

Exploring future paths with students

Laura Whitelock (University of York)
Josh Shapland (University of Bristol)

Today we will cover:

What options are available in RGIs?
(with Laura)

- Top tips for choosing a course
- Types of courses
- Alternative entry options

Admissions to RGIs
(with Josh)

- Understanding entry requirements
- Widening participation and contextual offers



Top Tips

3 top tips for choosing a course

1. Research courses available - new subjects, combined courses etc.
2. Compare content of similar courses
3. How do students want to learn?
Work experience, specialists institutions, year abroad etc.



3 top tips for managing student expectations

1. Don't limit students' potential by "putting them in a box"
2. Be realistic with them and give them all the options available
3. Think about back-ups with students in case things don't go to plan





Types of courses

BA or BSc

BA (Bachelor of Arts)

- Tend to explore theoretical and creative ideas about subjects
- Mainly include debate, discussion, and sharing ideas
- Will include subjects such as: English, History, Music, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology.

BSc (Bachelor of Science)

- Focus on research, data and analytical skills
- Mainly include scientific approaches and fact
- Will include subjects such as: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Maths.

What if a subject offers both BA and BSc?

Some subjects may have multiple approaches they can take, and so may offer a BA or BSc option. Both earn a degree of the same value.

→ Subjects may include:
Archaeology, Business,
Geography, Psychology

Advise students to think about what they wish to learn, and how they wish to learn it.

For example: A BA in Geography will focus on Human Geography, cultures and society, whereas a BSc in Geography will focus on Physical Geography, and research.

Combined courses and joint honours

Combined courses

- Students choose 3 to 4 subjects to study in one degree
- Popular examples include:
 - Natural Sciences
 - Liberal Arts
 - PPE (Philosophy, Politics, Economics)

Joint honours

- Tend to split two subjects 50/50
- Popular examples include:
 - Physics and Maths
 - Computer Science and Maths
 - English and History
 - Politics and History
 - Economics and Philosophy

“With” subjects

Major/Minor Model

Some courses may follow a major/minor model where students “major” in the first subject and “minor” in the second subject.

Examples include:

Politics with International Relations

Philosophy with Spanish

Specialisms

In other cases, the “with” may be referring to a specialism within the course that students will have more focus on than the standard degree.

Examples include:

Physics with Astrophysics

Computer Science with AI

Integrated masters

These course last for 4 years, rather than 3. Students graduate once with a Masters level degree, usually in STEM subjects.

Students receive undergraduate funding for whole 4 years, and do not need to apply for a Masters later.





Alternative entry routes

Gateway courses and foundation years

Gateway Course

Primarily used for Medicine-related courses, if students have not achieved the correct subjects or grades. It starts with a gateway year to upskill students before joining the standard 5 year Medicine course.

Foundation Year

Allows students to upskill before joining a degree programme. Often available for STEM or Art and Design courses if students don't have the correct grades or subjects to meet the entry requirements, or to prepare them for the degree.

Degree apprenticeships

Some universities now offer degree apprenticeships courses, although these are mainly offered by employers.

Students will still need to apply to a job within their chosen industry rather than through UCAS.

Differences to 'standard' degrees:

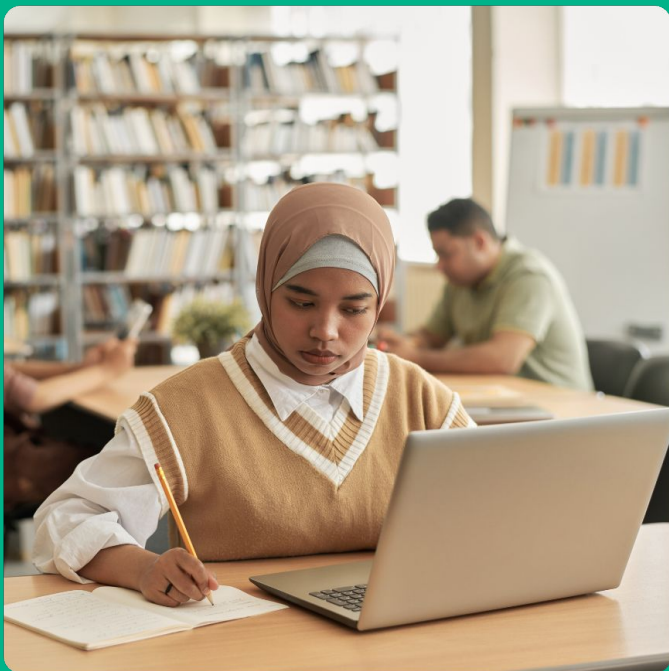
- Students need to balance full-time work and study
- Degree is paid for by employer
- Students receive a salary
- Students will not qualify for student finance
- Students gain practical work experience

Access to HE Diploma

Helps students to prepare for university-level study by completing a Level 3 qualification.

