

DISCOVERY COLLEGE

PART OF YMCA PLYMOUTH



Discovery College

UCAS Application Guide 2019/20



YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

SUPPORT & ADVICE

ACCOMMODATION

FAMILY WORK

HEALTH & WELLBEING

TRAINING & EDUCATION

UNDERTAKING YOUR UCAS APPLICATION FOR UNIVERSITY.

Thinking about studying for a degree?

You're now starting to think about applying to University, that maybe locally (e.g. Plymouth Uni) or away from home. This process can be daunting, but it is important to explore how your studies will fit into your long-term career aims.

When deciding on a degree to study, take the opportunity to see what career possibilities are available. Check out any occupations and ask yourself... **will this suit you?** For example, don't decide that you would prefer to do a degree in Sport without considering what jobs will be available to you following your degree.

At this point, you will need to check the University admissions requirements (**UCAS Points**) for the subject/s of your choice. For example, if you wish to study a degree in 'BSC (Hons) Sport & Exercise Science' at University of St Mark & St John you must achieve BTEC triple grades MMM, UCAS points equivalent of 96 (**See BTEC/UCAS posters in CR1-6**).

Additional qualifications may also be required to secure your University place (e.g. Maths & English – Grade 'C'). You can get further advice on what course may suit you by speaking to Kirsten (Discovery's Deputy Head) or alternatively the UCAS website (**www.ucas.com**) which supports you with all aspects of University applications.

There are several reasons why people decide to study for a degree, for example;

- Mandatory training for a career in fields such as medicine, engineering & law.
- Motivated by an interest in a subject
- Desire to improve your career prospects.

Make sure you are clear about what you'll gain from your time at University. Don't think solely about your studies, but also about student life (Living arrangements / distance from home / family / friends / social activities / clubs etc).

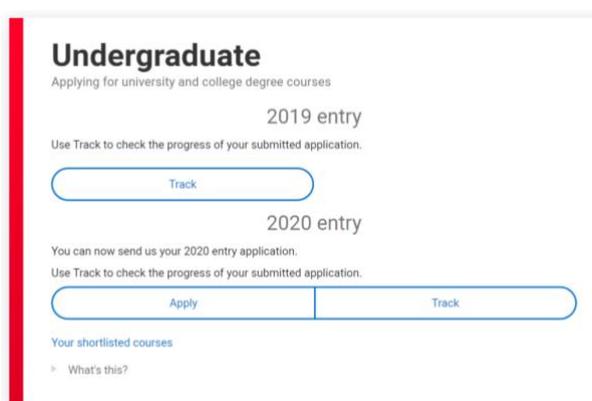
When to apply

In short, **NOW!** Discovery staff have experience of supporting our students through the UCAS application process. Therefore, please discuss your application with your tutor as soon as you start. However, for entry in 2020, UCAS starts processing applications from September 2019. Universities guarantee to consider your application if received by the 15th January 2020, or 15th October 2019 for certain courses (Oxford & Cambridge).

If UCAS receive your application after the deadline date, but before 30 June 2020, the Universities may consider it, but they don't have to. After the 1st July 2020 it will go directly into Clearing. If you want to take a "gap year" (a year out before starting your course), you must check that the university or college will accept a deferred entry application. If you apply for deferred entry in 2020, you must meet the conditions by 31 August 2021. See <http://www.ucas.com/apply/key-dates>. You can only send one UCAS application in each year's application cycle. If you are interested in going to University **apply as early as possible!** Research your choices carefully and select the best courses for you.

Applying Online

When applying for a University course you will need to use the UCAS online service '**Apply**'. Apply is a secure, web-based application system which is available 24 hours a day. It can be used anywhere where there is access to the internet, which gives you the flexibility to fill in your application where and when it suits you. To apply online you should access the Student login link. Apply via web page www.ucas.com/students - **You should click on the 'Undergraduate' and apply for '2020 entry'**.



