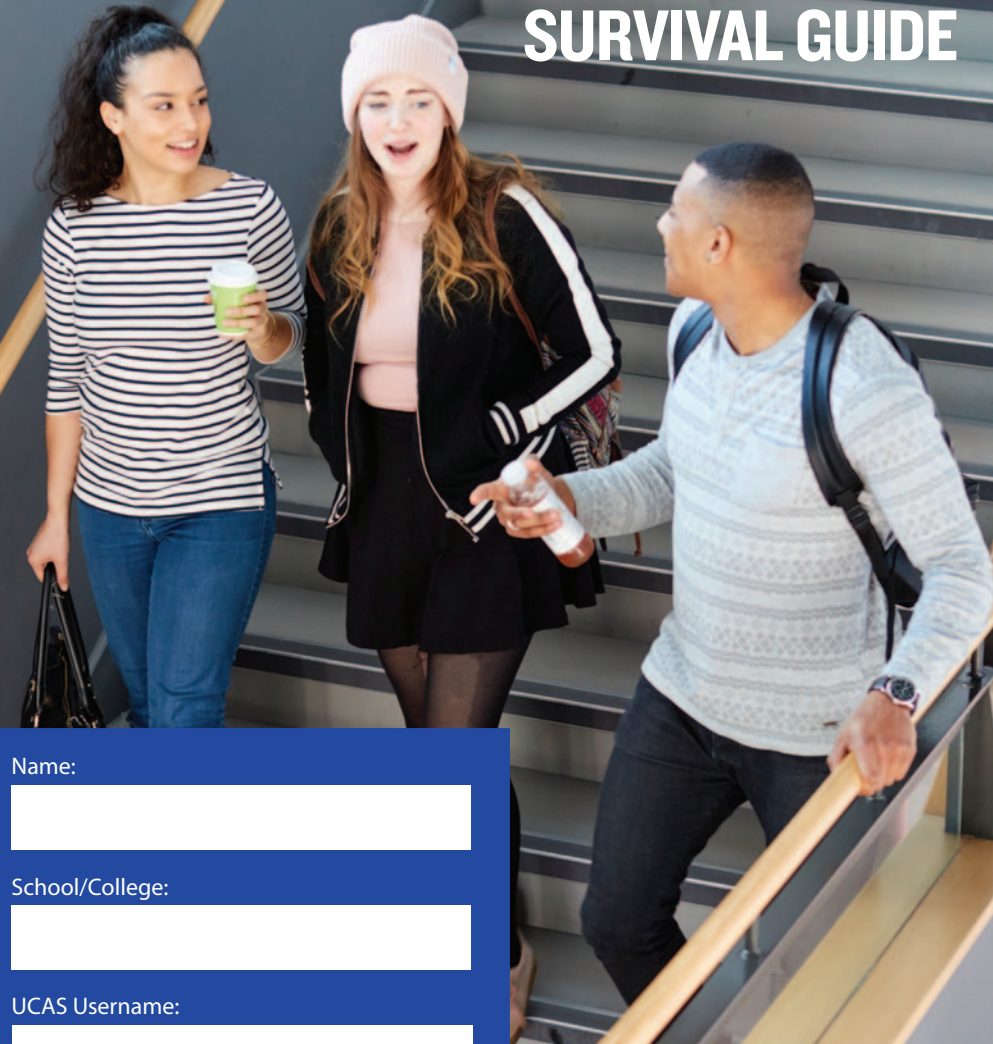


# UCAS

## SURVIVAL GUIDE



Name:

School/College:

UCAS Username:

UCAS Personal ID:

# UCAS PROCESS

## JUNE-SEPTEMBER

### RESEARCH

With more than 36,000 courses available across hundreds of universities, narrowing these down to just five can be hard work.

It's important to start early. The best way to research universities is to attend Open Days. You can find our Open Day dates and book your place online at: [www.southwales.ac.uk/opendays](http://www.southwales.ac.uk/opendays)



## SEPTEMBER-JANUARY

### APPLY

Applications are made to UCAS between September and January, with most of this process completed at your school or college.

The personal statement is one of the most important parts of the application. University tutors rely on this information when making a decision about whether to accept potential students, so it needs to be the best reflection of you. You'll find more guidance on writing your personal statement in this booklet.



