



'Achieving Excellence through Curriculum & Culture'

PARENTS' UCAS INFORMATION EVENING

7 June 2023



OUTLINE OF SESSION

- The UCAS application process;
- Making a successful application -the importance of a strong personal statement;
- Predicted Grades;
- Student Finance.



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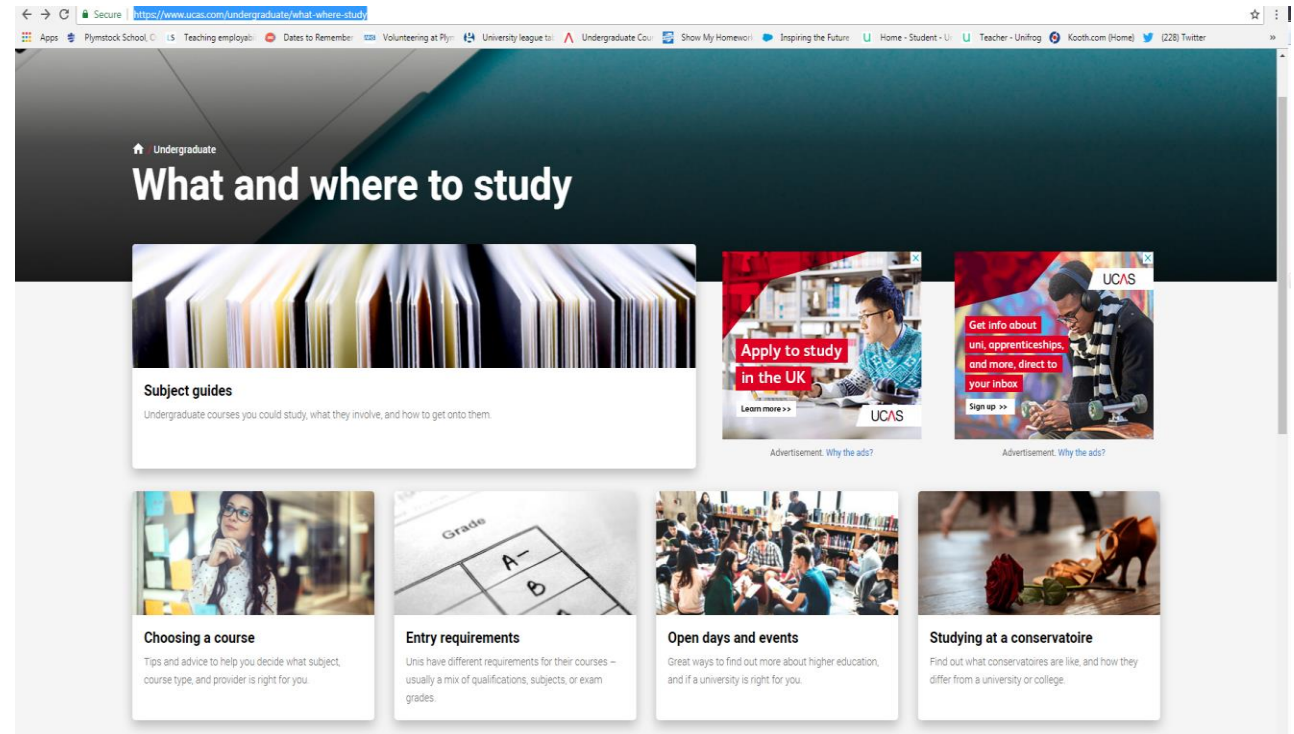
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RESEARCHING COURSES

- Your son or daughter can use the UCAS search tool www.ucas.com
- There is help for parents' too.
www.ucasdigital.com/widgets/parents_tool/index.html#/home



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UCAS TARIFF

Tariff Points	GCE AS	GCE A Level	BTEC (QCF) Subsidiary Diploma	BTEC (QCF) Certificate	OCR Cambridge Technical	Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)
56		A*	D*		D*	
48		A	D		D	
40		B				
32		C	M		M	
28				D*		A*
24		D		D		A
20	A					B
16	B	E	P	M	P	C
12	C					D
10	D					
8				P		E
6	E					