Usually students may study this part-time, or if they are re-entering education after a break.





Entry Requirements

Entry Requirements: The Basics

- These are the **minimum** expectations we have to consider a student for a particular course.
- They vary by institution, i.e. Russell Group and other 'High Tariff' HEIs will typically have much higher entry requirements than 'Medium/Low' Tariff HEIs.
- They vary by course. Naturally the more competitive courses (think Med/Dent/Vet) will expect higher grades at all HEI's.

Medicine (A100) How to apply →

2025 entry Summary Structure **Entry requirements** Next steps

Entry requirements

We accept a wide variety of qualifications and welcome applications from students of all backgrounds. Below is a guide to the typical offers for this course.

A-level standard offer	↕
AAA including Chemistry and either Biology, Physics, Mathematics or Further Mathematics. Graduates are required to obtain a 2:1 in their degree plus BBB at A-level, including Chemistry and either Biology, Physics, Mathematics or Further Mathematics.	
A-level contextual offer	↕
BTEC	↕
International Baccalaureate Diploma	↕
International Baccalaureate Diploma contextual offer	↕

Applicants must also meet these requirements

GCSE profile requirements
Advanced numeracy requirement (7 or A in GCSE Mathematics or equivalent) and Standard literacy requirement (4 or C in GCSE English or equivalent)
Further information about [GCSE requirements and profile levels](#).

English language requirements
If English is not your first language, you need to have one of the following:

- IELTS 7.5 overall with 7.0 in all skills
- GCSE English Language grade B or 6
- an alternative qualification outlined in our [Profile level A](#).

Further information about [English language requirements and profile levels](#)

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— OVERVIEW —

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR 2025 ENTRY

A LEVELS: 3 A LEVELS 3 x A levels (including Biology and Chemistry) with a minimum prediction of AAB. See our A levels entry requirements for our offer portfolio.	GCSES: 6 GCSES AT LEVEL 9-4 OR A*-C 6 GCSEs at Grade 9/A* - 4/C or equivalent, including English Language and Maths at Grade 6/B or above.	UCAT: SJT BAND 1, 2 OR 3 Situational Judgement Test band of 1, 2 or 3. The UCAT must be taken in the calendar year of application.
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Entry Requirements: The Qualifications

All universities will expect students to apply with Level 3 qualifications (post-16) but the types of courses accepted will vary.

Most common accepted (especially at Russell Groups) is A-Levels.

Other accepted* qualifications:

- BTECs
- T-Levels
- Access to HE
- International Baccalaureate
- Advanced Highers (Scotland)
- Advanced Apprenticeships
- Cambridge Technical

Entry Requirements: Grades or Points?

UCAS assigns each qualification a standardised set of Tariff Points. For example, an A-grade in A-Levels is worth 48 points. So, a course requiring 3xAs is the same as 144 Tariff Points.

These are very useful when students study a combination on qualifications, such as A-Levels and BTECs.

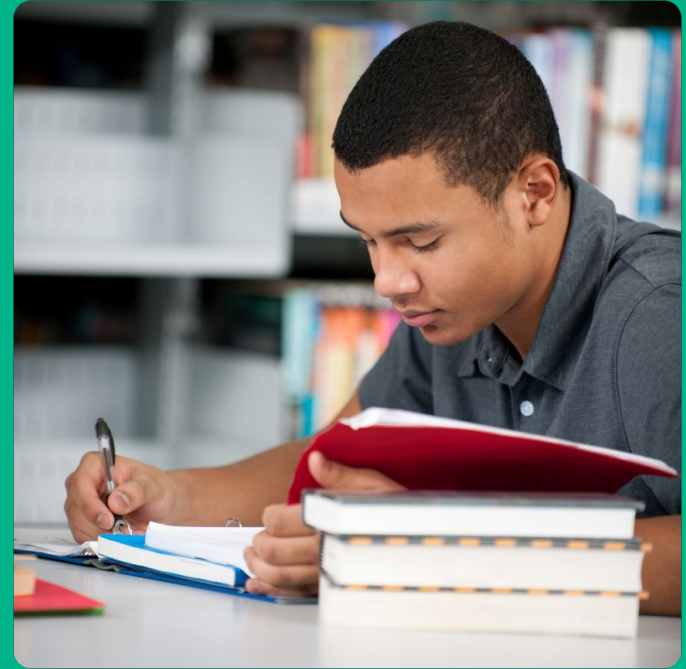
Caveats:

- Not all university will accept a combination of qualifications
- Not all universities 'accept' Tariff Point equivalents. i.e. a university which insists on AAA, may not accept A*AB even though both sets of grades are worth equivalently 144 tariff points

Personal Statement

As part of the UCAS process, all students write the 'Personal Statement.'

