



Urmston Grammar Sixth Form

# Post-18 Options Evening

May 2026

## Session 1

Amy Marshall – Apprenticeships

Sally Merrell (MMU) – Degree Apprenticeships

## Session 2

Sixth Form Team – University choices and the application process.





# Undergraduate Study

## **Option 1**

Straight into study on an Undergraduate course at university.

## **Option 2**

A gap year, prior to studying on an Undergraduate course at university.

Students planning on a gap year should still apply for university whilst in the sixth form but select 'deferred entry'.



# Gap Year

Gap years can be a very positive thing provided they are used effectively to gain more knowledge, experience or travel.

Students planning a gap year are actively encouraged to have a plan of study lined up for after the gap year.





# Gap Year





# Applying to University

## Students have already:

- Visited Lancaster University for a taster day.
- Attended the Northwest UCAS Discovery Day.
- Had opportunity to apply for a place on numerous summer schools.
- Engaged in 1:1 meetings with Amy Marshall, our careers advisor (ongoing).
- Been encouraged to engage in Spotlight Masterclasses and the super curricular programme.
- Have organised summer work experience placements.
- Access to Unifrog.
- Pastoral/academic mentoring.





# Applying to University

## Students have already:

Engaged in presentations on;

- Widening participation schemes - e.g. Manchester Access Programme, Sutton Trust and The Social Mobility foundation.
- How to make the most of Y12 – Huddersfield University
- Choosing the right course and university – Mr Neale
- Studying in Scotland – Stirling University
- Alternatives to University – Amy Marshall
- National Apprenticeship Week – Amy Marshall
- MDV & Oxbridge Introduction - Mr Neale & Mrs Mangham-Dewhurst



# Applying to University

**The following support that is yet to come:**

**Presentations on:**

- Revision techniques – Sixth Form Team
- Making the most of work experience – Mrs Kinder
- Introduction to personal statements – Sixth Form Team
- Making a competitive application – Sixth Form Team
- Student Finance\* – Sixth Form Team & TBC
- Student Accommodation – TBC
- Offers, extra & clearing explained – Sixth Form Team



**Engagement in:**

- Support from our UCAS co-ordinator Miss Longden
- A mock interview
- Personal statement workshop – Mrs McNally





# Supporting MDV & Oxbridge students

## Students have already:

- Attended preparation for MDV / Oxbridge presentations.
- Selected to attend a conference held by the University of Cambridge.
- Had the option to attend an Oxbridge evening held by the University of Cambridge & Oxford University at AGSB.
- Had the option to attend our Oxford University taster day.
- Attended online Masterclasses in specialist subjects.
- Led societies and arranged/attended meetings held in school by students and professionals.
- Been informed of the UCAT & UAT dates and preparations.
- Continue to be informed of relevant webinars, support and events through email group.



# Supporting MDV & Oxbridge students

## Students will:

- Have subject specific support for UATs.
- The option to attend UCAT training in school.
- Practice interview skills.
- MMI Day.





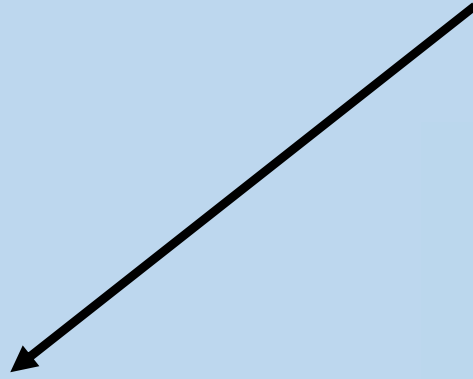
# Urmston Grammar Sixth Form

**Any student planning to go to university must take the following steps:**

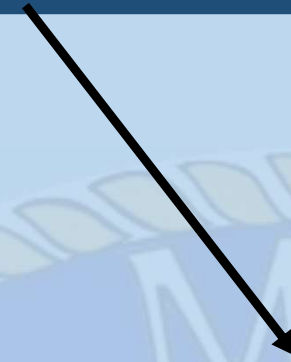
- 1. Decide **WHAT** to study**
- 2. Decide **WHERE** to study**
- 3. Complete their **UCAS** application online, including their personal statement.**
- 4. Some universities and courses may also require:**
  - Aptitude Assessments**
  - Submit essays**
  - Interview/MMI**