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THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A UNIVERSITY

- Graduate employment rates <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/sep/24/guardian-university-guide-2023-find-your-subject>
- Student satisfaction (value for money) <https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings?sortby=student-satisfaction>
- Teaching Excellence Framework <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/choosing-course/how-choose-between-undergraduate-courses-and-unis/teaching-excellence-framework-tef-what-you-need-know-courses-starting-2018>
- Finance – course fees, grants, travel and living costs
- Accommodation – university halls or private residences?
- Extra curricular activities



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VISIT, VISIT, VISIT ...



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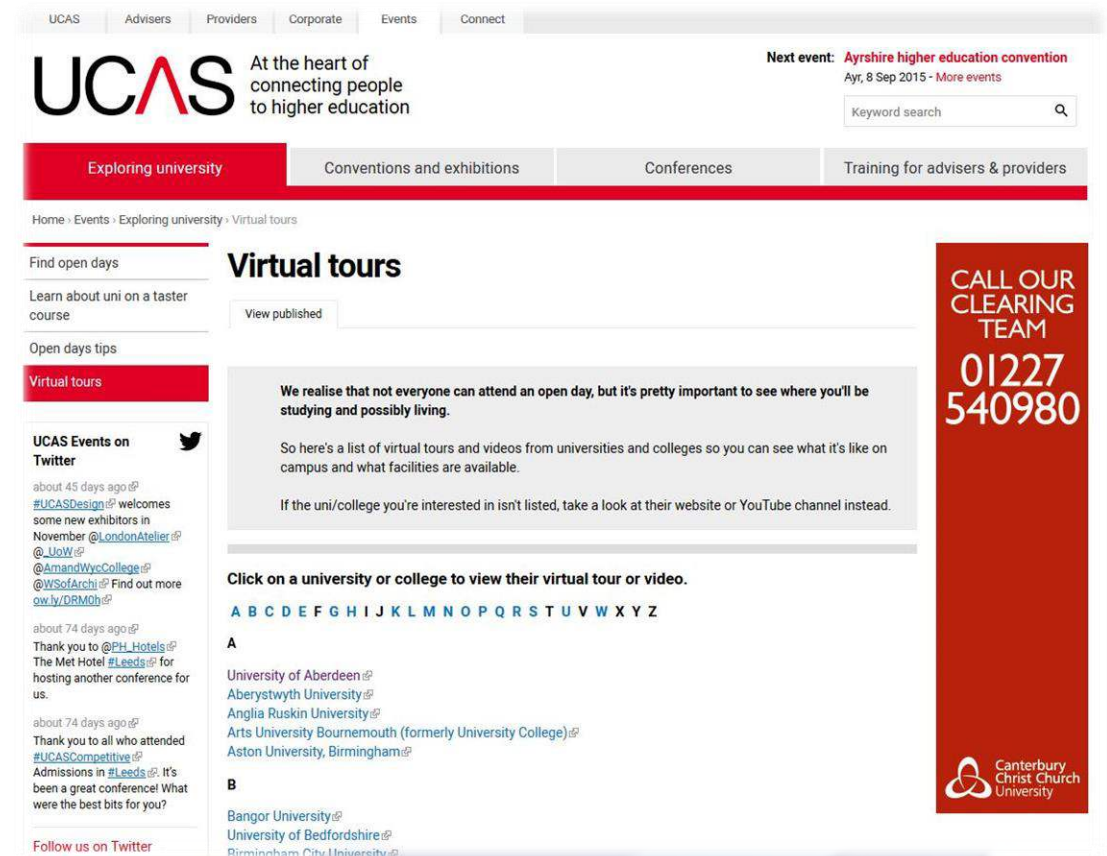
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VIRTUAL TOURS

www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/events-and-open-days/virtual-tours

