

UCAS 2017 Hills Road talk - Paul Ingham

PowerPoint link:

<http://tinyurl.com/jorhlxy>

- By results day over 1000 applications will have been submitted. There has been a 95% inaccuracy rate when checked for clerical errors in careers. Students will have a checklist to use and this will be sent to parents electronically. Please use this to speed up the process. After 16th October we will not check for clerical accuracy.
- Around one third of our applications are post results as students want value for their grades and fees. We offer a gap applicant day in late August/early September so forms can be completed accurately and quickly and references requested.
- Any day can be hand in day, preferably well before a deadline.
- Check your form clerically against the exemplar form in our UCAS booklet. AND the faculty admissions grades, skills and criteria list. Be ambitious but have an insurance offer – with a lower grade. Check ‘Offers and Rejections’ on Careers SharePoint.
- Our internal deadlines - to allow checking and time to send the forms **Friday 16th September 2016** – Oxbridge, Medics, Dentistry, Veterinary and early applications
- **Friday 14th October 2016** – All other applications.
- **Wednesday 16th November 2016** – last hand in date, to guarantee being sent to UCAS by January 15th.
- **January 15th 2017** - UCAS deadline for most courses. Universities can choose not to look at forms received after 15th January.
- Our UCAS administrators will check forms received before 16th October for clerical accuracy and email students to come to careers to collect their form, alter it, then have the correction re-checked. Some students enter new mistakes at this stage. This injects delays we want to avoid in order to send forms to UCAS – hence the self-check form. Around deadlines it will take 3-4 weeks to process forms, *this is normal*. Requests for information on the progress of an individual’s form causes further delays and are discouraged.
- **Employability and My Future** – student SharePoint has a link in which every subject has an entry on the skills and qualities developed; very useful for writing the personal statement. There is a CV template and entries on what universities and employers look for. Plus a recording log for students to complete, this will help with reference writing. All students should use this.
- **Useful sources** – recommended websites www.ucas.com with course search function, parental links, and short videos on every aspect from courses to finance, applying and Clearing. www.unistats.com the National Student Survey of final year students rating their course, plus government data on graduate employment, starting salary etc. www.opendays.com a calendar of open days and links to book them with universities. Some fill up quickly – wise to book early. But universities are not closed sites, it is worth calling in when passing a university town to see what the atmosphere is like in term time. Most open days are weekends and in holidays which can create an odd impression of emptiness. www.ukcoursefinder.com an excellent start point which has a questionnaire on A levels taken, interests and suggests good degree course matches to both criteria. Brian Heap’s University Degree Course Offers www.heaponline.co.uk ranks courses by level of A level offers but is fully searchable and has other web links. Password CRUWZOXF.

Calendar of events and lunchtime talks to be held at HR

21st April	Employer Fair in the Atrium 11.00am-2.30pm
13th June	Guidance Day and talks by Leeds University on application strategy.
13th June	Apprenticeship Fair
20th June	Oxford Admissions talk
21st June	Cambridge Admissions talk.
22nd June	UCAS Fair held at Anglia Ruskin University – all UK universities plus several foreign universities represented, talks, prospectus grabbing
29th/30th June	Oxford Open Days – there are separate College and Subject days see Oxford website for how to book them.
30th June /1st July	Cambridge Open Days - as above.
31st August	Return to College Guidance day and talks by Birmingham University on personal statement writing.

Others will be added as offers come in to Careers.