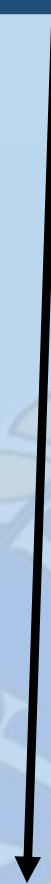
# Decide WHAT to study



**“I know exactly  
what I’d like to  
study”**



**“I have no idea”**



**“I have a vague  
career path in  
mind!”**



# Decide WHAT to study

## “They know exactly what they’d like to study”

Great that they have a solid plan 😊

They need to:

- Research into specific courses.
- Look at what entry requirements are – do current PUGs match them?
- Come up with a ‘Plan B’ if PUGs/aspirations don’t work out – always best to be prepared.
- Does work experience match? If not, don’t panic – but could they get some additional work experience over the summer.
- Do they need to set any exams e.g. UCAT, LNAT?
- Are there any access programmes they can sign up for?
- Start looking at Open Days which will be over the summer.



# Decide WHAT to study

**“They have a vague career path in mind!”**

Use UniFrog to search for different courses....

Any of these interest you?

Select up to 10 subjects at a time.

Direct matches (1)

History

Subjects you might like (95)

#### SINGLE HONOURS

American History

Ancient History

History and Heritage

History of Art

International History

Italian and Scottish History

Marine and Natural History Photography

Military and International History

Russian and Scottish History

Scottish History

Scottish History and Spanish

#### JOINT HONOURS

Ancient History and Archaeology

Ancient History and French

Ancient History and German

Ancient History and History

Ancient History and Italian

Ancient History and Philosophy

Ancient History and Spanish

Anthropology and History

Arabic and Art History

Arabic and Medieval History

Archaeology and History

Art History and Chinese Studies

Art History and Contemporary Fashion Design

Art History and Creative Writing

Art History and Early Childhood

- Use UniFrog to search for different courses....
- Begin to narrow things down (don't have to have a final course in mind).
- Then follow the previous steps.



# Decide WHAT to study

**“I have no idea”**

<b>Subjects you enjoy</b>	<b>Subjects you are good at</b>	<b>Discussion with teachers</b>
<b>Joint honours courses or ‘Natural Science’</b>	<b>Sandwich Courses ‘Year abroad’ ‘Year in industry’</b>	<b>Which courses lead on to good career opportunities/salaries</b>
<b>Qualification: BA, BSc → MSci</b>	<b>Duration of course: 3,4,5+ Years</b>	<b>Foundation Year</b>
<b><a href="http://discoveruni.gov.uk">discoveruni.gov.uk</a></b>	<b><a href="http://ucas.com/explore/subjects">ucas.com/explore/subjects</a></b>	<b><a href="http://www.myunichoices.com">www.myunichoices.com</a></b>

Approximately 70% of all graduate jobs are open to all graduates.



