

UCAS

CLOSING NOTE FROM UCAS: **SUPPORTING FAIR ACCESS**

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Adviser Engagement Partner



DATA AND INSIGHTS



What UCAS' data tells us about the students we support

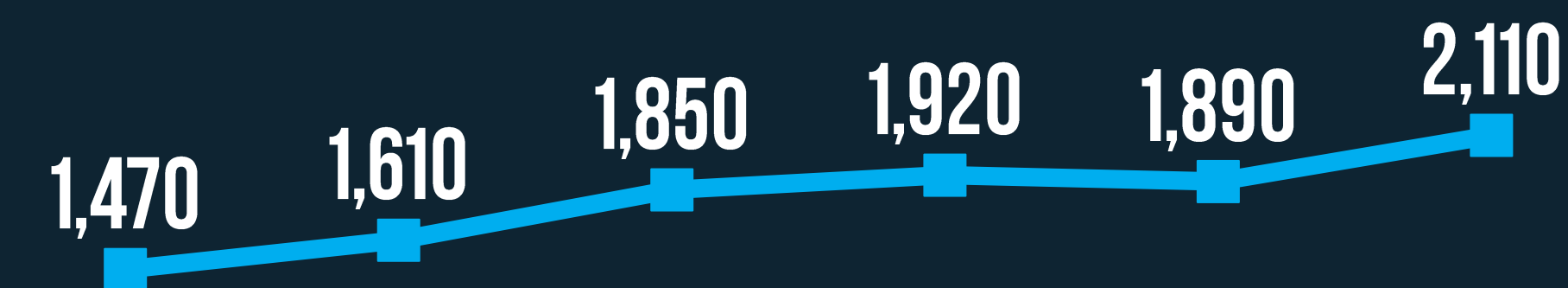
WIDENING PARTICIPATION DATA: 2024

Accepted 18 year olds (overall) by various measures of socio-economic disadvantage