Summer term research

- Plan applications in the light of estimated subject grades and Progress Review.
- What are you good at AND what do you enjoy? Research 'new' subjects – use UCAS website for courses, universities, parental and student advice and UCAS TV for mini video guides. See the Careers SharePoint 'Applying to University' and Start-Programs-Careers eg. for Pathfinder and Higher Ideas. Use www.ukcoursefinder.com free on the web for ideas linked to A level choices. Parents are advised to register on the UCAS website www.ucas.com/parents/ for email information about applications, funding etc. View the UCAS Finance section for information on loans, fees, bursaries and scholarships.
- Visit universities on open days, or just call in if passing, or at a weekend to get a feel for the town and campus. Do you want to live there for 3 years or more? Maximum 2 open days in term time!
- Decide which course to apply for.
- Make a short list of potential universities. Do consider at least 1 insurance choice from outside the 'Russell Group'. Some courses, especially English, History, Law, Drama, Midwifery, Nursing, Architecture and Physiotherapy, are often over-subscribed and students predicted all A grades can receive rejections, sometimes from every university.
- See the Offers and Rejections data on SharePoint
- Log onto UCAS Apply and register as a **Hills Road** (not Independent) applicant when this facility becomes available in June. We will enable students to start the application process in College during the summer term with guidance from Careers, or as advised by their tutor, to overcome basic clerical errors.
- Be aware that UCAS only allows you to apply for 5 courses. Medics, Dentists and Vets, can apply only to 4 universities for that course, but they can use the 5th choice for another course, as a fall back.
- Begin writing the personal statement during the exam leave (most students finish exams before our return to College) and attend open days.

Sources of information to support summer term research

- Order prospectuses via UCAS / university websites. Remember universities are marketing themselves.
- www.ucas.com especially course search. There are links to university websites, grades needed, UCAS Apply application facility, parents, finance and other essential functions. Look for updates of admissions tests – more may be introduced.
- <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/> allows a subject to be chosen and a 'basket' of universities compared, using the results of the National Student Survey on satisfaction ratings by students in their final year. The links to KIS Key Information Set is very useful with % satisfaction, average salary of graduates, destinations, information on teaching and assessment. Some top universities aren't as popular with their students as you may expect.
- www.which.co.uk/university from the consumer group - links KIS with other sources to compare universities in a user friendly format.
- Careers Sharepoint – see our programs 'Offers and Rejections' and 'UCAS Profiler' and Start-Programs-Careers for programs that have to be accessed within College. Work out the odds of an offer from possible combinations of 5 courses.

Do you have to take an admissions test?

www.admissionstesting.org This website has details of all the following tests:

BMAT – bio med tests for some Medicine, Dental, Vet Physiological Science courses. Register with our Exams Office from 1st September. Test date

Wednesday 2nd November 2016.

Oxford tests also all on **2nd November** – English ELAT; History HAT; Classics CAT; Maths MAT for Oxford and Imperial; Oriental Languages OLAT; Physics PAT, STEP Maths exam; Thinking Skills Assessment TSA for Oxford, Cambridge and UCL. Register with our Exams office.

- www.lnat.ac.uk website for the Law test demanded by some universities. Register online to book at a computer assessment centre.
- www.ukcat.ac.uk website for the test demanded by most Medicine and Dental courses. Registration opens 3rd May, testing begins 1st July. Registration deadline 21st September. Last test 5th. October. This is taken at a computer centre – like the driving theory test. Book early!
- <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/conservatoires> website for applications to some Music conservatoires
- www.ox.ac.uk and www.cam.ac.uk Oxbridge sites, with excellent guidance on applying. For ALL Oxford admissions tests register with our exams office in September. See below for Choral, Music and Organ scholarships.
- See Cambridge website for pre-interview and at interview testing:
- <http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/applying/admissions-assessments/pre-interview>
- STEP Maths paper – required by Oxford and Warwick and probably Imperial for some courses involving high level mathematics – check for other universities adding the STEP paper to their criteria. See Maths department to discuss the papers.
- USA Applications see the Fulbright Commission website for details <http://www.fulbright.org.uk/> and register with the US College Board. The College

is registered as a test centre for US SAT exams and will offer tests in October, November, December, January, May and June. See exams office.

- Check the website of all the courses you are considering, to see whether they have introduced their own test. You must check the departmental websites for the course you are considering as these often have details of essential requirements that are not made clear in prospectuses or on the UCAS website – they may almost tell you what to write in the personal statement, what work experience is needed etc.

