UNIVERSITY APPLICATION PACK 2027

City of Portsmouth College

careers@copc.ac.uk

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UCAS PROCESS

1. Register for UCAS

2. Work on your application

- Complete your personal details
- Add your education history - make sure you add GCSEs, Level 2 and most importantly your current college course!
- Employment history
- Course choices
- Personal statement

3. Pay and submit your application

4. Application is checked by Careers Team

- If there are any isues we can at this stage return your form to you

5. Careers Team to add your reference from your lecturer and submit

6. Keep an eye on UCAS Hub for replies from universities

How to apply

First, register for UCAS

Website: ucas.com

Click into the following on each page:

- In the top right hand corner, select **Sign in**
- On the drop-down list select **Students**
- Under **2027 entry** click **Go to your hub**
- Click **Register**
- Complete the **short form**, tick the box and click **Register**
- **Check your email** to see an email from UCAS with a **code** to verify your email address
- Under **verify your account** enter the **code** you received in your email and click Register
- Click **Ready** to answer a few short questions -
- Enter the year you want to start your studies: click **2027**
- Select level of study: click **Undergraduate**
- Click **Next**
- Enter your **postcode** and click **Next**
- Update your preferences by ticking **Yes** or **No**
- Under mobile number enter your **mobile number**
- Select the **top three subjects** you are interested in studying
- Under **Get the right support** click **Yes**
- Click **Create account**
- Under **Your school/college** type in **City of Portsmouth College Highbury Campus**
  City of Portsmouth College Sixth Form Campus
- Click **Create account**
- Click **Go to my Hub**
- Click **Your Applications** (white box)
- Click Yes (blue circle)
- Enter the **Buzzword** input **Highbury27** or **Sixthform27** and click **Save Buzzword**
- If correct, click **Yes** in the blue circle
- Under **Select group**, pick your course and click **save**

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Key dates

College internal deadlines for Oxbridge/Medicine/ Veterinary Science applicants

- Students to have submitted a completed and checked (by College Careers Advisers) application via the UCAS Apply system by **5 October 2026**

College deadlines for Btec/A level/Access students applying for degree courses excluding those applying for Oxbridge or Medicine/Dentistry

- Students to have submitted a completed and checked (by College Careers Advisers) application via the UCAS Apply system by **28 November 2026**

External UCAS deadlines

- **2 September 2026** First date that the completed form can be sent to UCAS
- **15 October 2026** Last date for applications for Oxford and Cambridge, or for veterinary medicine, medicine and dentistry to be received by UCAS
- **13 January 2027** Last date for applications from the UK and EU residents for all other courses to be received at UCAS and to be guaranteed equal academic consideration.
- **25 February 2027** start of 'UCAS Extra'.
- **30 June 2027** Last date for the receipt of all applications for immediate consideration. Those received after this date will be held for clearing.
- **2 July 2027** Clearing opens for eligible applications.

We cannot guarantee that the applications of students who do not meet the College deadlines will be processed in time to meet UCAS deadlines.

Students who register and start applications after deadline dates need to allow two weeks.

Please note there is a **£34.50 administration fee** to UCAS when you submit your application

Free school meals application fee waiver: For the 2027 cycle, if you have been in receipt of free school meals at some point during the last six years (during your secondary or college education) up until the end of your final year, you will be eligible to have your applciation fee waived.

My Personal Statement

YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT IS YOUR CHANCE TO SELL YOURSELF TO THE UNIVERSITY. WHY THEY SHOULD PICK YOU SPECIFICALLY.

- Academics from the course will read your statement so you should be sure it is the right course for your career aspirations and that you have an understanding of the course
- You need to be positive and honest - UCAS use a plagiarism checker on applications so do not copy from the internet or something else!

USE IT AS WORKING DOCUMENT, APPROACH IT LIKE AN ESSAY

- List your ideas, expand on them, arrange in order and complete your first draft
- You could have to rearrange and redraft many times to ensure you are 100% happy!
- Think about flow and structure, each paragraph should flow into the next in a logical way.
- Think about the skills and qualities you have developed from your experience
- Use an introduction to grab their attention and a conclusion to reinforce your main point!

You have **4,000 characters** across the three questions
Ensure you cover all the main points but don't waffle!

Fill these boxes to start to get your ideas on paper

Why have you chosen this subject?
Include topics that interest you, books read, people who have inspired you.

Your current course - what you enjoy, your strengths, skills you are developing.

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Future plans - career ideas and how they relate to your university course

Work experience - part-time, voluntary or work experience - what have you gained?