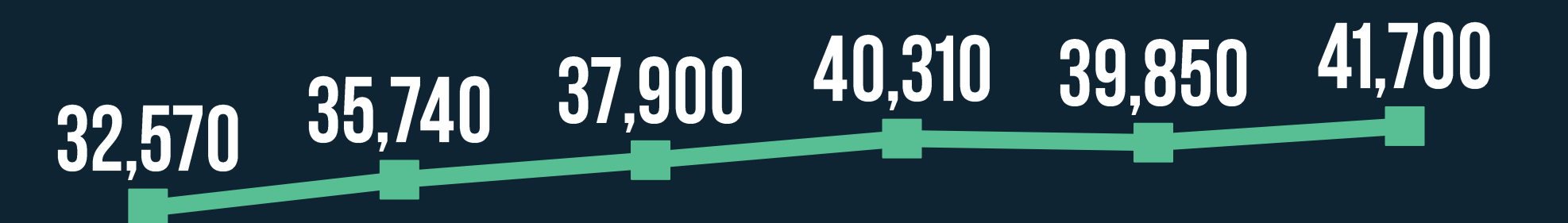
POLAR4 Q1



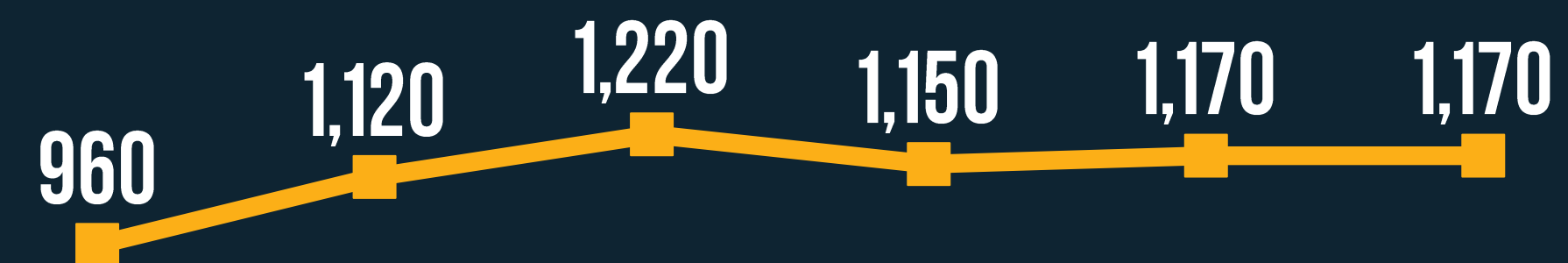
SIMD 2020 Q1



IMD 2019 Q1



NIMDM 2017 Q1



WIMD 2019 Q1



TUNDRA Q1



2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024

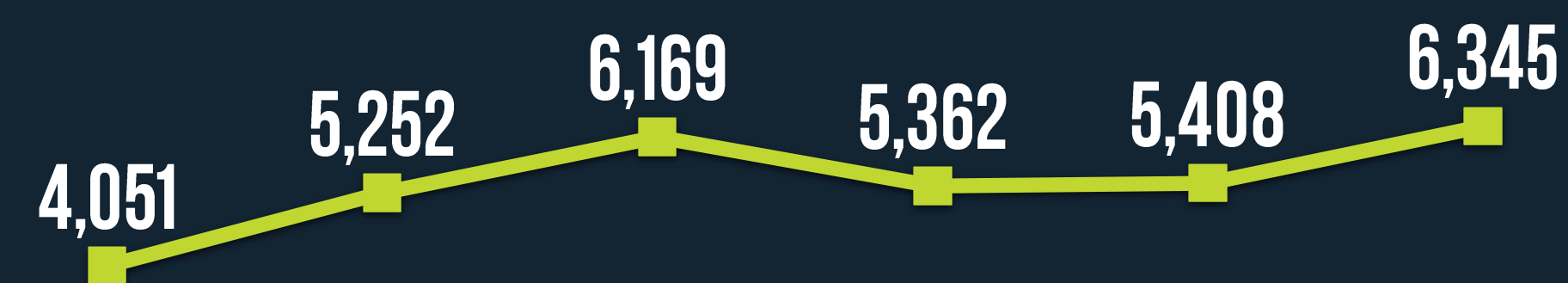
2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024

2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024

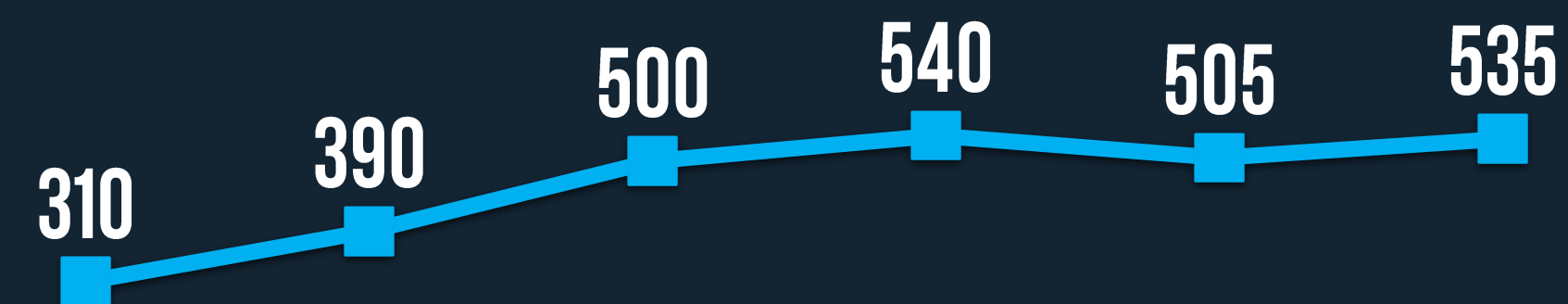
WIDENING PARTICIPATION DATA: 2025 JANUARY (RUSSELL GROUP ONLY)

