

# Inclusive Transitions

A toolkit to support  
you with your next  
steps in education.

This belongs to:

.....

.....







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# Introduction

This resource is designed to help you explore your options through education. You'll be in compulsory education until you're 18, and some people choose to continue studying beyond that.

This resource will help you to understand the choices you have, the ways you can study and how to research, apply and transition to your next stage of education. It will help improve your knowledge of the support available, how to access it and build your confidence in reflecting on your support needs and advocating for yourself.

## Is this the right resource for me?

This resource is for any student who feels they might need to access some additional support to make their Higher Education experience as successful as possible - whether that means accessing mentoring, assistive technology to support you with studying, supported accommodation, or adjustments in classes or assessments.

## Who are Shaping Futures?

Shaping Futures, part of the Uni Connect programme, is an outreach team based in the Liverpool City Region, formed by 12 local Higher Education providers and led by the University of Liverpool. Our 12 partners are:



The Shaping Futures team work with young people and adult learners across the Liverpool City Region to help them better understand their education options, including their Higher Education options. We help students to make informed choices about their future by providing impartial information, advice and guidance, as well as providing support with the Higher Education application process.

## Activity

Which of the Shaping Futures partner institutions are closest to me?

Using Google Maps, search for the location of each partner and jot down the three closest to you

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Using Google Maps again, look to see if they're walkable. If not, what are the public transport options?

# What are my Higher Education options?

Higher Education refers to all qualifications at Level 4 or above. These are typically qualifications you study after completing compulsory education at 18 or 19. There are lots of options, from 3 year undergraduate degrees to 1 year HNCs, to apprenticeships where you gain a qualification alongside paid work. The range of options mean no matter what your interests or aspirations are, you'll find a course that meets your needs.

The graphic below shows some of the different Higher Education pathways available. If you'd like to find out more about these qualifications you can visit [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

[www.shaping-futures.org.uk](http://www.shaping-futures.org.uk)  
[www.lcrbemore.co.uk](http://www.lcrbemore.co.uk)

You might also have the option to study your Higher Education qualification full time or part time. Part time takes longer, but can be a great option for students who want to achieve their qualification without the pressure of full time study.

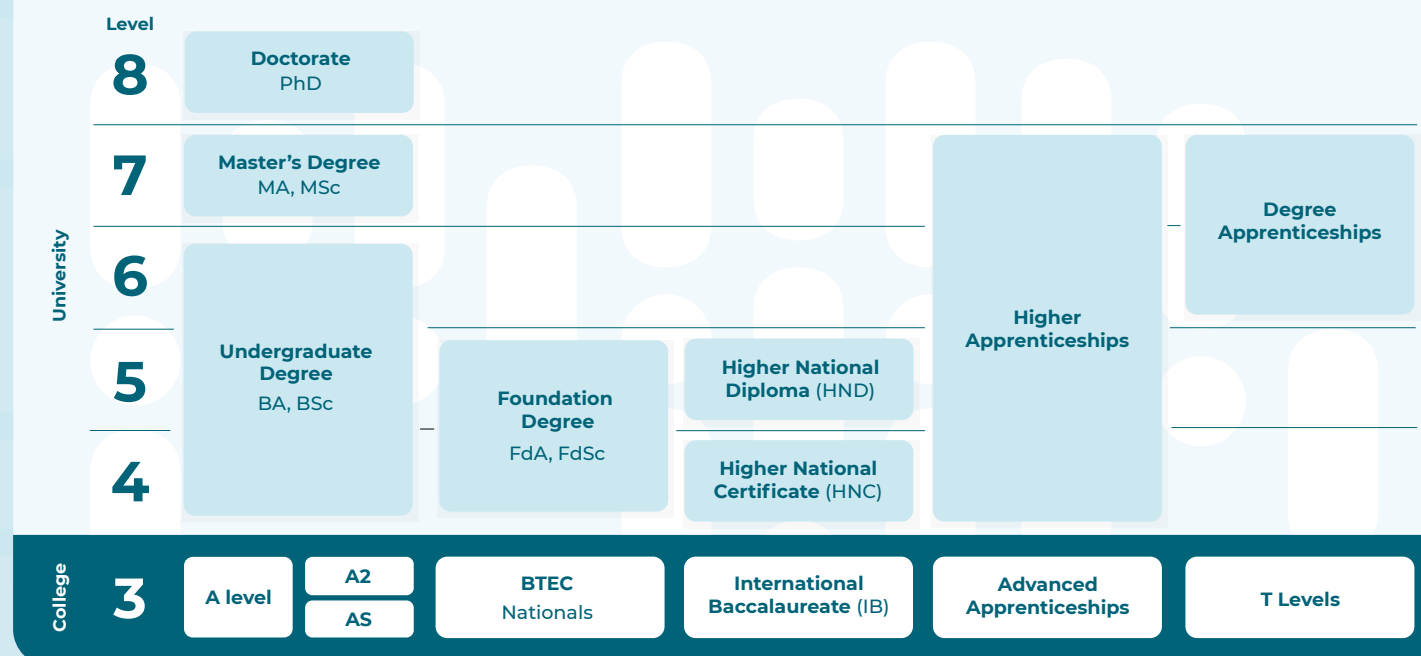
## University vs college?