Summer term action

- Choral and Organ scholarships at Oxford and Cambridge organ scholarships must have been sent to arrive late August – needs sorting out this term. Cambridge choral scholarships are post application. See Music dept. and Mrs Murphy in Careers for advice. A meeting will be held for interested students.
- Early applicants – Medicine, Vets, Dentists, Oxbridge - discuss with your tutor and subject staff. Cambridge has a post-application form to complete online. Oxford and Cambridge have their own tests for certain subjects. Check their websites carefully for details.
- Book external admissions tests eg UKCAT, LNAT. Attend meetings of Medsoc and Law Society in Summer term. Registration opens for external tests.
- Attend the UCAS Fair held at Anglia Ruskin on 22nd June, 150+ universities attend - we have a College booking. You can chat and collect prospectuses. EXCELLENT talks held in lecture rooms on statements, UCAS strategy etc.

UCAS APPLICATIONS SITE BECOMES 'LIVE' AROUND MID JUNE.

TUTORS WILL ADVISE STUDENTS WHEN TO START THE FORM.

APPLICANTS MAY WISH TO COMPLETE THE PERSONAL INFORMATION, GCSE AND AS/A LEVEL COURSE DETAILS BEFORE THE END OF TERM, AND ALSO MAKE COURSE CHOICE DECISIONS. PERSONAL STATEMENTS TO BE WORKED ON DURING THE SUMMER TERM.

AS Results published on 18th August – consider intentions in the light of AS results. Have you under or over estimated your ability and potential courses?

Autumn term

- There are Early Applicant Advice Days on 12th and 13th September in College, which students applying for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Vet Medicine are expected to attend. More details later. Hand Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Vet UCAS forms in by 16th September.
- From 1st September UCAS can receive applications.
- UCAS will be a focus of tutorial activity and advice workshops will be run by Careers at lunchtime.
- Most UCAS forms should be completed and handed in by 16th October.
- For Art & Design students a meeting will be held to explain the process for Art Foundation and University courses.

UCAS accepts first wave applications up to January, **BUT** competitive courses may start allocating places earlier. Applicants to the most competitive courses should hand in

forms as early as possible as post results applicants apply before undertaking their travels and may be 'cherry picked', leaving fewer places for upper sixth applicants to compete for.

November – mock interviews are offered and are important for **all** early entries and subjects which interview at all universities eg teaching, nursing and related subjects. Check the interview policies of universities you are considering. Mock interviews **MUST** be booked by a deadline to be set early in the autumn term, read emails from Careers carefully.

Offers from universities are made from September to April, with Oxbridge offers/rejections made early in the new year. When all applications have had a reply, the student will be set a deadline, usually early May by which they must choose their final two choices.

Applicants have to choose a firm and insurance (lower) offer to keep, and then decline other offers.

Any student who is rejected for all their courses or declines their offers may choose an extra course in UCAS Extra, available from February/March, but places will be limited.

Ensure you are in Cambridge for the A level results day, as telephone calls will have to be made if the grades do not match the offer. Clearing, best avoided by careful choice of insurance offer, is available to applicants who do not hold an offer, allowing another choice of course from those still available. Adjustment is available for 6 days after results are published to allow students to 'upgrade' to another university if their results are better than expected. In reality there are very few places available – about 500 used this nationally last year.

University Fees and Funding

See the UCAS website for very good information on tuition fees, grants, scholarships and bursaries.

See www.gov.uk/student-finance as the website from which you can find information and apply for funding on-line. Students must arrange for funding to be in place in order to be admitted by a university. Those taking a gap year will need to consider how they will access the funding application process. Look before you leave the country for updated information. Applications for student finance support are made in the year you will start university – after leaving college in the case of gap applicants.

NON-UK/EU Applicants

Check the fee status and how much the fees will be – you are likely to have to pay foreign student fees if you do not have a UK/EU passport or indefinite leave to remain in the country.

There will be a talk for potential Gap year students and their parents early in September, with advice from returning students, medical advice from the Travel Clinic and a professional gap year advisor. Start thinking and saving for a superb gap year experience. More details later.

Paul Ingham
Director of Careers/Higher Education Liaison.