The screenshot shows the UCAS 'Undergraduate' application page. It features a red vertical bar on the left. The main content area is titled 'Undergraduate' and includes the text 'Applying for university and college degree courses'. There are two sections for entry: '2019 entry' and '2020 entry'. Each section has a 'Track' button. Below the '2020 entry' section, there is an 'Apply' button and a 'Track' button. At the bottom, there is a section for 'Your shortlisted courses' with a 'What's this?' link.

A log-in page will be displayed on which you will need to click **Register**. The registration process is free and will take approximately fifteen minutes. After registering you will be given a username and you must also choose a password (**WRITE IT DOWN – record on you phone**), which you will need to use to enter your application.

The UCAS website includes a ‘How To’ visual guide under the ‘Undergraduate’ Tab, which is a step-by-step guide to registering and applying. During registration, you will be asked to enter some personal details and indicate if you are applying through a school or college, or if you are applying as an individual. If you are applying through a school or college, you will need to obtain a **BUZZWORD** from them. A **BUZZWORD** is a word or phrase that is supplied to you by your school, college or other education provider, which you will need to be able to register. Discovery’s Student Liaison Officer (Nicole) will be able to help you with this. **(E.g. All Saints Academy students – ASAP2020). NEETS Students – your classed as an independent learner (No Buzzword).**

Do not try and complete your application in one go. Little and often is the best policy, you will be able to use your username and password to log in to your application multiple times and enter more information each time you log on. **You will not** be able to add any further information to your application when you have completed and sent it, so take your time and always **RE-CHECK!!**

Your completed UCAS application will be redirected to your school, or Discovery College so that a reference can be attached. Once a reference is complete, your application will be returned to UCAS – see Nicole for school contacts. Once your application is completed and sent off together with a reference, it will be processed and sent by UCAS to your chosen universities or colleges for consideration.

Payment

Applicants UCAS fees can be paid online by credit or debit card, or a mixture of both. If you have only entered one course at one university or college in the courses section, your application fee will be £20.

If you have entered more than one choice (2-5) in the courses section, your application fee will be £25. If your application is received by UCAS after the 30 June 2020 the fee will be £25. Fees are paid online via a Debit/Credit card.

Course Choices

You can **choose up to five courses** which will be arranged into alphabetical order. Each University or College will only have the details of their course or courses that you have applied for. They will not know about your other choices at other institutions.

Previous Courses – Chosen by previous Discovery Students.

- BA in Police Studies Duchy college
- BA (Hons) in Business Management Plymouth University
- BA (Hons) Sports Writing and Broadcasting at Staffordshire University (2-year Fast Track)
- BSc (Hons) Sports Science and Coaching at Marjons University
- BHSc (Hons) Physiotherapy at York St John University
- BSc (Hons) Sport, Coaching and Exercise Science at Manchester Metropolitan University

Education details

You will be required to provide the name, centre number (if applicable), start date, finish date and type of attendance for the most recent secondary schools, colleges or education providers you have attended/studied with.

You must also provide details for the following qualifications to help universities and colleges consider your application:

- All qualifications for which you have accepted certification from an awarding body, even if you are retaking all or part of the qualification

- All qualifications for which you are currently studying or for which you are awaiting examination results

The entry screens for many of the qualifications will include an “add module/ unit” or “add subject”. When these buttons are displayed at the bottom of the screen, you must use them to provide full details for all the subjects, modules and units that form part of your qualifications.

Make sure that all information you provide is complete and accurate. UCAS will match the qualifications information on your application with the records of exam entries and the results you get from the awarding bodies, which set and mark your exam papers.

UCAS are then able to send your results to the universities and colleges where you are holding the offer of a place. They can then decide if you have met the entry conditions.

If UCAS cannot match the information you give them to results, there may be a delay in this process and there is also the risk that applications that contain qualifications that cannot be checked against awarding body results may be considered fraudulent and cancelled.

If you are studying or have taken a BTEC, enter your BTEC Registration Number. If you do not know it, ask the Student Liaison Officer (Nicole).

Employment details

If you have done any paid full-time or part time work, you must provide the job titles, employer names and addresses and the dates of employment. You should make it clear if the position was full or part-time.

Personal details

When you open this section of your application you should find that UCAS have used the information you have already provided to complete many of the sections. You will

have to enter information in to the other sections that are relevant to you. If a section is not applicable to you, leave it blank.