You can choose to pursue Higher Education at a university or college, and in the Liverpool City Region we're lucky to have a wealth of options to choose from. So how do you choose? It's about reflecting on what's best for you!

Colleges can be more local to you, reducing commuting time if you plan to stay at home. They're often a smaller environment, which some students prefer. You might even have the option to take your Higher Education qualification at the same college where you've studied previously, providing continuity for you.

Universities are typically much bigger, with a wider range of courses and a larger study body, potentially giving you more opportunities both academically and socially. Some courses might not be available at both universities and college, but when you do have a choice, it's important to consider which environment will suit you best. Open Days can help you make this decision (see page 12).

## Qualification levels: Where you are (and where you can go)



# About Me

A big part of Higher Education is becoming more independent, both academically and personally. You'll take responsibility for your own learning and managing your own time and deadlines, although lots of support is available. As part of this you'll start to advocate for yourself more, for example discussing the support you might need, or letting someone know if you have any difficulties.

Advocating for yourself can be daunting, but it's an important life skill. A good way to start developing your advocacy skills is self reflection, so you're confident on

what you're asking for and why it is important. The questions on this page are a starting point for self-reflection, and there are other prompts throughout the resource to help you with this.

A good way to start developing your advocacy skills is self-reflection, so you're clear on what you're asking for and why it is important. The following questions are a starting point for self-reflection, and there are other prompts throughout the resource to help with this.

What are your favourite subjects? What do you enjoy most about them?

What careers or jobs are you interested in?

Are there any parts of school or college that you find more difficult?  
E.g. loud/busy classrooms or long days?

Do you currently receive any support?  
E.g. rest breaks in exams or using a laptop to complete your work?

Is there any other support you think you'd benefit from?

# What support is available?

Whether you choose to study at a college or university, your institution is committed to ensuring you can access academic and social opportunities and will provide support to help you do this. The support available will vary at each institution but will always be tailored to you, your needs, and your course. Support can be provided for each element of your academic experience: lectures, seminars, practical learning in laboratories and studios, placements, independent study, and accommodation.

Support at a university will be provided by a dedicated team, which might be called something like Student Support, Disability Advice and Guidance, or Inclusion. We'll use the term Student Support in this resource. These are some examples of support available at Shaping Futures partners:

- ▶ Support with managing your time effectively and organising/planning your work
- ▶ Disability Coaches who can help with initial support enquiries, identifying support you may be eligible for and how to access it
- ▶ Counselling and mental health support, alongside assessment and support for mental health issues
- ▶ Transitions Days, which provide an extra opportunity for you to familiarise yourself with the institution and start to set up support

Outside of Disabled Students' Allowance\* and the academic advisor programme for every Liverpool medical student, I currently receive support from the School of Medicine's Wellbeing team, and Mental Health Advisory Service from the wider University services. My student support plan means I am in contact with various teams within my course and individual hospital undergraduate teams during placement rotations. This is so I can get reasonable adjustments such as with assessments (e.g. rest breaks). Living at home, I also get support from family and friends.

**Sophie, Medicine,  
University of Liverpool**

\*Find out more on page 8.

My support plan allows me to request coursework extensions on most assignments, giving me the flexibility and enough time to complete assignments to the best possible standard without facing late penalties. My support plan also enables me to have extra time and a separate room during formal examinations, which I find very beneficial.