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/events/find?keywords=virtual+open+days&layout=list>



The screenshot shows the UCAS Virtual Tours page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for UCAS, Advisers, Providers, Corporate, Events, and Connect. The UCAS logo is prominently displayed with the tagline 'At the heart of connecting people to higher education'. A sidebar on the left contains links for 'Find open days', 'Learn about uni on a taster course', 'Open days tips', and 'Virtual tours' (which is highlighted). Below 'Virtual tours' is a section titled 'UCAS Events on Twitter' with several tweets. The main content area is titled 'Virtual tours' and includes a 'View published' button. A text box states: 'We realise that not everyone can attend an open day, but it's pretty important to see where you'll be studying and possibly living. So here's a list of virtual tours and videos from universities and colleges so you can see what it's like on campus and what facilities are available. If the uni/college you're interested in isn't listed, take a look at their website or YouTube channel instead.' Below this is a section 'Click on a university or college to view their virtual tour or video.' with an alphabetical index (A-Z). Under 'A', it lists: University of Aberdeen, Aberystwyth University, Anglia Ruskin University, Arts University Bournemouth (formerly University College), and Aston University, Birmingham. Under 'B', it lists: Bangor University, University of Bedfordshire, and Birmingham City University. On the right side of the page, there is a red vertical banner with the text 'CALL OUR CLEARING TEAM 01227 540980' and the Canterbury Christ Church University logo at the bottom.



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THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- Students had an assembly in May about how to create their UCAS account in the UCAS Hub www.ucas.com – students have already started registering
- Application form
- Personal statement
- Reference
- To send off the application students will be responsible for arranging meetings with me to check their application and personal statement and a final meeting with me to send off their application.



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KEY DATES AND APPLICATION FEES

2nd October 6:00pm Deadline for most Conservatories music courses

16th October 2023 6:00pm This is for medicine, dentistry, or veterinary medicine. When applying for these courses students can apply for four courses for their subject area i.e. medicine and their fifth choice must be something different but related i.e. biomedical sciences.

16th October 2023 6:00pm One choice - Oxford or Cambridge – you can't apply to both. You would then apply for four other universities in addition.

Equal Consideration Deadline: 31st January 2023 6:00pm

Students can apply for up to 5 courses. The fee is £27.50 in total.



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THE PERSONAL STATEMENT

- The only section your son or daughter has control over.
- Their chance to market themselves individually.
- One personal statement for all choices.*
- Max. 4,000 characters, 47 lines
- Min. 1,000 characters
- American spelling/grammar check – students are advised to put it into a word document before transferring it to UCAS.
- No formatting

* Sometimes universities will accept an additional personal statement.



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WHERE TO START..

- Don't start at the beginning!
- 70%-80% of the personal statement needs to be about the course being applied for.
- Show **enthusiasm** for the course and give supporting **evidence** to back this up.
- Extra curricular activities and **relevant** work experience.
- **Skills** they can use on the course – leadership, communication, team work for example.
- Allow plenty of **time** as they will have to draft, redraft and redraft again!



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WHAT TO AVOID...

The 11 most common opening lines used in personal statements :

1. From a young age I have (always) been [interested in/fascinated by]... [1,779]
2. For as long as I can remember I have... [1,451]
3. I am applying for this course because... [1,370]
4. I have always been interested in... [927]
5. Throughout my life I have always enjoyed... [310]
6. Reflecting on my educational experiences... [257]
7. Nursing is a very challenging and demanding [career/profession/course]... [211]
8. Academically, I have always been... [168]
9. I have always wanted to pursue a career in... [160]
10. I have always been passionate about... [160]
11. Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world... [148]



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REFERENCES

- References are requested by myself from subject teachers once students have completed a first draft of their personal statement and are showing progress.
- The new reference will have 3 sections:-
 - Contextual Information about the school;
 - Extenuating Circumstances (not applicable for all students);
 - Information about the students (focus on the subject they are applying for, their capabilities as a student, achievement to date, wider engagement with the subject, relevant work experience/volunteering, roles in the school).