## JANUARY-MAY

### OFFERS

Once you have applied, you'll start to receive offers. The types of offers are below:

- **Unconditional offer** is an offer of a place on a university course, where the applicant has met all of the entry criteria.
- **Conditional offer** is dependent on the applicant meeting certain criteria, such as particular grades or UCAS tariff points. Most applicants receive this type of offer. Depending on the course, some universities may invite you to attend an interview or audition before they make their decision.
- **Unsuccessful** means that the applicant has not been accepted for the university course.

### ACCEPTANCE

Once you have received your offers, you will need to decide on your **firm acceptance**, which is the offer you accept as your first choice. In addition, you can make an **insurance acceptance** (your second choice), in case you don't get the grades needed for your first choice. It is important that the entry requirements for your insurance course are lower than those of your firm acceptance course. You have until the beginning of May to reply to all offers.

Applying to university can seem a daunting process, so to make sure you know what happens when, here is a handy overview to help you keep on top of it all.

## FEBRUARY-JUNE

### APPLY FOR STUDENT FINANCE

Students from Wales can make a student finance application at: [www.studentfinancewales.co.uk](http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk). Students from England can make a student finance application at: [www.gov.uk/student-finance](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance)

### UCAS EXTRA

If you receive no offers from your five UCAS choices, or choose to decline all the offers you are made, you will have the chance to enter UCAS Extra. This is a second chance for some students who were not successful with their initial applications. You will only be able to apply for courses at institutions that still have vacancies. For more information, please visit: [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)



## AUGUST

### RESULTS DAY AND CLEARING

If you haven't secured a place at university after receiving your results, or if you fail to meet the entry requirements for your firm and insurance choices, you can enter a system called Clearing. This matches students with spare university places.



## UCAS DEADLINES

### 15 OCTOBER

The deadline for courses such as medicine, dentistry and veterinary science, and for applications to Oxford or Cambridge.

### 25 JANUARY


The deadline for most UCAS applications. Some scholarship and bursary application deadlines are also tied to this date.

## SEPTEMBER

# YOU'RE NOW A UNIVERSITY STUDENT



# RESEARCH: WHAT TO CONSIDER

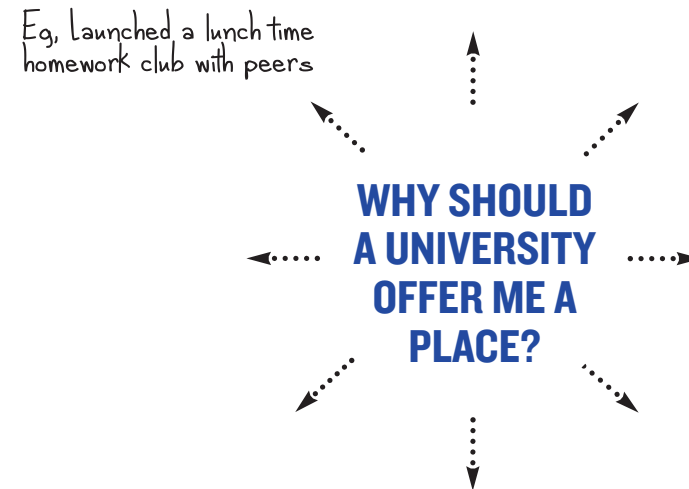
INSTITUTION	COURSE TITLE(S)	OPEN DAYS	SCHOLARSHIP/ BURSARY AVAILABLE?	ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
University of South Wales			SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES AT USW: 	

# PERSONAL STATEMENT

Students often find the personal statement the most challenging part of their UCAS application. It may be difficult to squeeze all of your achievements and experiences into just 47 lines or 4,000 characters.

## MIND MAP

Before you start working on your personal statement, you need to consider what you want to include and what you want your chosen universities to know about you. Map out your ideas, achievements and experiences below.



# WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

To begin drafting your personal statement, use your ideas from the previous page to write brief answers to the following questions.

## WHY DO YOU WANT TO DO THIS COURSE?

Think about your current studies:

- Are there particular elements you enjoy?
- Are there areas you want to study further?

What appeals to you most about the course you have chosen? Why have you chosen it?

Do you have a career in mind? Is this connected to the course you want to study?