**Joel, Business Management,  
University of Liverpool**

Almost all colleges and universities will offer you the chance to set up a document that details any reasonable adjustments you need, or recommendations to help you succeed. The name of this document will vary institution to institution, but might be called a Learning Support Plan, Student Support Information Sheet, or something similar. This document will be co-created with you by a specialist team within the college or university and can be shared with appropriate staff (such as tutors) to ensure you can access Higher Education.





# Disabled Students' Allowance

Alongside the support offered by your university or college, you may be able to apply for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) as part of your Student Finance package.

DSA is provided to cover study-related costs you might have as the result of a disability which impacts your ability to study, such as a:

- ▶ Specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, or ADHD
- ▶ Mental health condition, such as OCD, anxiety, or depression
- ▶ Physical disability, such as mobility issues, hypermobility, or multiple sclerosis
- ▶ Sensory disability, such as visual impairment or hearing loss
- ▶ Long-term health condition, such as cancer, chronic fatigue syndrome or diabetes

The type of support you get is tailored to you and your individual needs, but you could get help with the costs of:

- ▶ Specialist equipment, such as accessibility software or a laptop
- ▶ Non-medical helpers, such as specialist note takers or BSL interpreters
- ▶ Travel, to facilitate your ability to attend your course or placement
- ▶ Other disability-related study support, such as help with printing costs or a study skills tutor

## How do I get Disabled Students' Allowance?

You'll apply online as part of your Student Finance application, at the same time as you apply for your Tuition Fee Loan and Maintenance Loan. Once you've been accepted, you'll take part in an informal assessment, to discuss the support you'll need based on your individual needs and your course. After this, you'll receive confirmation of the support you'll be receiving and information on how to arrange it.

To find out more about Disabled Students Allowance and see the process visit: [www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa](http://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa)

Through the Disabled Students' Allowance I received a laptop that has software which makes it easier for me to create mind maps and make notes in lectures and seminars. As well as this I am able to claim for ink and printer paper. The process of applying for Disabled Students' Allowance was very easy. Once I had applied, I had a zoom call to work out what I needed to aid me during my time at uni.

**Rachael, Marketing,  
University of Liverpool**

# Timeline

You'll need to focus on different things at different stages of your Higher Education journey, below we have a rough guide! If you're ever unsure, speak to a teacher or careers advisor on what the best next steps are for you.

## Year 10

- ▶ Start to think about the course you'd like to study, or careers you're interested in
  - ▶ Reflect on your strengths and the areas you might need support

## Year 12

- ▶ Start researching your Higher Education options and support available
- ▶ Reflect on how your support needs have changed in post-16 education
- ▶ Create your UCAS account and start to visit Open Days at universities, colleges and employers

## Year 13 (Spring term)

- ▶ Attend Offer Holder Days and discuss your support needs
  - ▶ Apply for Student Finance
  - ▶ Make your Firm and Insurance Choices
- ▶ Research accommodation if you'll need it

## Year 11

- ▶ Explore post-16 pathways to the Higher Education course or career you're interested in
- ▶ Start to build your advocacy skills by communicating any support needs to your teachers ahead of your GCSEs - for example, is it helpful for you to have copies of Powerpoints after lessons?

## Year 13 (September - January)

- ▶ Attend further Open Days if needed
- ▶ Complete and submit your UCAS form
- ▶ 15th October: Early admission deadline for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary courses, as well as all Oxford and Cambridge courses
- ▶ Late January: UCAS deadline for all other courses

## Year 13 (Summer term)

- ▶ Focus on your exams and final coursework submissions
- ▶ Results day!

## My key dates are:

It's important to bear in mind that this timeline isn't prescriptive and will look slightly different for everyone.

If you're applying for a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship, your timeline will be set by your employer and the information should be available on their website.

**Once you hit Year 12 use the Key Dates space to make a note of the dates relevant to you - either from the Key Days page of UCAS.com, or from an employer website.**



Support is created to give students like us an even standing despite our difficulties.

