

A GUIDE TO UNIVERSITY STUDENT WORKBOOK



The Checkland Building



University of Brighton

Outreach

WELCOME

If you are considering university we understand that there is a lot to think about. We are here to make sure that you get the information and experiences to help you decide about the right subject, course and university for you.

Through our Outreach programme we have a range of activities from taster days to residential summer schools.

We hope that these activities and this workbook will help you to develop your ideas about the best university options for you.

We will enjoy working with you and hope you enjoy working with us.

Best wishes

The Outreach team
University of Brighton



The University of Brighton is an amazing place to study. The uni is in a great city that has everything you need. It has plenty of resources to use on campus. It's a friendly university... it definitely is the university for me.

Scarlet, Primary Education

CONTENTS

03

MY UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

04

ACTIVITY DIARY

05

WHY GO TO UNIVERSITY

06

EXPLORING YOUR OPTIONS

Choosing the right subject, course and university

08

MY NEXT STEPS

09

TIMELINE

10

APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY

11

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND ADMISSIONS

12

YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

14

TOP TIPS

15

USEFUL WEBSITES

16

CONTACT DETAILS

MY UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE



Use the space below to make notes about your first impressions of university and what you felt about your experience. Recording this information here will give you something to refer to when you are completing your UCAS form.

1. Which activity did you take part in?

Was it online or on campus?

5. What surprised you?

2. Which university campus did you visit? Did

you look round online or in person?

3. What were the dates of your activity?

6. What do you want to know more about?

4. People you have met and their jobs

**Have you met any student ambassadors,
lecturers, support staff?**

ACTIVITY DIARY



Use this space to make a note of all the activities you take part in.

7. What did you do?

This could be... attended a lecture | took part in a seminar | visited a halls of residence | did a group activity | went to a workshop | attended an online event | took part in an online summer school | or something else.

What did you do?

What did you learn about university?

WHY GO TO UNIVERSITY?

People go to university for all kinds of reasons. We asked some students at the University of Brighton to tell us about the reasons why they chose to study here. Here are the most popular answers.

- ✔ To train for a professional career such as a designer, doctor, nurse or teacher
- ✔ To challenge themselves, build confidence, self-esteem and independence
- ✔ To prepare for a career and not just a job, for example in engineering, banking or tourism
- ✔ To explore a subject they are passionate about, such as English literature or history
- ✔ To meet new people and discover new interests
- ✔ To develop expertise in a subject like photography or computer science

8. What could university do for you?

What would you say your reasons for coming to university could be?

Completing this section can help you develop some ideas for the personal statement in your UCAS application.

EXPLORING YOUR OPTIONS



Take the time to make sure you choose a subject, course and university that all complement your strengths and attributes. Consider all your options, as studying at university opens up a much wider range of subjects to choose from. Make sure that you find out all the information you need, particularly if you are looking at a subject that you are not familiar with.

9. Choosing the right subject and course

Family, friends, teachers and careers advisers can all be good sources of information but what appeals to others may not be right for you. Ultimately, the decision is yours.

Which subjects would you like to explore?

✔ Once you have made a shortlist of your options, ask yourself the questions below to help you to reach a decision.

10. What do you like about these subjects?

If you want to get the most out of your time at university you should be prepared to work hard. It's easier to motivate yourself when the pressure is on if you are committed to the subject and you'll be more likely to graduate with a better degree at the end.

Which subjects do you enjoy?

11. Would you like to study more than one subject?

Is it possible to study more than one subject as a combined degree such as English and media?

12. What career(s) could this subject lead to?

Look at university websites and prospectuses to get an idea of what careers your university course could lead to. Chat to our current students: www.brighton.ac.uk/chat. Or you could ask people from different industries what degrees they studied.

What career options appeal to you?

13. Choosing the right university

Once you have a subject in mind, you need to shortlist which universities to apply for.

Think about:

- Is the course classroom-based or more practical and does this suit how you like to learn?
- Are the entry requirements achievable?
- How is the course assessed? Is it exam-based, essays, presentations or group work?
Which do you prefer?
- Where would you like to study? For example, near your home town or wherever the best course for you is offered?
- Why do you want to study there? For example, to be close to home or to experience a new place.

What do you think these places will be like to live in?

- The cost of living may vary from place to place
- Living at home may be cheaper
- Do you like universities with one single campus or multiple sites?
- What will the cost of travelling home or to your campus be?
- Does the city/town you would like to study in provide social activities that you enjoy like sports, music and arts?

Where would you live and study? Think about the questions above and list the pros and cons of the places below.

Pros

Cons



Don't be shy. If you need more information at any stage, you can also contact any university directly to ask questions.