Personal Statement – Sell Your Self!!!!

Your personal statement is your opportunity to tell universities and colleges why they should want you as a student. A good personal statement is important as it will underpin your application. Admissions officers will want to know why you are interested in the courses you have applied for and what you hope to do after your studies. In many cases, applicants will not be interviewed, so this may be your only opportunity to make a case for your admission.

You should consider carefully the information you wish to give in your personal statement. Think about the best way to present it effectively while being truthful and accurate and remember that, although each university or college that you have applied to cannot see your other choices, they will all see your personal statement. You should include:

- What interests you about your chosen subject? Include details of what you have read about the subject.
- What career plans you have for when you complete your course.
- Any job, work experience, placement or voluntary work you have done, particularly if it is relevant to your subject. You may want to give the skills and experience you have gained from these activities.
- Any involvement in widening participation schemes, such as summer schools or mentoring activities.
- Details of non-accredited skills and achievement that you have gained through activities such as ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network awards);
 - Diploma of Achievement
 - Duke of Edinburgh's Award
 - Sports Leaders' Awards
 - **National Citizenship Service (NCS)**
 - Millennium Volunteers Scheme
 - Young Enterprise
 - Your future plans



- Any subjects you are studying that do not have a formal assessment
- Any sponsorship or placements you have or have applied for
- If you are planning to take a year out, your reasons why
- Your social, sports or leisure interests

***You should not underestimate the value of your social team sports. It should provide you with previous experiences which Admissions Officers should consider with any application. You should ensure that you present the experience you've had at your local sports club in a positive way that an educational institution will appreciate and value.**

The skills below are an important guide as to the abilities that you can bring to the table when making your application. You should also try to link what interests you in your chosen subject with any experience (if possible) and establish how this may impact on future career aspirations you may have. Think of the skills you have developed during your Apprenticeship both academic and football related.

Here are some to get you started:

- Adapting to different circumstances and environments
- Articulating ideas and thoughts verbally and in writing
- Improved communication skills
- Knowledge of the world of work
- Motivational skills
- Organisational skills
- Planning time effectively
- Presenting information in a form appropriate to a given situation (a piece of coursework, a coaching demonstration, leading a talk in a group discussion)
- Problem solving
- Reading, analysing and combining vast amounts of material



- Taking the initiative/responsibility for tasks
- Thinking originally and imaginatively
- Working independently
- Working in a team
- Working under pressure and to deadlines
- Working unusual/erratic hours

You can enter up to 4,000 characters, including spaces, for your personal statement. When you save text, the system will automatically tell you how many more characters are still available, or if you have used too many characters. You can view the layout and format of any text you have entered after you have saved it.

You should prepare your personal statement offline using a word-processing package and copy and paste this into the Apply system. This is because Apply will time-out after 35 minutes of inactivity. If you enter your personal statement directly into Apply, you must save it to prevent your work being lost.

Reference

Once you have checked that your personal details, your choices, your education and employment details and your personal statement are all completed, you can then send your application online to your referee (Your referee will normally be one of your current tutors / however it doesn't have to be).

Before providing a reference, your referee will check your application and may ask you to make amendments to the information you have provided. After providing a reference, your referee will approve your application and send it to UCAS via your school.



What UCAS do with your Application

UCAS use the information you have provided on the online application system and send your application details to each of the universities and colleges that you have selected.

Each university and college will only have the

details of the course or courses that you have applied for at that university or college.

They will not be told what your other choices were until after you have replied to your offers. Universities and colleges must not ask you for details about your other choices.

UCAS will also write to you and provide you with your Personal ID, username for Track and a list of your choices. You will be able to view your application in 'Track' using your Personal ID and the same username and password you used originally.

Each university or college you have chosen will decide whether to make you an offer. They may ask you to achieve certain exam results. When you have received a decision for all your choices, UCAS will ask you to decide which offers, if any, you want to hold while you wait for your results. You can only hold up to two offers.

University and College offers

A course offer by the University of your choice should tell you the course start date. You will be made either an '**Unconditional Offer**' or a '**Conditional Offer**'.