**Jack, Biological and Medical Sciences,  
University of Liverpool**

## Research

**The first stage in your Higher Education journey is deciding what you'd like to study and researching the options around that subject.**

**Some students will be interested in a career that requires a specific qualification, while others will want to carry on a subject they enjoy. If you're unsure of what to study, speak to a careers advisor in school or try a careers quiz like <http://icould.com/buzz-quiz> as a starting point.**

You might start your research stage in Year 12, or earlier, whenever you feel ready to think about your Higher Education journey! The aim of the research stage is to create a shortlist of courses you'd like to apply to.

Research will look different for everyone, because everyone has different interests, priorities, and needs, but some of the most common criteria for shortlists include:

- ▶ Does this course cover the areas I'm interested in?
- ▶ How far is the university, college or apprenticeship from home? Can I commute in? If I'd need to move away, can I easily travel back if I need to?
- ▶ What are the accommodation options?
- ▶ Can I do work placements, or study abroad?
- ▶ Are the entry requirements roughly in line with my predicted grades?
- ▶ Can the university, college or apprenticeship meet my support needs?

### Can you think of any other questions that will be important for you during your research?

The last criteria can be the most important one for students with special education needs or disabilities. As part of your research it's important to consider areas you might need support and what that support would look like, so you're able to see if the university or college offers it. The prompts on this page can act as a starting point, but you might also want to talk it through with someone you trust. If you have an EHCP or IEP, this can give you some ideas too.

After you've done your research and have a shortlist of courses, it's time to head to some Open Days. These are often targeted at Year 12 students, but there's nothing to stop you going along earlier!

### What are my support needs?

**E.g: Note taking, feeling anxious in busy places, needing to access my medication**

### What would I need to support me with this?

**E.g: A note taker, access to smaller classrooms, quiet accommodation on campus**



# What is an Open Day?

Open Days are events organised by universities and colleges to give you a chance to look around the campus and talk to staff and students. UCAS describes them as 'the best way to get a real taste of university life'.

You'll be able to look at teaching spaces, accommodation and student life buildings, talk to current staff and teaching staff, and attend talks about the university or college. You can go by yourself, or take a parent, carer or friend along.

If you have questions about the support offered at an institution, an Open Day is a great first opportunity to speak to staff and find out more. To find out when Open Days are taking place, you can visit the university or college website directly, or use the UCAS Open Days search tool.

Employers will often run specific Open Days or Careers events too, in order to promote their apprenticeship schemes.

**Useful links**

**UCAS.com** - As well as an Open Days search tool, UCAS has guides for lots of different courses, and a course search tool with filters to help you with your shortlist.

**UniTasterDays.com** - This is a directory of Open Days, taster days, workshops and more, offered by universities and colleges across the country.

**TheUniGuide.co.uk and DiscoverUni.gov.uk** - These websites provide course profiles with information on entry requirements, course content, graduate outcomes, student satisfaction and more. UniGuide includes the A Level Explorer tool, which suggests what students with your subject combination have gone on to study.

## Top tips

- ▶ After each Open Day, make a note of what you thought using our Open Day Reflections Log on the next page. Noting your thoughts down at the time means you don't forget anything and can be helpful later on.
- ▶ You can usually register for Open Days in advance and can often disclose any access requirements in the process. Once registered, you'll receive information about what's on offer and can plan your day out to get the most out of it.
- ▶ If you can't attend an in person Open Day, most universities, colleges and employers will offer Virtual Open Days, online chats, or a chance to visit outside of Open Days when things are less busy.

If I had to give any tips to students with Special Education Needs or Disabilities considering Higher Education, speak to universities on Open Days and ask what support they can offer you, although it may be daunting at first it is 100% worth it.

**Lillie, English Language, University of Liverpool**

**Which open days would you like to attend? Jot the dates down here!**

**What are 2 key questions you'd like answered on an open day?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_



**University/College Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I saw:**

Teaching facilities     Sports Facilities     Student Union     .....

Accommodation     Libraries     Student Support Teams     .....

*The blank spaces are for you to jot down the important things you want to see beyond this list e.g: music facilities, student health centres, art studios, laboratories.*

**I asked questions about:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I found out:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What questions do I still have?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What did I like?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What did I dislike?** \_\_\_\_\_

**University/College Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I saw:**

Teaching facilities     Sports Facilities     Student Union     .....

Accommodation     Libraries     Student Support Teams     .....

