

A photograph of three students walking across a green lawn in front of a large, multi-story brick building with many windows. The students are a young woman in a pink sweater, a young man in a green sweatshirt, and a young woman in a patterned dress. The scene is bright and sunny.

**your route
to success >>**

reigate • college

sixth form education at its best

Parent UCAS meeting 2025

11 September 2025

This session will cover

Ellen Walkinshaw – Director (Progression)

Natalie Holmes – Associate Director (Careers)

- Basic overview of the UCAS process and review of 2025
- Advice on helping your son or daughter make their university choices
- The advice and help that is available to students in College to support them with applying to university
- Key UCAS deadlines
- Agreements we have with particular universities
- Advice about student finance

A link to this evening's slides will be in Monday's Careers Bulletin

Please add questions using the Q and A function

The UCAS process – the basics

- UCAS = Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
- Students make **five choices** on their UCAS form.
- To help the College manage the UCAS process we the **UAR** on (now on the portal) – this enables Careers and tutors to keep track of applications
- Once they have received all of their offers they have a set amount of time to choose a **firm** and **insurance** choice
- After they have received their offers universities invite students to “offer holder” or “applicants” days to help them decide which offers to accept.
- On results day universities will accept students who meet their offers. If a student doesn't meet either their firm or insurance offer they will be placed in clearing
- College staff are in College all week in results week to offer support

UCAS process – three recent changes

- **Personal statements – statement replaced with 3 structured questions:**
 1. Why do you want to study this course?
 2. How have your qualifications and studies helped prepare you for this course?
 3. What else have you done outside of education to prepare and how have these been helpful?

- **Fee waiver:** Students who have been eligible for FSM at any point in the last 6 years no longer have to pay the £28.95 UCAS fee – see the student guide for what they should do – most important is that they do not enter any credit/debit card details!
- **Grades on entry tool:** UCAS have introduced a very useful [Grades on Entry](#) tool, which shows the actual grades students held when accepted on to a course – which can differ from the entrance requirements on universities' websites

Overview of the 2024-25 Cycle

As of 11 September:

- 1086 applications

Processed

- 925 placed at firm choice university

Placement summary

Active applications



Filter applications

Unplaced	107
Placed insurance choice	54
Placed firm choice	925

Top 10 Reigate College university destinations 2024

All UK universities

1. University of Surrey (67)
2. University of Brighton (49)
3. University of Portsmouth (49)
4. University of Exeter(48)
5. University of Southampton (41)
6. University of Nottingham (36)
7. Bournemouth University (28)
8. Kingston University (27)
9. University of Warwick (25)
10. University of Manchester (22)

Russell Group universities:

1. University of Exeter (48)
2. University of Southampton (41)
3. University of Nottingham (36)
4. University of Warwick (25)
5. University of Manchester (22)
6. University of Leeds (21)
7. University of Cardiff (20)
8. University of Bristol (16)
9. University of Birmingham (16)
10. University of Durham (11)

Advice on Choices

Students should be considering:

- Course content and method of assessment
- Opportunities for years abroad/placement years
- Entry requirements – A level/BTECs, but also GCSEs and other requirements such as admissions tests or work experience
- Location – distance from home, campus or city, accommodation, what else the area has to offer!
- Extra-curricular opportunities/opportunities for part time work
- Reputation and surveys – various league tables, National Student Survey (NSSS) and Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

Selecting their final five choices

- Students don't have to choose 5 choices before sending to UCAS – they can add more in Track on UCAS up to 14 January
- General advice is for students to have an aspirational, solid and safe choice amongst their five choices – They can use the Unifrog shortlisting tool but it is important to also check the university websites for entry requirements
- Students can/should discuss their choices with their tutor and where relevant their Pathway teacher

Key Reigate College UCAS deadlines 2024/25

Oxbridge and Medics, Vets and Dentistry applications:
Friday 19 September

Deadline for 10 working day turn-around of applications:
Monday 3 November

All other UCAS applications in order to be guaranteed to meet UCAS
January equal considerations deadline:
Thursday 27 November

Final UCAS deadline = Wednesday 14 January

Predicted grades

- Predicted grades are based on work in the Lower Sixth
- The [predicted grade policy](#) is on the portal
- Predicted grades for A level are on the UAR which students can view on their portal BTEC and Criminology predicted grades will be issued on **22 September**
- Predicted grades for EPQ are added once UARs are submitted by Careers