An Unconditional offer means you've already met the entrance requirements of the University and that they are happy to have you on the course. They will contact you if they require proof of your qualifications and the offer may also have other conditions (e.g. medical or financial) that you will have to meet before you can enrol on the course.

A Conditional offer means that the offer is based on you meeting certain conditions (e.g. achieving certain exam results or attain a certain number of UCAS Tariff points). You will be required to meet these conditions of your offer by the 31 August 2020 even if your offer is deferred for entry onto a course in 2021.

A guide to when you can expect decisions on your choices

See website: www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/apply-and-track/key-dates

Replying to offers

When all the universities or colleges have made decisions on whether to offer you a place and you receive at least one offer, UCAS will email you to let you know there has been a change to your application and ask you to look on Track.

If you haven't provided a valid email address, you will receive a letter which will ask you to reply to your offers. If you receive some offers that you wish to accept you do not have to wait for decisions from your other choices. You will be able to use **Track** on the UCAS website to cancel the choices you are waiting to hear back from.

When you receive your 'Replying to Offers' email or letter please ensure that you reply at the very latest by the deadline given on the email or letter.

If you miss this date your offers will be withdrawn.

You will be asked to reply to each offer in the following way:

- Firm acceptance **(F)**
- Insurance acceptance **(I)**
- Decline **(D)**

Offer and reply combinations	
Unconditional firm (UF)	You're in!
Conditional firm (CF)	You're in if you meet the conditions.
Conditional firm (CF) and conditional insurance (CI)	You've made a first and second choice – you'll be in at the first if you meet the conditions. If not you might have met the conditions for the second – if so you'll be on that course instead.
Conditional firm (CF) and unconditional insurance (UI)	You've made a first and second choice – if you meet the conditions of the first you'll be on that course. If not you'll definitely be on the second.

How to make your replies

When your last decision comes in we'll send an email as usual to say there's an update (or a letter advising you about replying).

- Then you go to **Track** to make your replies.
- You'll have a deadline shown in **Track** to do this by – how much time you have depends on the time of year, varying from a week to five weeks.



Tuition Fees

Tuition fees are charged by the universities and colleges to cover the cost of your studies. The fees vary depending on the type of course you will be taking and which university or college you will be attending. You can find more information on the student finance page of UCAS.

You will be able to take out a student loan to cover the tuition fees charged by your university or college.

Student Loans & Grants

There are two types of student loan available. One to help cover the cost of tuition fees and one to help cover your living expenses (rent, bills, food etc.).

Depending on where you live, your application will be processed either by your local authority (LA) or the Student Loans Company (SLC). You can apply by paper or online.

Once your application has been processed, you will get a letter telling you how much you will receive. As it can be quite a long process, it is important to apply early. The deadline for new students is the end of June, so the sooner you can apply the better. Both types of student loan are available to all students who meet the basic eligibility requirements. More information about student finance and how to apply for Student Loans, grants and bursaries can be found at; www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Students from lower-income households may be entitled to a special support grant or maintenance grant each year. How much you get will depend on your income and that of your household. For the full guidance please visit www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance



Useful Contacts for application:

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service	www.ucas.ac.uk
Direct Gov	www.directgov.uk
Student Finance Wales	www.studentfinancewales.co.uk
The Student Awards Agency for Scotland	www.student-support-saas.gov.uk
Student Finance Northern Ireland	www.studentfinanceni.co.uk
National Union of Students	www.nus.org.uk
The Professional Footballers Association	www.givemefootball.com
The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education	www.qaa.ac.uk
Unistats – Compare UK Universities and Colleges	www.unistats.com
The Council for Industry and Higher Education	www.cihe-uk.com
The Times Higher Education Supplement	www.timeshighereducation.co.uk
The Independent	www.independent.co.uk/student

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

UNIVERSITY/s INTERESTED IN - (university code) =

COURSE/s INTERESTED IN (course code/s) =

PERSONAL STATEMENT written on Microsoft Word first & then checked by your tutor before you submit it.

TEACHERS REFERENCE this will be written once all the other areas have been completed adequately.