



Watford Grammar School for Girls

Parents' Guide to the UCAS process

June 2016

Your daughter will soon be applying to university and we hope this will help you to understand the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service and what is involved for your daughter.

Factors to Consider in Choosing Courses

Choice of **Subject**

- Specific career?
- Importance of transferable skills as well as the area studied.
- A subject you enjoy?
- "New" subject or continuation of A-levels?
- Link with your outside interests?

Choice of **Course**

- Course content
- Structure of course
- Methods of teaching and learning
- Type(s) of assessment
- Wide range of courses within broad subject area
- Placement year/Year abroad

Choice of **Institution**

- Entry requirements
- Reputation and teaching quality of department
- Location – distance from home, cost of travel
- City/Town/Rural
- Old or new buildings
- Campus or multi-site
- Size of institution
- Mix of departments and students
- Accommodation and cost of living
- Daily transport
- Students' destinations
- Other facilities: libraries, recreational, social

RESEARCH [From January 2015]

- **UCAS website:** www.ucas.com; use the UCAS search tool
- **Unistats website** allows you to search for and compare data and information on university and college courses from across UK. The site draws together information on those areas that students have identified as important in making decisions about what and where to study
<http://unistats.direct.gov.uk>
- University websites
- Prospectuses
- Subject and progression guides and other books in Connexions Library (gallery in school Library)
- Visits and open-days

We strongly advise students attend only two open days in school time, since missing more than two school days is likely to affect progress in A2 studies.

- Grade requirements/Typical offers – printed in prospectus and on university website; remember to check these prior to completing application.

By September 2016

Students should have five **realistic** choices or at least a 'short list' of courses/universities. They should be the same/similar/linked courses with a range of entry grade requirements. They should be prepared to go to any of these universities; it would be unwise to expect to receive offers from all of them.

Applicants may only make a maximum of **four** applications for **Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine** courses.

In **September Y13** students receive their predicted grades. It is important that your daughter is **realistic** about her choices.

UCAS PROCESS [June 2016 – August 2017]

June/July 2016 Student registers to apply online at www.ucas.com : Apply or track your application (need school buzzword).

October – December 2016

Student completes the different sections of the form online and makes payment. The fee, £24 (£13 if applicant makes only one choice), is paid on line by credit or debit card (applicant's or parent's).

School adds academic reference and submits application to UCAS.

UCAS processes application and makes it available electronically to applicant's chosen HEIs (Higher Education Institutions).

Track is the online system applicants use to keep up-to-date with the progress of their application and reply to their offers. Full details will be included in the welcome email your daughter receives from UCAS once her form has been sent.

October 2016 – March 2017 HEIs consider and make decisions

What will you hear next?

Interview/Offer (made via UCAS track)/Unsuccessful/Nothing

Every institution works differently

Your daughter must keep working at her A-levels

We strongly advise that you **do not** phone universities if she does not hear.

Types of Conditional Offer

Grade offer eg AAB in any subject or ABB (A in specific subject)

Points offer eg 300 points (see points tariff overleaf)

Applicant views decisions and manages application via Track (including updating personal information, using **Extra**, replying to offers).

Applicants who are unsuccessful in all 5 choices become eligible for **UCAS Extra** – UCAS will contact these applicants with details. (Begins in February.) **Extra** identifies unfilled places and eligible applicants can choose to apply for one of these courses on Track.

By May 2017 for most applicants

Applicant decides on 'firm' and 'insurance' offers and informs UCAS via Track.

17th August 2017

GIRLS MUST BE AT HOME – HEIs deal with **applicants** – not parents.

What happens when A level results come out?

HEIs record final decisions which applicant sees on Track

- a. If she achieves grades for 'firm' offer, she is IN.
- b. If she just misses grades for 'firm' offer – HEI *may* still accept her.
- c. If she does not achieve grades for 'firm' offer, but does for "insurance" offer, then she is IN there.
- d. If she does not get grades for her offer, she may be made an offer for a different course – she does not have to accept this.
- e. If she doesn't get grades for either and both reject her – CLEARING
If she achieves better grades than required for 'firm' offer, she is eligible for 'adjustment period' and has 5 days in which to look for an alternative course that has places available, while still holding her original choice.

A detailed document of guidance: **What to do when A level results are published** is placed on the school website prior to the publication of A level results. Students are fully briefed in school before they go on study leave.

UCAS Points Tariff 2017

<u>New tariff points</u>	<u>GCE A level</u>	<u>AS level</u>
56	A*	
48	A	
40	B	
32	C	
24		
20	D	A
16		B
12	E	C
10		D
6		E

Dates to Remember

18 th September	Oxford & Cambridge Applications
26 th September	Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine Applications
November	All other UCAS Applications
Variable	Applications for Art Foundation Courses
Early May	UCAS Decision Deadline
17 th August 2017	A Level Results

UCAS for PARENTS

To find out all about higher education and the application process, log on to www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/parents-and-guardians . (There is also a parentucas link on the bottom of the home page of the WGGS website.) You can download a copy of the Parent Guide 2017 entry and watch the video guide for parents.

The staff are here to help and support your daughter. If you wish to discuss any aspect of university admissions contact Miss Braham, Director of Sixth Form Studies, at the school.