References

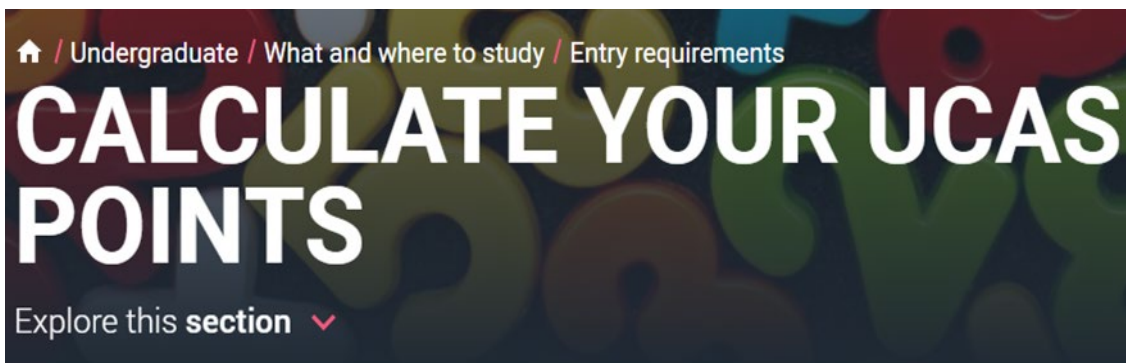
UCAS references have three sections:

Section 1: General statement about college - same for all students

Section 2: Extenuating circumstances which may have impacted education and achievement. Only for some students –they should have submitted details of their UAR and will have had the chance to discuss with their tutor or senior tutor

Section 3: Other supportive information specific to the applicant and relevant to the course(s) applied for – which is taken from subject teacher references written at the end of the lower sixth year

The UCAS point calculator



Work out how many UCAS points your qualifications are worth.

- 1 Select your qualification from the drop-down list.
- 2 Enter the subject you're studying (this is optional).
- 3 Select your grade from the drop-down list – the Tariff points for this qualification will display

Some universities publish their entry requirements as UCAS Tariff points. Students can work out how many points their predicted grades are “worth” using this [calculator](#) on UCAS

Gap years

- In most cases it is best for students to apply this year for deferred entry in 2027
- Students can apply for 2026 entry and then contact the universities and ask them if they can defer once they have their results .. but universities are under no obligation to do this
- If students apply once they have left we still write their references and they can access advice on the website, but our ability to offer one to one advice is obviously limited

Help and advice for students in College

- **Get Ahead Day and Progression Day** – Lower Sixth
- **Unifrog** – Online destinations platform, students all have log in details
- **OSCAR** – help with personal statements – Aspire students automatically have log ins, other students were told to e mail careers@reigate.ac.uk if they would like a log in
- **Student UCAS guide** – has been e mailed to students and can be viewed at [Student UCAS Guide](#)
- **Careers Bulletin** – e mailed to students every Monday (first one for this term came out on Monday 15/9)
- **General UCAS queries and personal statement feedback sessions in Careers** – will be run this term at lunchtimes and advertised via tutorial and the Careers Bulletin
- **Upper Sixth Tutorial** – all students will receive help and support with applications through their U6 tutorial pathway
- **Upper Sixth Pathways** – most students also have a pathway lesson this term (28 to choose from!)

Contextual offers

University of Bristol: Reigate College is no longer on Bristol's list of "Aspiring State Schools" so the contextual offer no longer applies to our students unless they meet one of the other Widening participation criteria

Other Contextual offer schemes:

There are a range of other contextual offer schemes. These are often called "Access to ..." or "Pathway to ..." The eligibility criteria for these differ, the most common ones are:

- Being eligible (or having been eligible) for FSM
- Being care experienced
- Being first in your generation to go to university
- Living in an area with low progression to HE – to find this out use the [Polar Postcode Checker](#)

Less common criteria include

- Having a family member who is serving or has served in the armed forces
- Being a Young Carer

Progression Agreements

- **University of Law** – Offer a scholarship to two Reigate College students who meet certain widening participation criteria
- **University of Portsmouth** – Students who meet widening participation criteria may receive an unconditional offer with a scholarship of £1,000 if they meet or exceed their predicted grades
- **UCA** - Partner Scholarship of £500
- **Emil Dale** – ask Performing Arts Dept for details

Overview of Student Finance

There are two main sources of financial support to help students cover tuition fees and living costs:

- Tuition fee loan to cover fees
- Maintenance loan towards living costs

There are also sources of additional support:

- DSA [Disabled Students' Allowance \(DSA\) | UCAS](#)
- NHS Learning Support Fund
- Bursaries and Scholarships

Tuition fee loans

Maximum fees at publicly funded universities in England are:

- £9,535 year for full-time courses
- NB – fees for a study abroad or industry placement year will vary
- Fees may be higher at private universities and lower for HE study in colleges

You don't have to pay fees upfront, students can use a tuition fee loan. A tuition fee loan:

- Covers 100% of fees at a publicly funded UK university
- Is not based on household income
- Is paid directly to the university each year
- You need to reapply each year
- It is repaid after university depending on earnings

Maintenance loans

Students can apply for a **maintenance loan** towards living costs

- The maintenance loan is paid directly to the student in 3 instalments
- The amount received could change each year
- A maintenance loan may not cover all living costs
- Students need to reapply each year
- Maintenance loans are repaid after university depending on earnings

Maintenance loan

The amount you can borrow depends on household income, and where you live and study.

Where you're living while studying	Maximum amount per additional week	
	2025 to 2026	2024 to 2025
Living with parents	£75	£73
Living outside of London, away from home	£113	£110
Living in London, away from home	£145	£141
Living abroad	£157	£152

Maintenance loans continued ...