Social and sporting activities - be specific and make it sound interesting. Expand if relevant to your course

Other skills and achievements - time abroad, fund-raising, Duke of Edinburgh Award

Any other information - family situation, health issues, course changes etc.

Useful websites

ucas.com
search courses and apply to university

unistats.ac.uk
compare colleges and universities

opendays.com
register online to visit universities

Check your personal statement with your tutor, friends and family.
Get advice but remember it is your statement and the final choice should be yours.

UNIFrog has a fantastic personal statement writing tool, please log into your account to access the support, you can even tag your careers adviser so they can check through for you!

My Personal Statement

Using the notes from the exercise on the previous page, you should now start forming paragraphs to fit into the three questions on the UCAS application form

Question 1 Why do you want to study this course or subject ?

Here you could discuss :

Your motivations for studying this course(s)

Your knowledge of this subject area and interests

Your future plans and why this is a good fit for you

Question 2 How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject ?

Examples of what you might talk about here are:

How your studies or training relate to your chosen course(s) or subject area

What relevant or transferable skills you have that make you a great candidate

Any relevant educational achievements

Question 3 What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful ?

Here you could talk about:

Personal life experiences, employment or volunteering

Hobbies and any extracurricular or outreach activities

Achievements outside of school or college

Post-education activities

Key points to remember

AI and ChatGPT

Generating (and then copying, pasting and submitting) all or part of your personal statement from an AI tool such as ChatGPT, and presenting it as your own words, **could be considered deceptive by universities and colleges** and could affect your chances of an offer.

When you complete your application, you now have to declare that your personal statement hasn't been copied or provided from another source, including artificial intelligence software.

The UCAS Verification Team run checks to detect fraudulent applications and patterns of similarity in personal statements. If UCAS software detects elements of a personal statement that are similar to others, the universities and colleges it is intended for will be notified.

- Always create a draft and get it checked by someone else - you can ask your tutor or one of the College's Careers Advisers to do this. Do not be surprised if you have to write several drafts before getting it completely right.
- Make sure the sentence structure, spelling and grammar are perfect. Never type directly onto the UCAS form itself - use Word so you can spell check and then cut and paste once you are happy with it.
- Never copy someone else's personal statement or use the same sentence from another personal statement. UCAS have plagiarism software which will detect any work copied from another source. If they detect plagiarism they will tell your chosen universities. This could seriously affect any offers you may or may not receive.
- Do not say too much about things that are not relevant. If you discuss a hobby or interest, try to link it to skills and qualities the Admissions Tutor will be interested in.
- Do not leave it to the last minute - your statement will seem rushed and important information could be left out.
- Make a final statement - do not let your personal statement fizzle out. Pull together what you have already said and finish on a high note !

Useful websites

General information about university

purepotential.org provides information about applying to university, finance, university life and different career choices

studential.com provides in-depth information about going to university and the application process involved

direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/index.htm information from Directgov about higher education and applying.

The Student Room

is the UK's largest online community for school, college and uni students. Find friendly and supportive discussions on everything from GCSEs to uni life, from A-levels to UCAS applications.

General information about university

unistats.com compare colleges and universities in UK. Comprised from Annual National Student Survey

whatuni.com full of essential university information and student reviews

push.co.uk a 'ruthlessly' independent guide to university

ucas.com search for courses via subject and/or region of study

education.guardian.co.uk/universityguide university league table from The Guardian

prospects.ac.uk prospects for graduate jobs, postgraduate study, advice about work experience, internship opportunities and graduate careers

Applying to university

ucas.com register online from summer 2026 for entry in September 2027 or deferred entry for September 2028

Writing your personal statement

studential.com/university/applying/UCAS-application-guide/personal-statements a guide to personal statements including advice from UCAS

Student finance

gov.uk/student-finance-register-login find out what student support is available and apply online

ucas.com/studentfinance for general information

Choosing a University

Making this choice is a really important one and here are a few things to consider when deciding which university you would like to go to:

Entry requirements

What are the grade requirements and are they in line with what you are **expecting to achieve?**

Employability and career destinations

Statistics are readily available outlining the number of graduates that go on to find jobs within six months of graduating. Try to find out as much as you can about what students studying your particular degree go on to do and whether the university you are considering helps them in any way. Most universities will have a dedicated **careers service** for students; research the services and how they might help you get a foothold in your chosen field.

What else is offered on top of the degree?

Studying will take up a majority of your time at university but remember to also consider whether you can have an active and fulfilling **social life** during your time there! University is a time to experience exciting new things and to meet new people. Check whether the university you are looking at has an active **Students Union** that effectively supports students. Are there **clubs and societies** that would give you the opportunity to play sports or pursue other interests?