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TARGETS VS. PREDICTED GRADES

- Target grades are calculated from prior performance and contextualised data.
- Predicted grades will be based on current data and performance throughout Year 12 (and beginning of Year 13) and professional judgment.
- For UCAS we take an holistic view and teachers will use evidence gathered over year 12 and the beginning of year 13.



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SCHOOL TIMELINE

- **Stage 1 (May onwards)**

Students' begin completing the online application form and start drafting Personal Statement. I am now receiving drafts and will provide ongoing feedback to students. This will continue over the Summer holidays and until their personal statements are ready.

- **Stage 2 (2 weeks)**

Once a student is nearing completion of their personal statement their teacher references will then be requested by myself. Students will need to arrange their first meeting with me. I will check their application form and personal statement.

- **Stage 3 (2 weeks)**

Once the teachers have written their subject reference we will then compile the schools reference, incorporating the subject references.

- **Stage 4**

Whilst the reference is being finalised students will need to arrange their final meeting with me to send off their application in anticipation of their references being completed. Students need to communicate with myself around time scales. Students' will need to pay the application fee prior to meeting with me to send off their application (or alternatively bring a debit card with them to the appointment in order to pay the application fee).

- **Stage 5 (Final Stage)**

Students' will then have their final meeting. I will attach the schools reference and input their predicted grades, check the entire application again to ensure no mistakes and submit the application to UCAS.

Students who are applying for the early deadline (16th October) will be given priority in September.

Students must be proactive, the sooner they are ready, the sooner their application can be sent.



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SUPPORT AVAILABLE

- Drop in support every WEDNESDAY after school;
- Personal Statement Workshops at Lunchtime on Thursday 8th & 29th June & 6th & 20th July in SB2;
- One-to-one appointments upon request;
- Every student who attended a Next Steps Meeting (which have been running since January) have been issued with a university and/or apprenticeship booklet which contained areas of research and guidance.



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How do institutions make a decision on who to give offers to?

- Predicted grades and all entry requirements satisfied
- GCSE results
- Personal Statement
- Reference
- Interview
- Entrance exams: BMAT / UCAT / LNAT/ MAT/ STEP
- Contextual data



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DECISIONS AND REPLIES

Provider decisions:

- Unsuccessful
- Unconditional offer
- Conditional offer – qualifications and achievements and/or UCAS Tariff points

Once all decisions are received, students will select their final choices (the deadline for this is set by UCAS and depends on the date of receipt of the last university response):

- One as their **firm** choice
- One as their **insurance** choice (if they want to)
- All other offers are declined

Track will show their **reply date** -this will be around June 2024.



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Other options

Extra (Available from February to July)

- If all five choices have been used and they have no offers/rejected all offers.

Clearing (Available from end of June)

- If no offers have been received, or have applied after 30 June deadline.



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How Can You Support The Application Process?



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WESTCOUNTRY
SCHOOLS TRUST

- Use the parents'/guardians' section of the UCAS website/Parent Guide publication – www.ucas.com/parents and sign up for the newsletter.
- Offer to attend open days (if you can), you may have a different perspective to offer.
- Don't book family holidays at key times (results day 2024).
- Make sure they read everything carefully that is sent to them.
- Support your son/daughter's management of their application



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2023 APPLICATIONS – WHAT WE’VE SEEN..

- Less unconditional offers being given
- More deferred applications due to Gap Years.
- Contextual offers being given.
- Most popular courses:- business related courses, STEM based courses and social sciences (criminology).
- Increase in birth rate demographics so a lot more competition for places.
- An increase in applications.
- Increased competition for Healthcare related degrees.



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TUITION FEE LOAN

- All students no matter what their household income are entitled to the full tuition fee loan.