Accepted 18 year olds by various measures of socio-economic disadvantage

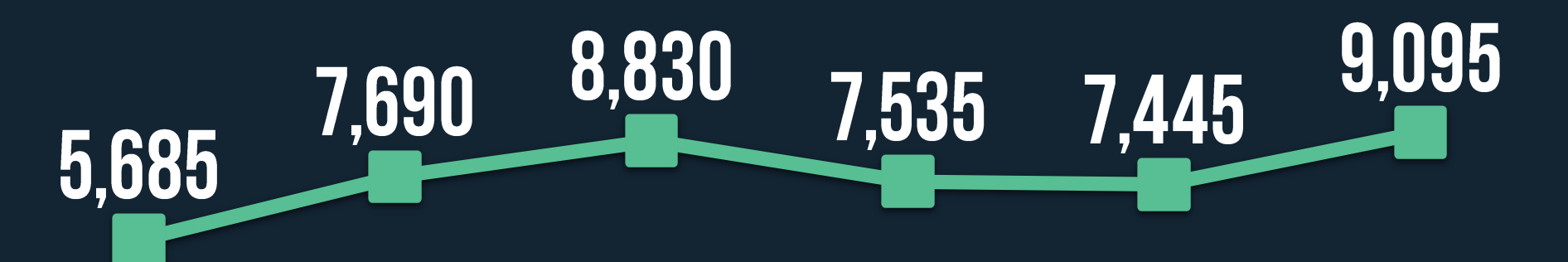
POLAR4 Q1



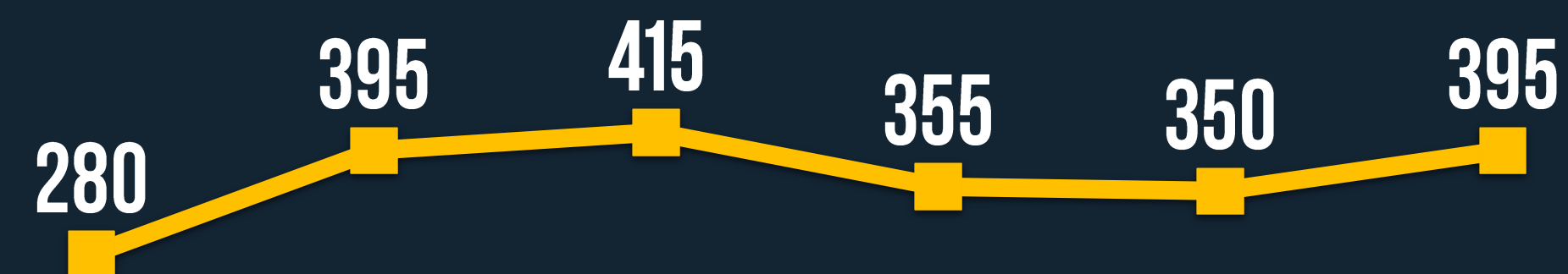
SIMD 2020 Q1



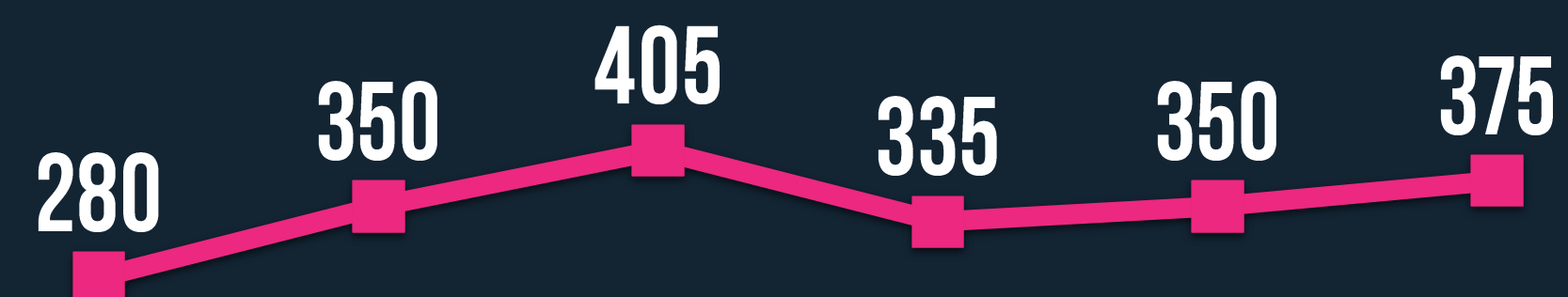
IMD 2019 Q1



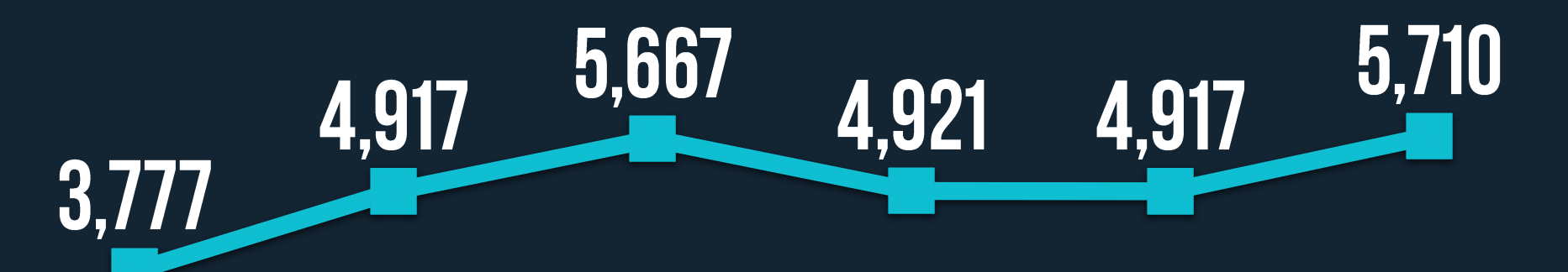
NIMD 2019 Q1



WIMD 2019 Q1



TUNDRA 2019 Q1



2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024

2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024

2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT FSM APPLICANTS

18-year-old applicants from England and Wales (self-declared FSM) in 2024

16% of English-domiciled applicants

11% of Welsh-domiciled applicants

43% from IMD Q1

36% from WIMD Q1

38% are White

24% are Asian

21% are Black

21% share a disability
(19% non-FSM)

7% share a MH condition
(6% non-FSM)

44% of care-experienced applicants receive FSM,
(15% of applicants without care experience)

FREE SCHOOL MEALS FEE WAIVER

- UK applicants only
- UG and conservatoire applicants
- Students applying through a UCAS registered centre
- Applicant must have been in receipt of FSM in last six years
- FSM status confirmed via adviser portal

Eligible students will need to:

1. share they are in receipt of FSM in the 'More about you' section
2. choose to 'Apply with Waiver' when they 'Pay and Submit' their application.