How do you demonstrate your passion for your subject? What additional reading, online courses or webinars or podcasts have you enjoyed?

Handwriting practice area consisting of multiple horizontal dotted lines for writing answers to the questions on the previous page.

## WHAT ARE YOUR GREATEST STRENGTHS AND SKILLS?

Don't be afraid to talk positively about yourself – this is your chance to shine!

Lined writing area for 'WHAT ARE YOUR GREATEST STRENGTHS AND SKILLS?'

## WHAT ACHIEVEMENTS HAVE YOU GAINED?

List the achievements you have gained at school, such as your qualifications, responsibilities, awards and certificates.

List extra-curricular activities you've been involved in, such as drama groups or sports teams, including any achievements.

Lined writing area for 'WHAT ACHIEVEMENTS HAVE YOU GAINED?'

### REMEMBER YOUR ABC

Consider how what you have gained or achieved relates to the university course you want to study.

### ACTIVITY

What have you done, achieved, experienced or read?

### BENEFIT

How did you benefit from the activity?

### COURSE

How does this relate to the course you are applying for?

**WHAT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE THAT ARE RELEVANT TO HIGHER EDUCATION?**

Have you taken part in work experience or a have a part-time job? If so, how have you benefited from this? Do you have additional responsibilities such as looking after a sibling or relative?

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**WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES?      NOTES**

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If you'd like some help and guidance with your personal statement or UCAS application, get in touch with us. E-mail [schoolsandcolleges@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:schoolsandcolleges@southwales.ac.uk) or find us on Unibuddy – search 'Chat to our Students' at [www.southwales.ac.uk](http://www.southwales.ac.uk)

# PREPARING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

1

## PREPARATION



- ✓ You can only write one personal statement, so remember to make a list of all the things you want to include in it.
- ✓ Remember that the same statement will be sent to all the universities you apply to.
- ✓ Start drafting your personal statement early to ensure you have enough time to read through and edit.
- ✓ Research! Research! Research! Look at different university websites and see what skills and qualities they're looking for.

2

## WHAT TO INCLUDE



- ✓ You will need to explain why you're interested in that specific subject area.
- ✓ How your current and previous studies relate to the course you've chosen.
- ✓ How your previous jobs and work experiences relate to your skills and the course you've chosen.
- ✓ Explain any training you've had and achievements you've gained.

3

## HOW TO WRITE IT



- ✓ The introduction and the way you start your personal statement determines whether the reader wants to continue reading it.
- ✓ Structure your personal statement and be clear and concise.
- ✓ Check grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- ✓ Emphasise your commitment, enthusiasm and skills.

4

## TECHNICAL DETAILS



- ✓ Don't copy! UCAS software systems detects if a statement has been copied, which could hinder your chances of being accepted.
- ✓ You will need to write 47 lines of text maximum, which is equivalent to 4,000 characters (this includes blank spaces).

**WATCH OUR TALK FOR MORE ADVICE ON WRITING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT:**



# GET TO KNOW USW

We're looking forward to meeting you and welcoming you to USW! You can find a list of upcoming Open Days on our website: [www.southwales.ac.uk](http://www.southwales.ac.uk)

There are lots of ways to get in touch with us and find out more. Through our website, you can chat to students and tutors, take virtual tours and ask any questions you have about studying at USW.

SCAN TO BOOK  
YOUR OPEN  
DAY PLACE



You can talk to USW students and academic staff online at any time. Just search 'Chat to our Students' at [www.southwales.ac.uk](http://www.southwales.ac.uk)

## OPEN DAYS: WHAT DO I WANT TO KNOW?



Note down some questions you'd like to ask at university Open Days, such as questions about the course structure or assessment methods, accreditations and what careers graduates have embarked on, or the work experience on offer as part of the course.

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# STUDENT LIFE



At USW you'll make friends for life, try out lots of new things and become more independent than ever before. You'll be part of a supportive environment for studying and living, where new students quickly feel at home.

Even though we're one of the largest universities in the UK, you'll find that lecturers know each of their students by name. We have a diverse and welcoming community, so you'll find people just like you, who share your interests, beliefs, and motivations.

Follow us on social to keep up with what's happening at USW. **#USWFamily**



Search:  
**University of South Wales**



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**@USW\_SCL**