MY NEXT STEPS

Here is your checklist of things to think about in Year 12 and 13 to help prepare you for university. The timeline on the next page shows you when to do each one.

Year 12

- ✔ Search for courses and universities on UCAS
- ✔ Choose between 6-10 that interest you
- ✔ Visit university websites to research course content and ways of learning in detail
- ✔ Check entry requirements
- ✔ Order or download prospectuses
- ✔ Visit open days: talk to students and staff
- ✔ Talk to careers advisers, teachers, family and people from the industry about your shortlist

Help your application by contacting your shortlisted universities with any questions you have, and by getting relevant experience by doing voluntary work; taking part in activities outside school; and researching the subject

All these things can contribute to a strong application and personal statement.

Year 13

- ✔ Decide on your UCAS shortlist - you can apply for up to five
- ✔ Prepare your personal statement
- ✔ Make your UCAS application
- ✔ Apply for funding
- ✔ Attend interviews and applicant days
- ✔ Consider which offers to accept
- ✔ Research accommodation options
- ✔ Confirm your university choice
- ✔ Get your exam results
- ✔ Enrol and start your exciting new future

Good luck!

YEAR 12

YEAR 13

START HERE



This timeline provides you with general advice about what you need to do and by when as you go through the process of applying and starting university.

Make sure you confirm the full details of deadlines and processes that relate to your application by checking university websites and those of UCAS and the relevant student funding body, eg Student Finance England.

BEGIN YOUR RESEARCH

Shortlist universities that offer the subjects you are interested in. Order prospectuses and check entry requirements.

Visit UCAS and HE fairs or attend events at your school or college.

Book open day visits in advance. Talk to careers advisors, teachers, family, friends and people from the industry about your shortlist.

Find out more about applying to the University of Brighton by visiting www.brighton.ac.uk/ studying-here

OPEN DAYS

START DRAFTING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

Start drafting your personal statement.

Having a draft copy you can amend later is better than looking at blank page. If you have any concerns contact the admissions department of your chosen universities.

OPEN DAYS

UCAS EXTRA

New applicants and applicants who are not holding offers are given a chance to apply to courses that still have vacancies.

YOUR APPLICATION

UCAS application opens in mid-September. The main UCAS deadline is in mid-January but your school or college may require you to submit your application to them before then.

Contact universities with any questions. Decide on your shortlist and prepare your personal statement.

APPLYING FOR FUNDING

You needn't wait for offers to apply for funding. Apply as early as possible. Visit www.gov.uk/studentfinance

CONFIRM YOUR CHOICES

Consider your options and confirm your firm and insurance choice. If you applied before the January deadline, you must confirm your choices with UCAS by early May. If you applied later you will need to confirm in June.

EXAM RESULTS

A-level results are published in July. Confirm your place with UCAS Track. If you don't do as well as you'd hoped you may still be able to find a place on a course through UCAS Clearing.

INTERVIEWS AND APPLICANT DAYS

You may be invited to visit a university for an interview or applicant day from the autumn term onwards.

This will give you further opportunities to get a feel for the university, meet students and staff from the course you have applied to and see the facilities you will be using every day.

Interviews usually take place between November and March.

ACCOMMODATION CHOICES

Research your options and think about which type of accommodation is right for you.

Find out more about the accommodation offer at Brighton by visiting www.brighton.ac.uk/accommodation

OFFERS AND INTERVIEWS

Offers can be made from September but usually in the spring term.

FINALISING ACCOMMODATION

Make sure you meet any deadlines you are given if you are offered a place in halls. Make use of support offered by university accommodation services if you are looking for other types of accommodation.

ENROL ONLINE

Your university will send you details of how and when to enrol on your course. Part of this process may be completed online before you arrive on campus.

STARTING UNI

Enrol in person and join in course induction and events for new students.

TIMELINE

MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	

APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY

In Year 13 from mid-September onwards you can apply to university through UCAS. Most people do so by the main deadline in mid-January but you can apply all year.

The UCAS application process is explained in detail on their website. For more information you can visit here:

www.ucas.com

You should also read the advice about application, admissions and entry requirements on your chosen universities' websites.

Applying through UCAS

Remember entry requirements may vary from course to course and some will want you to have certain qualifications such as subject-specific GCSEs.

Other selection criteria may include:

- Work experience (paid or voluntary)
- Interview/audition/portfolio inspection (mainly for art courses)
- Foundation diploma in art (this is a one-year course you would take after Year 13)
- A great personal statement - see pages 12-13 for help
- Additional testing of literacy and numeracy may be required
- Meeting health, residency and criminal conviction requirements.



You should check the details on the university's website before you apply. Understanding more about the policy at your chosen university could help you to make the right decision for you and a strong application.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND ADMISSIONS

Universities are all different and each one has its own admissions policy and entry requirements.