What do you get to do on the course? How are you taught?

Similar courses can be taught in a variety of different ways. If you're particularly interested in spending **a year abroad** as part of your degree or enjoy the **practical elements** of learning, then make sure the university you choose gives you this option. Also, make sure the **course structure** interests you!

Make informed choices

Speak to your current **tutors or careers team** and discuss your options. They might be able to give you some useful advice and tell you which areas of your studies you could focus on to further improve your chances. You can also visit university **websites**, go to **taster days** and even **summer schools** to get an idea of what studying at university is like!

Most importantly: visit universities and see for yourself

This will be one of the most important steps in your decision making process. Go to **Open Days**, take the opportunity to **speak to lecturers and current students**; ask them about their experience at the university you are considering. **Explore the buildings** and imagine yourself there, can you see yourself living and studying there? Make sure you take a checklist of questions and you think about what you want to get out of the day beforehand so that you make the most of the experience.

Here are a few questions for you to consider	Answer
Are you going to live at home or move away?	
Are you going to live at home or move away?	
Do you want to study a degree at a local college or university?	
What kind of areas surrounds where you will be living and studying? Do you like it?	
What are the Halls of Residence/ accommodation like?	
Does the university have the right resources for the course?	
What are the study facilities and the library like?	
What are the class sizes? Does this matter to you?	
What is the university's reputation for teaching your subject? Is this important to you?	
Does the university provide the right support service for your needs?	
Where have the previous graduates from this course gone onto?	

Choosing a course

There are thousands of university courses available and narrowing these down to five on your university application can seem difficult, but it doesn't have to be! You can start by thinking about what you enjoy doing, where your skills lie and what you're passionate about. Could you see yourself learning about this subject for the next three or four years and can you envisage yourself embarking on a career that is related to it?

What would I be studying exactly?

The question of course content is an important one. So, you might know that you want to study modern history but you would be wrong in thinking that studying modern history at one university would be exactly the same as studying it at another. The reality is that within this wider degree course, each university History department will offer **very different modules**, depending on the interests and specialisms of its staff. For example, there are over 100 different modern history courses on offer in England alone and no two of those will be identical!
Research is key in finding out which courses are out there so spend as much time as possible looking at university websites to get a feel for what kinds of courses are available and which of those might appeal to you. Consider whether you would like your course to have any added elements such as a **year in industry or a year abroad**. If you are torn between wanting to study two different subjects, check university websites to see whether there is the possibility of doing a joint honours degree which would allow you to study two subjects rather than just one. If, for example, you would like to study history but also have an interest in education then look into whether any universities offer a joint honours degree in Education and History and what doing this degree would entail.

You can choose a vocational degree course if you want to go into professions such as teaching, medicine, law or engineering. Do consider that for a majority of jobs beyond this sphere, employers are looking for graduates with good communication skills and an accurate grasp of literacy and numeracy, that can adapt quickly to new situations and have the confidence and tenacity to succeed. Add a good class of degree and relevant work experience and there are any number of jobs that you would be qualified for. It's perfectly alright to be unsure about the exact career you want to embark on, just make sure that the course you choose is one that **you are interested in** and that you think you can excel at if given the right help and guidance.

Here are a few questions for you to consider	Answer
What do you enjoy?	
What do you achieve well in?	
Can you specialise in an area your current course covers?	
Do you want a course that covers a range of subjects?	
What kind of assessments do you prefer? (Each university assesses differently!)	
Do you want the opportunity to do a work placement or study abroad?	
What are the entry requirements for your chosen course, do you think you'll meet them?	

Useful websites:

- Individual university websites
- ucas.com - university/course search and apply
- opendays.com
- whatuni.com
- discoveruni.gov.uk

LEAGUE TABLES WILL HELP AS A GUIDE TO INFORM YOU WHICH UNIVERSITIES ARE CONSIDERED THE BEST FOR CERTAIN TYPES OF COURSES:

- thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk
- timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings
- theguardian.com/education/universityguide

Student Finance

Tuition Fee Loan

The majority of UK universities charge the maximum tuition fees of £10,050 per year for a degree course for students living in England. The costs can vary, depending on your choice of university and course, so it's a good idea to check the websites of the universities you are interested in. But don't worry, you don't need to turn up at university with a suitcase full of cash! The cost of your degree is initially covered by the Student Loans Company, which pays your university directly on your behalf. You only start paying back the cost of your degree once you have a job and are earning a certain amount per year (currently £25,000). Only 9% of any earnings above £25,000 will be used to pay back your tuition fee loan, which is cheaper than the cost of a monthly phone contract! The money is taken straight from your monthly pay packet and if you don't pay your loan off within 30 years, it's cleared altogether!