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MAINTENANCE LOAN

- Maintenance support is available to help with living costs while in higher education.
- The Maintenance Loan is repayable.
- All students applying for University are entitled to receive some maintenance support.
- The amount of Maintenance Loan received depends on household income, and where you will be studying (inside or outside London).
- Maintenance support is broken down into three amounts which are paid directly into the students bank account each term.



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MAINTENANCE LOAN

Maintenance Loan Assessments are based on :-

The income of the parent(s) that the student lives with – including step-parents or new partners living in the household

Based on taxable income for the last complete tax year (Tax year ending April 2023 for student starting in Academic Year 2024/25)

Current Year Income Assessments option where income has dropped by at least 15% since the previous tax year (redundancy, retirement)

A guide is available for parents, explaining this process.

<https://media.slc.co.uk/sfe/currentyearincome/index.html>



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Maintenance Loan – Non-Income Assessed Minimum Amount

Living arrangements	Minimum Maintenance Loan
Living at home	£3,698
Living away from home, outside London	£4,651
Living away from home, in London	£6,485

***2023 figures**



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Maintenance Loan – Living at Home*

Household Income	Maximum Maintenance Loan	Amount available to you	Difference from maximum
up to £25,000	£8,400	£8,400	£0
£45,000	£8,400	£5,576	£2,824
£65,000	£8,400	£3,698 (only eligible for minimum amount)	£4,702

***2023 figures**



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Maintenance Loan – Living Away from Home (Outside London)*

Household Income	Maximum Maintenance Loan	Amount available to you	Difference from maximum
up to £25,000	£9,978	£9,978	£0
£45,000	£9,978	£7,125	£2,853
£65,000	£9,978	£4,651 (only eligible for minimum amount)	£5,327



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*2023 Figures

NHS Learning support fund

- NHS Learning Support Fund
- Students starting and continuing their course from September 2020 can apply for the NHS Learning Support Fund (NHS LSF) if you are on one of the following pre-registration undergraduate or postgraduate courses:
- dental therapy/dental hygiene (level 5 and 6 courses)
- dietetics
- midwifery
- nursing (adult, child, mental health, learning disability, joint nursing/social work)
- occupational therapy
- operating department practitioner (level 5 and 6 courses)
- orthoptics
- orthotics and prosthetics
- paramedics (bachelors and masters courses are eligible, DipHE and FD courses are not eligible for NHS LSF)
- physiotherapy
- podiatry/chiropractic
- radiography (diagnostic and therapeutic)
- speech and language therapy



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<https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-learning-support-fund>

NHS Learning Support Fund

- NHS LSF offers support for:-
- A Training Grant for all eligible students of £5,000 per academic year
- Parental Support of £2,000 for students with at least one dependent child under 15 years, or under 17 years if registered with special educational needs (this used to be called Child Dependants Allowance)
- Reimbursement of excess costs incurred on practice placement for travel and temporary accommodation costs (Travel and Dual Accommodation Expenses)
- Students experiencing financial hardship (Exceptional Support Fund)
- You can apply for NHS LSF when the online application system is available.



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STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENTS

- Students are liable to start repayments from the April after they finish the course (coinciding with the new tax year).
- Repayments are normally taken automatically from a graduate's salary with tax and National Insurance.
- Separate arrangements are in place with HMRC if a graduate is self-employed.
- Students who live abroad once they graduate will be required to fill in an Overseas Income Assessment Form. SLC will then send a repayment schedule showing how much needs to be paid each month which will be based upon the earnings threshold for the destination country.
- If a student leaves their programme early they will still have to pay back the loan once they earn more than the income threshold.