At Brighton we look at each applicant as an individual. Your exam grades are important to us, but we will also take your other achievements and your strengths, talents and experiences into account. Our approach is about you as an individual, about giving you every opportunity to succeed with us and achieve your goals.

- **We welcome a range of qualifications.** These include A-levels, International Baccalaureates, BTECs and Access courses - we use the UCAS tariff to assess all kinds of achievement - academic and vocational.
- **We consider every application individually.** Our students are people who bring a huge range of different experiences, talents and strengths to our community, so make sure you use your personal statement to show us everything you have to offer.
- **We want to get to know you.** For some courses this might be through a portfolio or an interview, this gives us more opportunities to get to know more about you, your values and what motivates and inspires you.
- **We will make you a personalised offer.** For many courses you'll find that our entry requirements sit within a range. If your predicted grades are at the top of this range we will generally make you an offer. If your predicted grades are towards the lower end but you've a good GCSE profile or relevant non-academic achievements we can still make you an offer.
- **You can tailor your degree to best fit your aspirations.** Study with us and you will have opportunities to choose modules and fieldtrips, placement or volunteering opportunities. For some courses the options you choose can enable you to formally specialise and have this acknowledged in the degree title you are awarded.

Our prospectus and coursefinder should be used as a general guide to our entry requirements. You can also contact our friendly enquiries team if you have any questions about this.

Send a question to www.brighton.ac.uk/enquiries

Live chat: www.brighton.ac.uk

Tel: 01273 644644

YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

Look back at the notes you've already made in sections 1-13. These will help you draft your personal statement.

Start drafting it early, maybe during the summer break between Year 12 and Year 13. It's better to have a draft you change later than a blank page and a looming deadline.

Don't panic

Remember everyone takes at least four drafts before they're happy with it.

Writing about the course

- Why are you applying for your chosen course(s)?
- Why does this subject interest you? Talk about your understanding of the course and subject.
- Why are you suitable? Do you have any skills and experiences that will help you succeed?
- Do your current or previous studies relate to the course?
- Have you taken part in any other activities that demonstrate your interest in the course?

Work experience

Include details of any paid or unpaid jobs - this could be placements or voluntary work. Again try to link this to any skills or qualities related to the course.

Skills and achievements

Talk about any achievements in or out of school and any responsibilities you have been given that you are proud of. Mention skills or experiences that give a sense of you as an individual that demonstrate your suitability for your course and life at university. Don't forget to say that you have taken part in an activity at the University of Brighton.

Hobbies and interests

Make a list of your hobbies, interests and social activities - try to link them to the skills and experience required for the course and how they show your personality and abilities.

Future plans

If you have any ideas or ambitions about what you would like to achieve after you graduate, explain how the course will relate to that and support you to achieve this.

Tip: When you use examples try to answer these questions:

- What did you do?
- What did you learn?
- How will this help you to succeed at university or in your future career?

14. Writing about the course

15. Work experience

16. Skills and achievements

17. Hobbies and interests

18. Future plans

TOP TIPS

- ✔ Draft your statement on a computer as a document and make sure you save it as you go along
- ✔ Do make sure you check your grammar and spelling. Make use of spell check and print a copy too as this is a good way to spot mistakes. Then cut and paste into the online application when you are ready
- ✔ Remember that your finished personal statement can be up to 4,000 characters or 47 lines of text (including spaces and blank lines). Word may count the characters slightly differently to the online UCAS form, so it is a good idea to allow plenty of time to make any last minute adjustments
- ✔ Save it regularly because the online UCAS form will time out after 35 minutes of inactivity
- ✔ Do show your strengths and explain everything clearly
- ✔ Do show your enthusiasm for the course
- ✔ Do produce several drafts and make sure you are completely happy
- ✔ Do ask people to proofread and give you advice on your writing
- ✔ Do visit www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/undergraduate/filling-your-application/your-personal-statement for more tips and information
- ✘ Don't exaggerate the truth or give any false information - you may get caught out!
- ✘ Don't leave it until the last minute
- ✘ Don't copy from the web or others - you will be checked for plagiarism

TOP TIP

If you attend an interview or applicant day at a university make sure you reread your personal statement, you could be asked questions on it.

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.brighton.ac.uk

www.brighton.ac.uk/outreach

www.brighton.ac.uk/chat

www.brighton.ac.uk/enquiries

www.ucas.com

www.gov.uk/student-finance

www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator

www.moneysavingexpert.com/funding-uni

Notes

Use this space to make any extra notes

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact the University of Brighton Outreach team on the details below or visit our website.

E: outreach@brighton.ac.uk

T: 01273 641043

www.brighton.ac.uk/schoolsandcolleges



University of Brighton

Outreach