Maintenance Loans (and other funding opportunities)

If you need financial support whilst you're studying at university, you can apply for a maintenance loan which is paid to you at the beginning of each term. The amount you get depends on a number of factors such as your household income, where you live and what you're studying. Most universities also offer scholarships to students based on academic achievements or personal circumstances or bursaries dependent on household income; neither of which you pay back. These funding opportunities are promoted widely on university websites so do your research and you might discover that there are extra funds available that you might be eligible for! Additionally, if you have any disabilities you may be eligible to apply for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) which is a grant you don't need to repay.

Healthcare Bursaries

Great news! If you're interested in studying a healthcare subject, the government will supply you with additional funding if you're starting your course from September 2020. This includes:

- A non-repayable payment of £5000 to eligible students each academic year payable in termly instalments
- Additional payments worth up to a total of £3000 per academic year for students in specialisms or regions struggling to recruit or to help students cover childcare costs.
- Eligible students can continue to apply for the Learning Support Fund.
- Further details are available at: https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/learning-support-fund/new-student-funding

You can apply if you're studying one of these courses at an English university from September 2020: Dietetics, Dental Hygiene/Dental Therapy (L5, L6), Midwifery, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Operating Department Practice (L5, L6), Orthoptics, Orthotics and Prosthetics, Paramedicine, Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Chiropody, Radiography, Speech and Language Therapy.

How to apply

Student Finance England

Student Finance England is the website you use to apply for the tuition fee and maintenance loans. You can apply for the tuition fee and maintenance loan, at the same time using the same application form. If you are entitled to DSA you can also apply for this here too.You can also keep an eye on the Student Finance England social media accounts where information is regularly updated. All this information is below:

- Website: **gov.uk/student-finance-register-login**
- X: **@SFE_England**
- Facebook: **@SFEngland**

For more advice and support about student loans, please talk to the Careers Team in the Student Hub

Higher and Degree Apprenticeships

Lectures, seminars and classrooms aren't for everyone, a lot of people achieve their 'learning' from the 'doing'. Apprenticeships offer the chance to **combine practical on the job training as well as getting paid a salary**. This allows apprentices to gain experience in a work environment; improving their chances of getting a job once they've achieved their qualification. During an apprenticeship, **practical training and wages are paid for by the employer**. The 'studying' bit is overseen by a college, training organization or university. Employers look out for certain skills and qualities when searching for an apprentice (they can be improved and perfected while studying an apprenticeship!) These skills include: enthusiasm, creativity, team-working, attention to detail, motivation, communication.. and many more! You can see where employers upload their vacancies onto the 'Find an Apprenticeship' website: **gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship**

Similarities between University and Apprenticeships

- **Both routes require** prior research in order to pick the right job/course for whoever is applying
- **Places can be competitive**, prospective students/apprentices should schedule some time to research how to make the most of their application in order to give themselves the best chance
- There are minimum entry requirements to consider

Higher Apprenticeships Level 4-7

equivalent to a foundation degree & above

A higher apprenticeship can take from one to five years to complete and involve part-time study at a college, training provider or university (mentioned below). If you complete a higher apprenticeship, you will be awarded with a Level 4+ qualification. According to government figures, **90% of apprentices in England stayed on in employment after completing their qualification; 71% with the same employer**. If the company doesn't employ you after qualifying, or you decide to move on, you will be a highly employable candidate for other companies. Competition for higher apprenticeships can be tough - partly because there are often only a limited number of vacancies, but also because school/college leavers and adults already in employment can apply for them. Something to bear in mind when applying, we recommend applying for a few!

Degree Apprenticeships Level 6-7

equivalent to a bachelors or master's degree

A Degree Apprenticeship allows you to work towards, and achieve, a fully recognised degree by combining part-time university study and full-time paid work. There are new programmes being developed all the time by employers and universities, s some universities will require you to find your place of employment first. University Degree Apprenticeship teams work with employers to put together the apprenticeships, then promote them across apprenticeship vacancy platforms. You can also look at what course a university offers, contact companies within that industry to see if they are interested in taking on apprentices, then suggest the university that offers the desired degree. Remember that with degree apprenticeships, the same level of job will need to be attached. You won't be leaving college and working at degree level straight away, just like full-time university study you are working towards it!

Useful websites

- **Find an apprenticeship**
- **Amazing apprenticeships**
- **National Careers Service**
- **Prospects .ac.uk**

If you would like to discuss apprenticeships at COPC please complete this form:
https://shorturl.at/4RKQQ

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Careers Hub

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