- For dependent students, **household income = the total taxable (gross) income of parents**
- (for 2026 entry the 2024/25 tax year is used)
- If parents are separated, it is the parent the student usually lives with
- If that parent has a partner who lives in the same home, the partner's income is included
- If household income has decreased by at least 15% since the previous tax year, you can ask for a current year income assessment

Loan repayments

- Monthly repayments depend on what you earn and not what you owe.
- Repayment starts in April after leaving university
- Repayments start when earning £25,000 or more
- Repayment is 9% of everything earned above £25,000
- After 40 years any outstanding balance is wiped
- Students starting university after August 2023 are on Plan 5

- Repayments are only based on income.
- Repayments are taken directly from salary through the PAYE system.
- See [How interest is calculated - Plan 5 - GOV.UK](#)

Gross annual salary	Monthly take home pay	Monthly repayment
£20,000	£1,427	£0
£26,000	£1,720	£7.50
£30,000	£1,978	£37.50
£40,000	£2,459	£113

Disabled Students' Allowance

- Support for extra study-related costs due to a disability, long term condition (including mental health) or learning difference such as dyslexia
- From Student Finance England
- Apply from your student finance account
- DSA is not repayable
- Based on needs not income
- Provide proof and attend a needs assessment
- Up to £26,948 (2024/25) per year
- Can apply anytime whilst at university
- Contact university disability support team for advice

Bursaries and Scholarships

- Provide extra support for those that need it most or to recognise achievement.
- Not repayable
- Can help with living costs or tuition fees
- Eligibility can be based on merit, income, or personal circumstances
- May be subject related or extra-curricular
- From universities, charities, companies, SFE
- Some require an application and some don't
- Some have other benefits such as mentor, work placement or accommodation
- [The Scholarship Hub | Apply for UK Student Scholarships and Russell Group bursary guide / Advancing Access](#)

When to apply for student finance

- Students apply online to Student Finance England: www.gov.uk/student-finance
- Student Finance England (SFE) applications open Feb / March for Sept entry
- The recommended deadline is the end of May
- Don't need confirmed course details, just an idea of first choice
- If the means-tested element of the maintenance loan is applied for, parents will be emailed a link to submit their information

Other ways students fund their studies or manage money

- £££ help from parents or family, savings, or child trust fund
- Scholarships, grants and bursaries
- Part-time or vacation work while at uni
- Gap year to work and save up
- Choose uni location and accommodation carefully
- Live at home and commute
- Money saving and independence skills: budgeting, meal planning, cooking
- Careful use of student overdraft to manage large one-off or set-up costs
- Student discounts: Totum, UniDays and Student Beans

With thanks to University of Portsmouth

Item	Weekly Cost
Halls / rent in shared house or flat	£100-£186
Bills (gas, electric, water, internet)	£35
Food / housekeeping	£45
Travel	£5-10
Phone	£5-10
Contents insurance	£3
TV licence	£3
Social costs	£30-£40
Total per week	£226 - £332
Total per academic year (40 weeks)	£9,040 - £13,280



**Average based on a student living in Portsmouth in 2024/25*

Useful links

- [Student Guides | MoneySavingExpert](#)
- [Student finance in England - Everything you need to know](#)
- [How interest is calculated - Plan 5 - GOV.UK](#)
- [Russell Group bursary guide / Advancing Access](#)
- [The Scholarship Hub | Apply for UK Student Scholarships](#)
- [Student Living Index 2025 | University Costs | Royal Bank of Scotland](#)

University of Portsmouth Visit

- Friday 26 September
- Students and parents have been e mailed about this – it is full

Looking ahead ...

- Offer holder (applicant) days and replying to offers
- Applying for student finance
- Choosing and applying for accommodation
- Results day

It is very important applicants **read their emails!**

Resources

- The Student UCAS Guide can be viewed on the portal, please read this before contacting Careers with questions!
- UCAS ultimate Guides

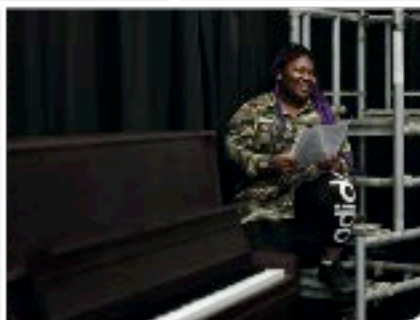
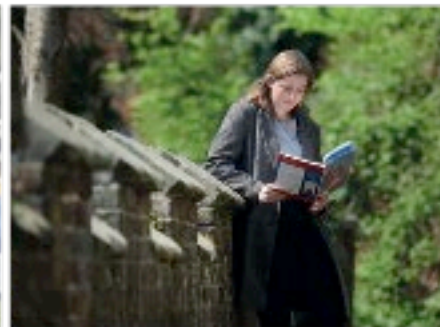


- A link to this presentation will be in the Careers bulletin and also on the portal under “Careers Resources” in the Careers and Progression Section

careers@reigate.ac.uk



reigate•college



high quality education
in a supportive community