*The blank spaces are for you to jot down the important things you want to see beyond this list e.g: music facilities, student health centres, art studios, laboratories.*

**I asked questions about:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I found out:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What questions do I still have?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What did I like?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What did I dislike?** \_\_\_\_\_

**University/College Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I saw:**

Teaching facilities     Sports Facilities     Student Union     .....

Accommodation     Libraries     Student Support Teams     .....

*The blank spaces are for you to jot down the important things you want to see beyond this list e.g: music facilities, student health centres, art studios, laboratories.*

**I asked questions about:** \_\_\_\_\_ **I found out:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What questions do I still have?**

**What did I like?** \_\_\_\_\_ **What did I dislike?** \_\_\_\_\_

**University/College Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I saw:**

Teaching facilities     Sports Facilities     Student Union     .....

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**I asked questions about:** \_\_\_\_\_ **I found out:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What questions do I still have?**

**What did I like?** \_\_\_\_\_ **What did I dislike?** \_\_\_\_\_

**University/College Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I saw:**

Teaching facilities     Sports Facilities     Student Union     .....

Accommodation     Libraries     Student Support Teams     .....

*The blank spaces are for you to jot down the important things you want to see beyond this list e.g: music facilities, student health centres, art studios, laboratories.*

**I asked questions about:** \_\_\_\_\_ **I found out:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What questions do I still have?**

**What did I like?** \_\_\_\_\_ **What did I dislike?** \_\_\_\_\_

**University/College Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I saw:**

Teaching facilities     Sports Facilities     Student Union     .....

Accommodation     Libraries     Student Support Teams     .....

*The blank spaces are for you to jot down the important things you want to see beyond this list e.g: music facilities, student health centres, art studios, laboratories.*

**I asked questions about:** \_\_\_\_\_ **I found out:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What questions do I still have?**

**What did I like?** \_\_\_\_\_ **What did I dislike?** \_\_\_\_\_

You'll probably attend more than 3 Open Days - you can visit [www.shaping-futures.org.uk](http://www.shaping-futures.org.uk) to download extra copies of the Open Day log







# Your Applications

Once you know where you'd like to apply, the next step is completing your UCAS or apprenticeship application and getting it submitted. For UCAS there are a few different sections, like personal details, qualifications and personal statement. You'll get help from your school or college and there's lots of guidance on UCAS.com. Apprenticeship applications will be unique to each employer.

## UCAS Application

You can create your UCAS account and start your application from around May in Year 12, and can submit from September of Year 12 onwards. The deadline is in late January, unless you're applying for a course at Oxford or Cambridge, or Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Sciences courses at any university. The aim of the application stage is to get your shortlist narrowed to the 5 courses that'll go on your UCAS application, and get your application submitted!

As part of your UCAS application, you'll complete a personal statement where you'll talk about why you've chosen this course, what you find most exciting about

the idea of studying it and how your current studies and experiences will prepare you for Higher Education.

Another part of your UCAS application is the teacher reference, where they can include any extenuating circumstances universities or colleges might need to be aware of. You might want to have a chat with them before you submit it to discuss anything you'd like included.

Although the UCAS deadline is January, your school will likely have an internal, earlier deadline, to allow them to check your application. Find out when it is, and jot it down:

**My school/college deadline is:**

## Top tips

- ▶ You'll have the option to disclose your special education needs or disabilities on UCAS - if you feel comfortable doing so, we'd encourage you to do this! It flags to the university or college that you might need some support and can start the process. **It doesn't have any impact on your likelihood of receiving an offer.**
- ▶ Don't wait until the last minute to submit your application!
- ▶ Check if your course has any additional entry requirements, like an interview, admissions test, portfolio submission or audition. If they do, contact the institution in advance to discuss any adjustments you might need. You can also make a note of any key timings if they're available - for example, that interviews or auditions at one of your choices are always in the first week of December. This will help you plan ahead and know what your term might look like.
- ▶ You can apply to some Higher Education courses delivered at colleges direct to the College. If you'd like to do this, check with the college for the dates relevant to them.
- ▶ If you're applying to Higher or Degree Apprenticeships, you'll apply direct to the employer. Applications for apprenticeships are similar to jobs, they are advertised all year around with deadlines specific to the role. You can search for these through UCAS but will be directed to the employer to apply.

## Decision making

After submitting your UCAS form, you'll then wait to hear from your 5 choices about whether they can make you an offer.