These are set to change for 2026 entry- there will be a separate Advancing Access webinar* on this which will go into these changes in more details.



UCAS Reference

As part of the UCAS process, all students get a school/college reference to verify their applications.

If you'd like to know more about writing references, speak to Advancing Access to book a specific talk for your school on references.

It is important to have detailed conversations with your students before completing their references as understanding more about their lives and what they're happy for you to share could make a massive impact on their chances of securing a place, particularly if they have extenuating circumstances or meet widening participation criteria

Entry Requirements: Additional Considerations

Many courses will have specific 'required' subjects to be eligible to apply, i.e. Biology/Chemistry for Medicine. They may also insist on a specific grade in required subjects, for example ABB entry may insist on the 'A' in the required subject.

Many Russell Group Universities may also require a minimum set of GCSE grades and/or specific grades in Maths, English, and Science for some courses.

Entry tests may be required such as the LNAT for Law or the UCAT for Med/Dent.

Interviews are common for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science.

Yr14 students- Some universities / courses may not accept retake students. So, if a student is unsuccessful, it's worth double checking with each university if they'd be considered before reapplying!

Entry Requirements: Top Tips

Look at entry requirement pages for their '**admissions statement**' as these detail the specific scoring for that exact course.

Use UCAS search course one grade above and below is a good rule* I.E. If predicted BBB, look at courses between ABB and BBC.

Talk to students in Year 11 **before** they choose their Post-16 qualifications to ensure they select any required subjects and/or modules for their future choices.

Selection process

- Regulations and codes of conduct we abide by to create a positive environment for learning and achievement are found in the [University admissions policies and procedures](#).
- If applying with extenuating circumstances please [see our policy](#).
- Full information about our selection processes for Medicine can be found in the Admissions Statement:

[Admissions statement](#) →

State schools can sign up for the free personal statement building platform- [OSCAR](#).



Widening Participation

What is Widening Participation? (WP)

WP is used by the sector to describe policies and initiatives designed to diversify the intake of HE students.

It focuses on students from both disadvantaged backgrounds and/or underrepresented backgrounds.

Each university will have a team responsible for WP, but their goals and targets will vary based on that institution's priorities for diversification.

Our Access and Participation Plans, overseen by the Office for Students, is how we set targets, layout initiatives and highlight our progress.

It's WP which helps us bring about changes in admissions to be more inclusive such as through Gateway Courses, Foundation Years and Contextual Offer policies...

Admissions Benefits

Contextual Offers:

- A grade-reduction scheme for disadvantaged and/or underrepresented students.
- Varies from 1-to-3 grade reductions, i.e. AAA-BBB!
- Some are automatically applied; some require involvement in outreach schemes.

Guaranteed Offers:

- Is a 'guarantee' scheme that students will be made on offer/interview provided they meet the entry requirements.
- Some are automatically applied; some require involvement in outreach programmes.
- Can often be 'as well as' Contextual Offers.

What are outreach schemes?

They are local and/or national projects run by universities to engage with students whom they're trying to encourage applications from to diversify their intake.

Typically, they are fully-funded enrichment opportunities for students to get some IAG about HE options (these often align with Gatsby)

As well as being enriching, they often come with the aforementioned admissions benefits. Some can even include bursaries too!

Eligibility will vary by HEI so it's worth reaching out to your local universities to see what your school might be eligible for.

Extenuating circumstances

Outline as part of the personal statement and teacher reference. Some universities may have additional forms to give more detail.

Students may be accepted if their circumstances have severely affected their education, even if they don't meet standard entry requirements.



Next steps

- Help your students to research courses
 - Talk through all the options, set goals and look at backup choices with students
- Be aware of what outreach programmes are available to your students locally and sign-post them to eligible students!

Helpful resources

[Advancing Access resource hub - “How do I help my students choose a university and a course?”](#)

32 resources to support you and your students with their choices.

- [UCAS - choosing a degree course](#)
- [Prospects - How to choose the right degree](#)
- [UCAS - contextual admissions](#)

Thank you for attending!

What questions do you have?

Find out more information:

- University of Bristol: bristol.ac.uk
- University of York: york.ac.uk

