

## United Kingdom

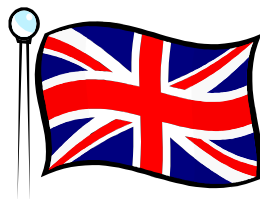
There are two major kinds of degree-awarding institutions offering higher education in the UK:

- Universities—traditionally regarded as the centers of academic learning and offer a wide variety of courses.
- Colleges and Institutions of Higher Education—generally smaller than universities and may concentrate on a specific fields of study such as education, art or music.

British universities are divided into several categories that are useful to know about.

- Oxford and Cambridge—have a unique status and different entrance system than all other schools. A student can apply to Oxford or Cambridge but not both. The UCAS application plus supplemental forms and submissions must be completed **before October 15.**
- Red Brick universities—sometimes called 'civic' universities. These were mainly built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and include schools such as Bristol, Leeds, Birmingham, Liverpool, Sheffield and Manchester. These are very competitive for entrance and the degree programs tend to be less flexible than the newer universities.
- "New" universities—built in the 1960's such as York, Sussex, Essex, East Anglia. These vary in competitiveness. Programs at these schools tend to be more flexible and often interdisciplinary.
- "Technology" universities—also founded in the 1960's such as Brunel and Aston. These schools offer very highly regarded degrees in pre-professional fields. Admissions may be very competitive.
- New universities, former "Polytechnics"—these schools were granted university status in 1992. These tend to have a strong industrial or commercial links and often offer more applied and vocational courses using the sandwich program. These offer more science, technology, design and business oriented courses. Many have strong job placement records with industry. These tend to be less competitive for admissions and have a wider variety of students enrolling in their programs
- Scottish universities—usually offer four year programs that tend to be broader based than other UK courses. Edinburgh and St. Andrews are very competitive.

Undergraduate degrees usually take three years to complete although some institutions offer special four year programs for students whose high school qualifications do not meet university requirements. In these cases, some universities may require an applicant to complete a "foundation year" before enrolling in the full degree program. Professional courses such as medicine, dentistry and architecture may take up to seven years to complete.

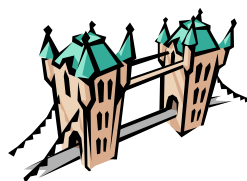


Admission requirements to colleges/universities in Great Britain are often selective. In the U.K., each institution sets its own standards for admission and individually reviews the applicants. Some are more rigid while others are more flexible. Most universities will list requirements based on tariff points, the GCE, AS or A level exam results but accept other types of assessment (IB diploma). Some schools in the UK are now expecting students to take and score well on the SAT/Subject Tests if the student is attending an American high school in the United States (or ASW). Students must consult the university to determine admissions requirements. The best way to find out about a particular school is to visit their website and to write to their admissions office directly.

If wanting to apply to the UK, it is best to identify the course of study first, then the university. The UCAS site on the web allows for searches which will produce universities offering the selected course of study. Career intentions should be considered as there is not much flexibility in the UK course program once enrolled in university. University prospectuses can be checked out of the Counseling Library or seen online. If an IB diploma candidate, IB qualifications are usually listed on the UCAS web site.

All students wanting to apply to a university in the UK will do so through a clearing house called **UCAS** (Universities and Colleges Admissions Services). A completed application form is used to apply to up to five universities. UCAS ([www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)) will then distribute applications to those schools for their decisions. Supportive materials can be sent by the student directly to the universities. The application will be completed online and submitted electronically. A credit card is needed to cover the cost of application. Applications should be submitted in the fall term of the senior year, between mid-October, and mid-December (See page 18-19). The deadline for applying to **Oxford, Cambridge or any medical, dental or veterinary courses** in the UK is **October 15**. Please note that admissions to any medical, veterinary or dental program for a non-UK citizen is next to impossible. In addition, oral and written exams and an interview may be required at some schools.

Students will receive an unconditional acceptance, conditional acceptance or unsuccessful response from universities. Final decisions will be based on the successful completion of grades and IB exams. Students, who are unsuccessful in all of the applications first submitted, may participate in Extra or Clearing--a process through UCAS where students can identify which colleges/universities still have openings in particular areas of study.



## United Kingdom University Web Sites

### Universities and Colleges Admissions Services

The application website for UK universities; extensive information on UK universities and programs including admissions requirements, course searches and location guides. ([www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk))

### Department for Education and Skills

Our aim is to give children an excellent start in education, enable young people to equip themselves with life and work skills, and encourage adults to achieve their full potential through learning. (<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/index.htm>)

### UK Universities and Colleges

An alphabetical list of universities and colleges in the United Kingdom. This is derived from the same data base as the UK academic sites active map. (<http://www.scit.wlv.ac.uk/ukinfo/alpha.html>)

### The Times Good University Guide

This describes UK universities and gives rankings for universities by course of study. (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/section/>)

### The Guardian University Guide

This is an interactive guide to universities and colleges. League tables, used for comparisons, are available. Searches can be done by subject/course. (<http://education.guardian.co.uk/universityguide2004/> )

### Hotcourses

Start with course of study and find UK universities that have your major. ([www.hotcourses.com](http://www.hotcourses.com))

### Open Days

Find out all you need to know about open days at the university or college of your choice. Browse the university and college open day calendar. Find out what goes on at an open day. Check out the advice for helpful tips and suggestions. ([www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com))