# Decide WHERE to study





# City Universities...





# City Universities...



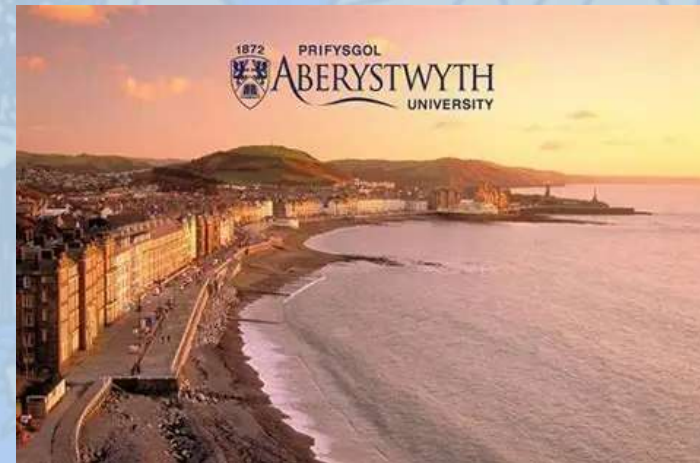
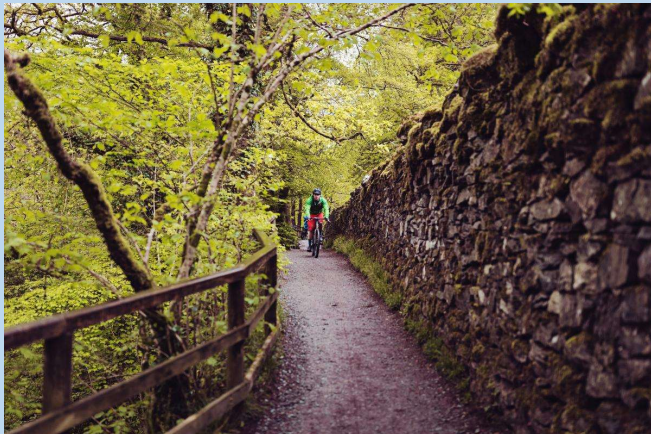


# Campus Universities...





# Rural Universities..





# NEW Universities...



Edge Hill University



Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University





# Collegiate Universities...



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE



Durham  
University





# Collegiate Universities...





# Decide WHERE to study

Location, Location, Location!



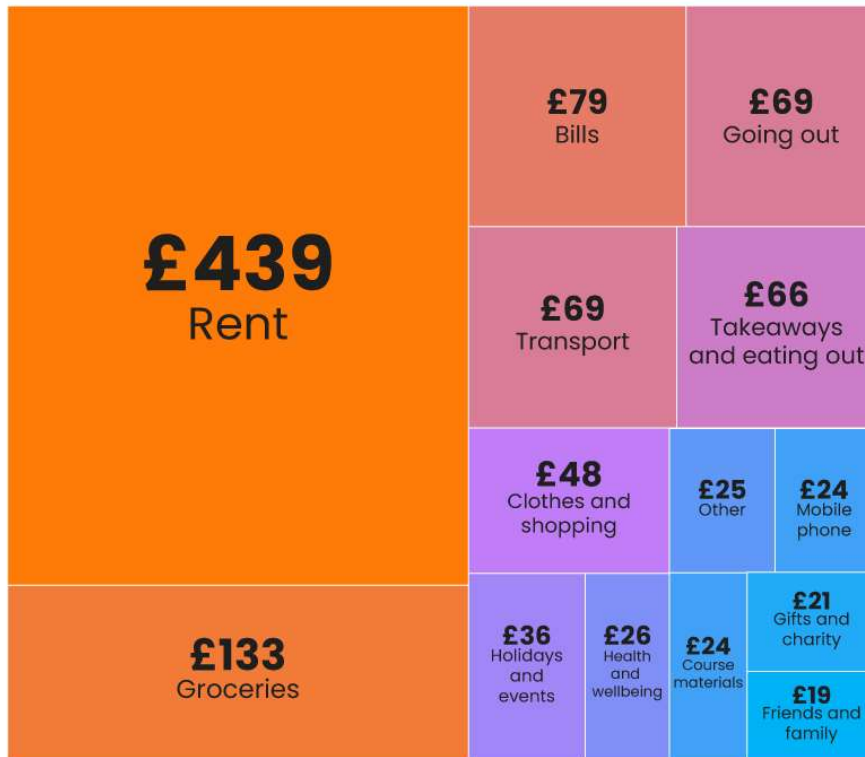
- Live at home?
- Live nearby?
- Live far away?



