditions and your right to cancel the contract you hold with the university or college.

If you are applying to a university or college in England, the Office for Students has released guidance which states that your university or college should:

- tell you about any changes to course, for example, whether they will be taught online or on-campus
- let you know whether the teaching on courses could change due to public health advice
- provide you with their terms and conditions
- ensure that their complaints procedure is accessible, clear and fair, and let you know where you can find it.

They should give you all of this information before places are confirmed in August.

If you are applying to a university or college in Wales, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales expects universities to make sure that students have access to clear and up-to-date information, based on what is known at the time. Where universities have made decisions about the delivery of part of the academic year, but not the whole year, they should provide information on the decisions

made to date, and the timescales in which information on the remainder of the academic year will be made available. Complaints processes must continue to remain accessible, transparent and fair, and universities must provide clear information on how students can escalate any issues, including through contacting the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

If you don't think your university or college has given you the information you need to make an informed choice, there are a few steps you can take:

- Complain to the university or college through their complaints procedure.
- If you are in England, you can notify the Office for Students. Bear in mind that this information will only be used to search for patterns of behaviour in universities, not to take further action on your individual case.
- If you are in England or Wales, you may be able to complain to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator](#).
- If you are in Northern Ireland, you may be able to complain to the [NI Ombudsman](#).
- If you are in Scotland, you may be able to complain to the [Scottish Public Services Ombudsman](#).
- If you think the university or college has breached consumer protection law, you can report their behaviour to the [Competition and Markets Authority](#).



Information for international students

If you're applying for a higher education course in the UK, you will need to look at how the university or college you're interested in plans to deliver the course and when the term will start. Some universities will have delayed or multiple start dates, or will only be teaching online for the first few weeks. Don't rush to book your travel, as you may be able to do the first part of your course from home.

When you are able to travel to the UK, you may find that you need to quarantine for a period. Make sure to keep checking the [UK Government's website](#) for information on travel and quarantining regulations.

The student support team at your university or college will be able to provide information on their specific social distancing measures or policies. Make sure you check in with them before you set off and let them know your planned arrival date.

A-Z of resources

Researching options

Discover Uni: <https://discoveruni.gov.uk/>

Prospects: <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/>

The Student Room: <https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/>

UCAS: <https://www.ucas.com/>

Unibuddy: <https://www.ucas.com/chat-to-students>

What Uni: www.whatuni.com

Qualifications information

England: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>

Northern Ireland: <https://ccea.org.uk/>

Scotland: <https://www.sqa.org.uk/>

Wales: <https://qualificationswales.org/> (available bilingually)

Government information

UK Government coronavirus information: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Welsh Government coronavirus support for higher education students: <https://gov.wales/higher-education-and-student-support-coronavirus>

Consumer protection

Competition and Markets Authority: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/competition-and-markets-authority>

Consumer protection law advice for higher education providers and students: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providers-and-students>

Office of the Independent Adjudicator: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

Submit a notification to the Office for Students: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/contact/complaints-and-notifications/>

NI Ombudsman: <https://nipso.org.uk/>

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: <https://www.spso.org.uk/>