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Repayment

- “To make the system fairer for students, the student loan interest rate will be set at RPI+0% for new borrowers starting courses from 2023-24, meaning that graduates will no longer repay more than they borrowed in real terms.
- To make the system fairer for taxpayers, the repayment threshold – the point at which graduates start repaying their student loan - for new borrowers starting courses from September 2023 will be set at £25,000 until 2026-27.
- This still means that graduates will not start repaying until they have reached well over the current median young non-graduate salary of £21,500.
- This makes sure that someone benefitting from a university degree makes a fair contribution to its cost: for example, a graduate earning £28,000 would pay back £17 a month.
- The student loan repayment term will also be extended to 40 years for new borrowers from September 2023, to ensure more students repay their loan in full, taking into account the fact that people are now working and earning for longer.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fairer-higher-education-system-for-students-and-taxpayers#:~:text=To%20make%20the%20system%20fairer,they%20borrowed%20in%20real%20terms.>



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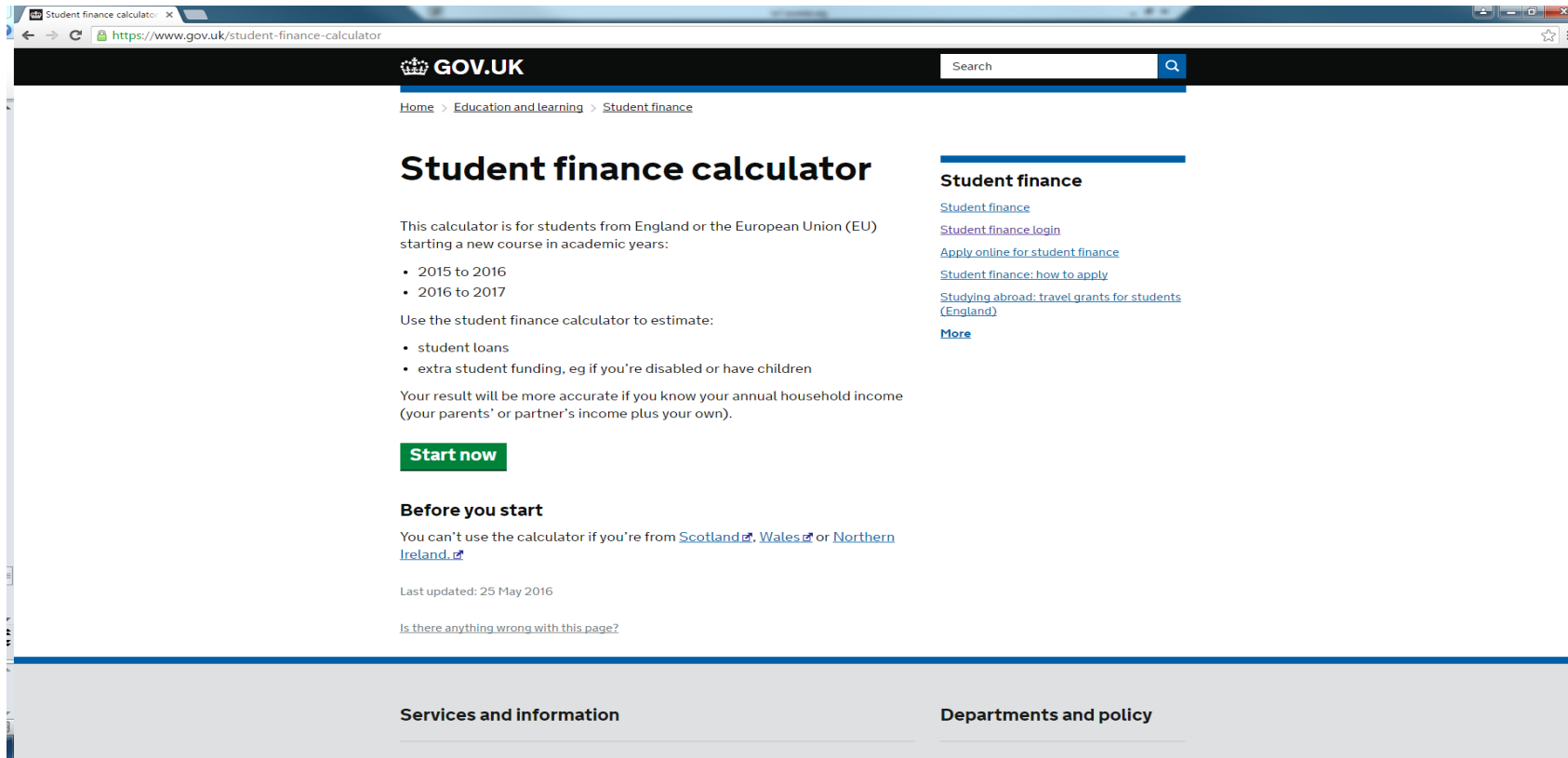
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GET YOUR ESTIMATE