This can be stressful, so if you're finding it difficult, please have a chat with someone you trust. Once you receive responses from your 5 choices, you'll select Firm and Insurance choices from the offers you're holding.

Your Firm is your first choice, where you most want to go. Your Insurance is the choice you'd want if you didn't meet the conditions of your Firm choice offer. It would usually have slightly lower requirements than your Firm.

Don't be afraid to disclose your disability and ask for help when needed. The university staff are there to assist you.

**Ammar, Law, University of Liverpool**

## Accessing support

Once you have your offers, it's a good idea to contact each university to start discussing the support they could offer you and what the process is to get this in place. The most important thing is to know what your next steps are at each institution, and the best place to start is usually by contacting the Student Support teams.

If you have one, it can be helpful to share your EHCP at this stage. While it doesn't apply in Higher Education in the same way it does at school or college, it can be helpful as a starting point to discuss your support needs and identify areas where support might be useful. You don't need to share the whole EHCP, you could share the relevant parts.

Once you've contacted each university or college where you hold an offer, note down the name and email/telephone number of the relevant person or team.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# Offer

# Holder Days



After you receive an offer, you'll usually receive an invitation to an Offer Holder Day at the university or college. This is like an Open Day, but more focused on your course. You might have a chance to look at the facilities, take part in a taster lecture, view the accommodation, or meet more current staff and students.

Offer Holder Days are usually quieter and smaller than an Open Day, and can be a useful tool if you're holding multiple offers and unsure which to Firm/Insure. Offer Holder Days are also a great time to meet with Student Support to discuss your support needs if you'd prefer to do this in person.

## Student Finance

Student Finance opens in February or March each year, the exact date varies. You can sign up via the Student Finance website to be notified when applications open. Once they're open, you'll create an online account, as will your parents/carers if you're applying for more than the minimum maintenance loan. You'll also indicate if you'd like to apply for additional support such as Disabled Students' Allowance. The whole process usually takes 30 minutes or less, but it's a very important part of the process!

Alongside the support you'll receive from Student Finance, you might be eligible for bursaries, scholarships or other financial support from your university or college.

## Top tips

- ▶ Complete your Student Finance application as soon as it opens. This helps ensure your finance is in place for the start of your course and is especially important if you'll be applying for Disabled Students' Allowance, as this has a longer processing time. You do need to put down a university or college and course you'll be studying - if you don't have all your offers, pop your favourite down, you can always update it later.

## Useful Links

[www.gov.uk/student-finance](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance) - The official Government site providing an overview of the support available, application and repayment process. There is also a calculator you can use before applications open each year to give you a rough idea of how much maintenance loan you'll receive.

[www.youtube.com/sfefilm](https://www.youtube.com/sfefilm) - Student Finance England offers video guides to each element of the Student Finance process including applications, how parents/carers complete their sections, finance for part time students and more.

# Transition

After you've made your Firm and Insurance Choices, you can start to relax in terms of your Higher Education journey and turn your focus to your final exams and coursework deadlines, while also getting excited as you plan for September.

## Independent Living

If you're planning to move out for university or college, you'll need to apply for student accommodation. The options will vary from institution to institution, so it's important to consider what might suit you best - on campus or off campus, en-suite or shared bathroom, studio or shared flat, university/college owned or private etc. The process of applying for accommodation will be different at each university or college, so it's important to carefully check the institution's website, or get this information on an Open Day or Offer Holder Day.

If you're opting for a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship, you won't usually be able to access student accommodation and may need to opt for living at home or a private rental. You should chat to your employer for advice.

Before you make any decisions, you should reflect on whether you have any specific needs that your accommodation would need to accommodate, such as:

### ▶ Shreya

*A Law student at the University of Liverpool, needed accommodation with space for a mini fridge in her room to help her with managing Type 1 Diabetes*

### ▶ Anna

*An Environmental Science student at the University of Liverpool, needed a studio flat to help her manage her OCD*

### ▶ Ellen

*A Geography student at the University of Liverpool, needed a ground floor flat because of her ME/CFS*

## Your Reflection





# Results Day

On Results Day you'll receive your final grades and UCAS will update to show if you've received a place on your chosen course. The UCAS Results Day page: [www.ucas.com/undergraduate](http://www.ucas.com/undergraduate) has a guide about what to expect.

