

## Thinking of going to uni?

Higher education (HE) gives you the opportunity to expand your knowledge on a subject you're passionate about, or help you work towards the job of your dreams. However, it's not just about learning – it's a great experience and helps you to develop the essential skills and knowledge that you will need for your future working life. Higher education qualifications are internationally recognised, and there is plenty of evidence that graduates have increased earning potential – but you do need to be motivated to study and learn.

**The first thing to do, if you haven't already, is make sure you sign up to [UCAS Hub](#)**

Your [UCAS Hub](#) will give you all the tools and information you need – in one place. We can then guide you to the information you need. You can easily explore, filter, and favourite the things which matter to you most. The best bit is that you'll have your own dashboard, which you can customise and tailor to suit you, and you can organise the tools that help you most, remove the ones you don't need, make notes, and tick off things on your to do list.

### How do I sign up?

The UCAS Hub is free and easy to use. All you need to do is follow these three simple steps to sign up:

#### Step 1 – Register

To get started, visit [ucas.com/hub](https://ucas.com/hub).

#### Step 2 – Verify your account

Once you've registered, you'll be asked to verify your account. An email will be sent to the email address you registered with and all you need to do is hit '**Activate account**'.

#### Step 3 – Sign in

Now you're ready to sign in and start exploring! The first time you do, we'll ask you some extra questions so we can help you find the right info.

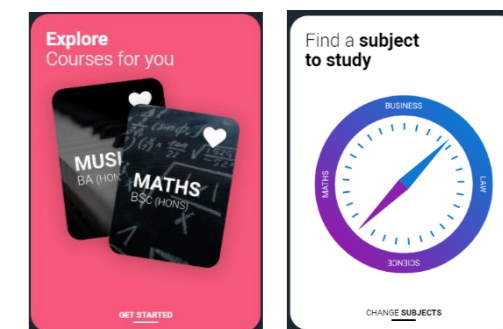
At any time to pick up where you left off, visit [ucas.com/hub](https://ucas.com/hub) or click '**Sign in**' on the top right hand side of any page on [ucas.com](https://ucas.com) and select '**Students**'.

## Activity 1: Explore, explore, explore

Think about your favourite subject or the fact you might find something entirely new. You might have a specific career goal in mind. Or you might still be unsure. The best place to start – is with an open mind. To help you understand if what you're studying might be a good fit, and to check if you need any specific subjects or qualifications for your career goals – sign in to your UCAS Hub and get started.

**A) Explore:** Use the 'Explore' tool to search our detailed subject guides. These will give you a description of:

- what the subject is all about
- entry requirements
- what you can do with a degree in the subject
- what it's like to study
- apprenticeships that also might be available



**B) Find a subject to study:** Use the 'Find a subject to study' tool to give you some inspiration. It will give you some idea of what people like you have applied for in the past. Use the information to help you explore new ideas. Click on each of the subject links to learn more through the specific subject guides.



Remember to favourite anything you find in the Hub that you're interested in by clicking on the heart; that way you can come back to it easily at any time. You will need to do this when you're researching specific courses you might like to study. You can also pin any page from [ucas.com](https://ucas.com) to your dashboard this way too.

## Activity 2: University life – what's important to you?

Along with thinking about the type of subject you might like to study, it's important to think about how uni will fit with you.

The reality is, no one university is 'best' for everyone. You need to consider what type of university you want to attend; the experience can vary enormously. Here are some things to consider, make a note of your responses to some of these questions so you can come back to this when you're doing more detailed research on your choices.

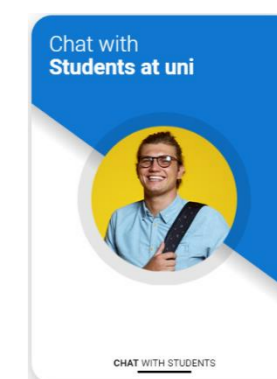
Factor	Things to think about	What is important to you?
<b>Style and size</b>	<p>Universities can have a focus on subject-based courses and research, or a greater focus on vocational courses. Do you have a preference?</p> <p>Do you want to study at a campus university (all in one place) or one that is spread out across a town/city with different locations?</p> <p>Some larger universities can have more than 20,000 students, whereas some of the smallest have only a few thousand. What would suit you best?</p>	
<b>Location</b>	<p>Some are based in large cities, others in smaller towns. This can have a major influence on the environment and lifestyle on offer.</p> <p>Do you want to live at home? If not, how far away do you want to be?</p> <p>Would you rather be in a city, countryside, or near the sea? Is the local surrounding area important? What would you like to have access to? E.g. museums, nightlife, walks, parks etc.</p> <p>How will you travel around? Do you want to take a car? Will you need access to a train station/airport?</p>	
<b>Culture and facilities</b>	<p>This can be influenced by a range of factors, including the diversity of students who attend.</p> <p>What teams, clubs, or societies could you take part in? Can you continue to pursue a current hobby or interest?</p> <p>Are the facilities important to you? What would you like to access? e.g. library, sporting facilities, students union.</p> <p>Are there any specialist services you need access to?</p>	

<b>Graduate and career services</b>	<p>All universities collect destination statistics which is where students then go on to. It can be interesting to find out the types of jobs or further study students choose.</p> <p>Is it important that they offer comprehensive career services? E.g. interview training help with job applications.</p> <p>Do you want the opportunity to have a placement year or internship opportunity?</p> <p>What about the chance to study abroad?</p>	
<b>Costs</b>	<p>Tuition fees can vary between course providers. How might you pay for university? Would you be looking to try and access a scholarship or bursary?</p> <p>What type of accommodation would you like? Halls of residence? Off campus living? Shared? Think about longer term too not just for your first year when you might be in student halls.</p> <p>How will you travel to and from lectures? Would this influence the type of accommodation you would like?</p> <p>What transport options are there? Would you be able to take a car (if that's important to you)?</p> <p>Think about other costs you might have such as socialising, food, clothes, study materials. Different regions of the country will vary in cost.</p>	

**Activity 3: So what is uni really like?**

Hopefully you should now have a rough idea of what you might be interested in studying and what's important to you. The best way to explore the unis themselves is to visit – which is, of course, a little trickier right now. But don't worry, there are still plenty of ways to find out what university life is really like. So, complete the tasks below to find out more and help you make your decisions. Remember to use what you have identified as important to you as a guide.

- A) **Unibuddy:** A great way to learn more about what life is really like. You can choose a uni, degree subject, or select by their home country. Ask the ambassadors anything, and learn more about why they chose to do their specific course at that specific university.
- B) **Virtual tours:** Take a [virtual tour](#) on [ucas.com](#) so you can see what it's like on campus and what facilities are available. Now is the time to really do your research, you aren't limited to the number of tours you can take, so spend some time exploring as many as possible. If the uni/college you're interested in isn't listed, then take a look at their website or YouTube channel instead, or see if they're on Unibuddy.com.
- C) **Virtual open day:** UCAS are listing uni and college [virtual and digital events](#), to help you learn more about what they're like. They will involve different things such as live chats, virtual subject booths, virtual taster days, webinars, and more. It's a great opportunity to visit as many universities and colleges as you can without having to do all the travel. So, book onto a couple to find out generally what university might be like. Don't worry about specific courses at this stage (unless you already know), it's about working out if higher education is right for you.
- D) **Social media:** Check out uni's social feeds. Many are promoting live chats, and extra info to help students find out more.



**UCAS TOP TIP: Use the to do list in your Hub to track your progress through your research. Try and work out what's important to you and what you need to do in order to make the right decision.**