www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator



The screenshot shows the GOV.UK website for the Student finance calculator. The page has a black header with the GOV.UK logo and a search bar. Below the header, the breadcrumb trail reads "Home > Education and learning > Student finance". The main heading is "Student finance calculator". The text explains that the calculator is for students from England or the European Union (EU) starting a new course in academic years 2015 to 2016 or 2016 to 2017. It lists the types of funding it estimates: student loans and extra student funding for disabled students or those with children. A green "Start now" button is prominent. Below this, a "Before you start" section notes that the calculator is not for students from Scotland, Wales, or Northern Ireland. A footer section contains links for "Services and information" and "Departments and policy".

Student finance calculator

This calculator is for students from England or the European Union (EU) starting a new course in academic years:

- 2015 to 2016
- 2016 to 2017

Use the student finance calculator to estimate:

- student loans
- extra student funding, eg if you're disabled or have children

Your result will be more accurate if you know your annual household income (your parents' or partner's income plus your own).

Start now

Before you start

You can't use the calculator if you're from [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) or [Northern Ireland](#).

Last updated: 25 May 2016

[Is there anything wrong with this page?](#)

Services and information **Departments and policy**



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BURSARIES & SCHOLARSHIPS



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- <https://www.thescholarshiphub.org.uk/>
- <https://grants-search.turn2us.org.uk/>
- <https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/options/scholarships-financial-support>
- <http://www.savoyeducationaltrust.org.uk/>
- <https://www.tass.gov.uk/>
- <https://www.crowdscholar.co.uk/>
- <http://www.dwyer-hartfoundation.co.uk/>
- <https://educationalgrants.co.uk/>
- [https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/university-tuition-fees/other-financial-support/university-bursaries-and-scholarships/#Find scholarships and bursaries](https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/university-tuition-fees/other-financial-support/university-bursaries-and-scholarships/#Find_scholarships_and_bursaries)



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ANOTHER OPTION....

- Studying abroad for example Europe, USA or Canada is another option.
- In Europe there are an increasing amount of degree courses taught in English. It can give you the opportunity to improve your language skills and experience different cultures. Studying in Europe is a lot cheaper than the UK. There are some scholarships available.
- Studying in America is expensive however, there are a number of different types of scholarships you can apply for in particular sporting scholarships which can cover the majority of tuition fees.
- Studying in Canada is only slightly more expensive than studying in the UK. There are scholarships students can apply for.
- You are not eligible to apply for student finance for any international universities however, there are scholarship programmes available to help with the cost.
- For more information visit:- <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/international/>
<http://www.eunicas.co.uk/index.php/eunicas/search.html> <http://www.fulbright.org.uk/going-to-the-usa/undergraduate>



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Things to think about if you study abroad....

- Cost.
- What legal documentation is required (Visa, residence permit etc.)?
- Are students able to work to help fund their education?
- Are they entitled to free healthcare?
- Is there a specific language requirement?
- How do you apply? For some universities you apply directly to the institution or through their equivalent to UCAS – you need to check with each institution as it will vary.
- EUNICAS <http://www.eunicas.co.uk/index.php/apply/apply-to-eunicas.html> (Europe) <https://www.commonapp.org/> (USA) <http://www.ouac.on.ca/> (Canada)
- What scholarships are available?
- Are there any entry exams that you need to take alongside your A Levels (American universities require you to take either you SAT or ACT exams)?



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ANY QUESTIONS?



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