# Decide WHERE to study

## Cost of living

Monthly cost (£)



Source: Save the Student





# Decide WHERE to study

## University Rankings

### University League Tables 2026

Our 2026 league tables rank the best universities in the UK, overall and in 74 subject areas, and allow you to compare universities ahead of starting university in 2026. Our league tables can help by showing you the top universities in the UK and

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[UNIVERSITY GROUP +](#)

QUICK VIEW

FULL TABLE

University ranking	University name	Overall score	Entry standards	Student satisfaction	Research quality	Graduate prospects
1	University of Cambridge <a href="#">VIEW COURSES →</a>	100%	96%	79%	88%	90%
2	University of Oxford <a href="#">VIEW COURSES →</a>	98%	94%	79%	87%	90%
3	London School of Economics and Poli... <a href="#">VIEW COURSES →</a>	93%	87%	78%	88%	91%
4	University of St Andrews <a href="#">VIEW COURSES →</a>	92%	100%	83%	83%	87%

2026	Ranking	University name	quality (%)	experience (%)	quality (%)	standards (%)	prospects (%)	tion rate (%)	Planet (%)	Total	
	1	London School of Economics and Political Science	85.1	85.1	68	185	92.5	90.6	97.6	68.1	1000
	2	University of St Andrews	89.3	86.9	53.8	208	87.6	90.6	98	38	933
	3	▲ +2 Durham University	87	82.2	55.9	178	88.8	90.5	96.8	55.6	906
	4=	University of Cambridge	85	75.7	69.7	210	90.4	92.1	98.4	37.2	903
	4=	▼ -1 University of Oxford	85.7	73.4	67	197	90.4	93	97.6	51.5	903
	6	Imperial College London	83.1	82.8	73.9	196	95.9	91.4	96.2	49.1	890
	7	▲ +1 University of Bath	84.6	85.2	53	171	88.7	88.4	97.2	57.2	861
	8	▲ +1 University of Warwick	85.6	84.1	60.9	170	86.4	84.8	95.3	47.5	839
	9	▼ -2 University College London	82.3	81	66.8	172	87.5	90.5	96.1	67.2	837
	10	▲ +1 University of Bristol	82.8	81	66.2	168	83.7	87	97.2	60.8	814
	11	▲ +9 University of Strathclyde	86.3	84.3	53.1	204	83	82.9	91.7	40.8	803
	12	▼ -2 Loughborough University	84.4	85	52.5	153	86.3	84	96.5	52.5	802
	13	▲ +1 University of Sheffield	87.3	87	59.1	157	82.9	82.8	96.1	46.1	800

-Oxbridge, Russell Group.....

Guardian, Times, Complete University Guide



# Decide WHERE to study

Open Days – see the universities



3+ years is a long time. Go visit!	Speak to the academic staff
See the buildings, lecture theatres, labs etc.	Find out the structure of the course
See the accommodation and student areas of the city.	See how easy/costly it is to get there
Speak to current students who are there	Check entry criteria/Interviews



## 3. Completing UCAS Application

- UCAS stands for 'University and College Admissions Service.
- Towards the end of this month, Year 12 students will set up their '**UCAS Track**'
- Much of the application is straight forward to complete.
- Students can apply for 5 universities/courses.
- Students must write a 4000 character 'Personal Statement' and this is an extremely important part of the application.
- Students gain guidance on writing their Personal Statement later this month.
- There is a fee of £34.50\*  
*(\*apologies, this has been a little bit of a jump this year)*



# UCAS – Personal Statement

## **The UCAS Personal Statement changed last year.**

The statement is still 4000 characters.

However, it is now broken into 3 'sub-questions' (students can flex how much they include in each option).

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

*There is no longer a line count (as was previously a requirement).*

*Centres will still read the whole statement (not just one section).*



# UCAS Personal Statement

- Competitive universities/courses actively discourage irrelevant extra curricular and enrichment information from Personal Statements
- Students need to have lots of subject specific content: Supercurricular
  - Background reading
  - Additional lectures/TED Talks
  - Work Experience
  - Relevant hobbies/projects/portfolios
- We have a super-curricular programme in school to provide more structure for students.
- Students to work on their personal statement with their mentor.  
May take up to 6, 7, 8+ drafts to get to the finished article!
- Students must be proactive.