After you've been accepted, your university or college will be in touch to discuss what happens next. This might include additional opportunities to visit the campus, prep work for your course, accommodation deadlines, finalising any support you've previously been discussing with them or move-in dates. It's important to keep on top of your emails from your new institution as there may be important tasks you need to complete.

## Clearing

If Results Day doesn't go as well as you'd hoped, and you don't receive the grades you need for your Firm or Insurance choice, Clearing provides an opportunity to get a place on another course.

UCAS Clearing shows all the courses that still have places available, so you can see if any suit you and then contact those institutions to see if they can offer you a place. You'll usually get answers quite quickly.

Using Clearing can be an unexpected change to your plans, so you might want to have a parent/carer, teacher or trusted friend support you as you go through the process. Your teachers or careers advisors can provide guidance and advice on your options. A great place to start can be those universities or colleges you looked at in your initial research, but who didn't make the final five.

If you secure a place through Clearing, you'll need to update Student Finance with your new course and institution, and contact the Student Support team there to discuss your support needs. You can usually visit the campus at an Open Day around this time to check it is the right choice for you and ask any questions you have.

## Top tips

Part of Higher Education is becoming more independent. The time between the end of school/college and Results Day is a great time to build some of the skills you might need - for example navigating public transport, booking tickets, or if you're hoping to move into student accommodation, some basic cooking and laundry skills.

Every school and college will do Results Day slightly differently, so check in advance:

- ▶ Do you receive your results in person or online?
- ▶ If you get them in person, what time does the building open?
- ▶ Are you allowed to bring someone for support if you'd like?
- ▶ Who can you speak to on the day if you have questions, or if things don't go to plan?



# Student Life

There's a lot more to Higher Education than your academic studies - you'll also have lots of options to meet new people, socialise and try out new things that you may never have encountered.

A Student Union is the heart of your student social life. They put together social events, list volunteering opportunities, house societies and sports teams for a wide range of different hobbies and interests. They're run by students for students, and offer all kinds of support too!

Student Societies give you a chance to pursue an existing interest, or take up a new one, make friends and have fun. No matter what you're interested in, you'll find a society for it - there are Disney Societies,

Film Societies, Gaming Societies, Pro Wrestling Societies and much more! You could even get involved in running a society, as a President, Treasurer or Social Secretary.

If you're interested in sports, the Student Athletic Union might be of interest. Each university or college will have a range of sports teams, representing the most common sports like football and basketball, as well as ones you might not see as often, like cheerleading, ultimate frisbee and table tennis. There'll be teams for all levels of skill and experience too.

If you'd like to work alongside your studies, you might be able to get a part time job at your university or college. You might be able to work in on-site retail or hospitality, in a support role for other students, in the library or sports facilities or as an ambassador showing future students around. These roles are usually really flexible around your studies.

There will also be lots of existing communities you can tap into for support and to meet other students in a similar situation, such as Disabled Students Societies.

I'm happy to report that I really found my footing at university and discovered a joy to being independent and responsible for myself. I've also made a bunch of friends and my social circles continue to grow as I progress through university.

Zack, Computer Science,  
University of Liverpool

Once you've made your Firm choice, visit their Student Union website and make a list of the societies you'd like to try!





## Top tips

► **Be proactive in seeking out support and advocating for yourself**

Make sure that you have a meeting with an advisor to get a support plan in place as soon as possible. You can then talk through what adjustments could be made for you, so there is not a long period of time where you are without support.

I would also recommend letting your tutor know about your disability, so you can talk to them too if you are struggling. You deserve the support that has been given to you – so don't be afraid to ask for an extension if you need it.

**Ellen, Geography, University of Liverpool**

► **Communicate if there's an issue, or something isn't working well, let someone know as soon as you can.**

I know that it's hard to disclose personal information but being open about it has allowed me to access so much more support than I even knew was available to me.

**Anna, Environmental Sciences, University of Liverpool**

► **You'll have so many opportunities available to you, embrace them and try new things!**

Remember to look after yourself and your own needs, but at the same time please do push yourself out of your comfort zone. You may find new hobbies or friends that you wouldn't have otherwise!

**Zack, Computer Science, University of Liverpool**





## Contact us

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