# UCAS – Personal Statement

**UCAS examples of how students can demonstrate they are interested/have developed skills in a particular area**

In person work experience	Blogs & vlogs	Positions of responsibility	Projects or essays	Mentoring
Virtual work experience	Documentaries	Awards	Books	Tutoring
Work shadowing	Podcasts	Challenges	Influencers	Online subject courses
Paid employment	TED Talks	Personal life experiences	Hobbies	Trips or visits
Volunteering	Articles	Work based learning / training	Clubs	Competitions



# UCAS Personal Statement

## Similarity Detection

- Personal statements are checked against a library of those already in the system, and from a variety of websites and paper publications.
- Each new statement is added to the library after processing.

### **Make sure that your personal statement is your own work**

We will carry out checks to verify that your personal statement is your own work. If your personal statement appears to have been copied from another source we will inform the universities and colleges to which you have applied. They will then take the action they consider appropriate. We will also contact you by email.



## 3. Completing UCAS Application

Once the student has completed their part of the UCAS

### **Application...**

- The mentor will write a UCAS Reference (checked by a member of the sixth form team).
- Add Predicted UCAS Grades (PUGs).



## 3. Completing UCAS Application

- Those applying to Oxford or Cambridge, or for Medicine, Dentistry and Vet Science Courses have a UCAS deadline of 15<sup>th</sup> October 2026.
- School deadline is two weeks before this.
- UCAS closes for applications on January 13<sup>th</sup> 2027.
- All students applying to university should have their UCAS forms completed by the end of November 2026.
- As a Sixth Form we aim to have applications sent off within 2 weeks of when the student has completed their part.





## 4. After Submitting UCAS Application

- Many universities choose to make an offer (or reject an applicant) based on the information in the application. Students are informed about through 'UCAS Track'
- Some universities/courses require interviews. Some are quite academic and rigorous (e.g. MDV/Oxbridge/Physiotherapy), others are more informal. Interview support provided in school.
- Some courses may require a portfolio of work i.e. architecture, arts etc.



## 4. After Submitting UCAS Application

- Students can only apply to either Oxford OR Cambridge, not both.
- Many courses require students to complete an aptitude test.  
E.g. LNAT, ESAT.
- Some subjects require essays to be submitted.
- Most interviews are during December. Sometimes a good amount of notice given, at times only told a few days in advance. Mock interviews held in school to help prepare.
- Offers usually made mid-January.



## 4. After Submitting UCAS Application

- Students can only apply to 4 MDV courses.
- 5<sup>th</sup> choice should be related: Biomedical Science, Dental Technician.
- Medicine courses require completion of the UCAT. We provide support for this in school.
- Interviews usually between December and February. Many interviews are 'MMI'. Significant preparation for these in school.
- Offers usually made mid-January to late-March.



## 4. After Submitting UCAS Application

Other information to be aware of:

- Some universities offer to reduce their entry requirement if:
  - Students put them as their first choice.
  - Students offer a strong grade in their EPQ
  - Students fulfil certain socio-economic criteria  
(i.e. first generation to go to university, certain postcodes)
- Some universities make unconditional offers, however the **'Fair admissions code of practice'** states that universities *“should avoid applying pressure through their offer making practices, including by avoiding the use of ‘conditional unconditional’ offers, restricting the use of unconditional offers to specific circumstances, and using incentives appropriately and transparently.*



## 5. What if it doesn't go to plan?

We of course hope that all students achieve the grades needed for their first-choice university, or if not their insurance choice. Every year there are a small number of students who don't get the grades they need though. If this occurs the following options are available:

- On A Level results day apply for a priority paper review.
- Find a university place through Clearing Plus.
- Delay going to university for a year. Re-apply the following year (still with the support of Urmston Grammar), completing some re-sits if necessary. PUGs will be based on an improvement from the previously achieved A Level grade.



# Urmston Grammar Sixth Form

Consider courses and universities of interest.

From  
Now

First draft of Personal Statement to Mentor

End of  
Y12

Finalise courses and university choices.

Sept/Oct

Complete full application and Personal Statement

Sept/Oct

Submit to school

30<sup>th</sup> Sept or  
30<sup>th</sup> Nov.



Urmston Grammar Sixth Form

# Post-18 Options Evening

May 2026

Thank you for joining us this evening,  
please let us know if you have any  
questions.