Are you currently receiving free school meals, or were you in receipt of free school meals between the ages of 11 to 18?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

☒ Mark this section as complete *

You must complete all mandatory fields in this section before you can mark it as complete. All sections must be marked as complete before you can send your application.

Save this section

Free school meals waiver

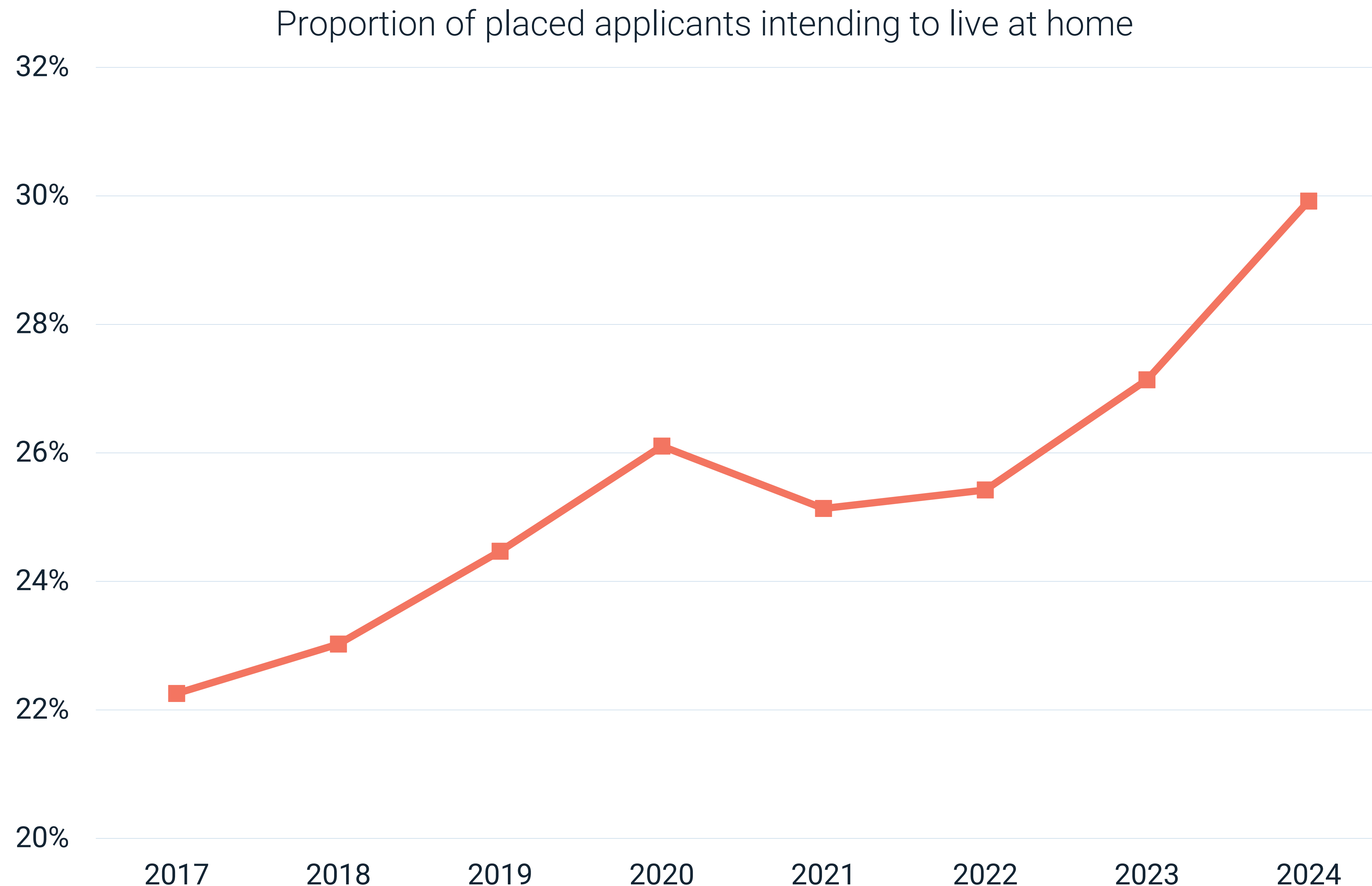
UCAS is waiving the application fee for students who are in receipt of UK government funded free school meals, or have been at some point over the past six years and can evidence this, if required.

[Check if you are eligible](#)

Apply with Waiver

Read our [step-by-step](#) slide pack for more info

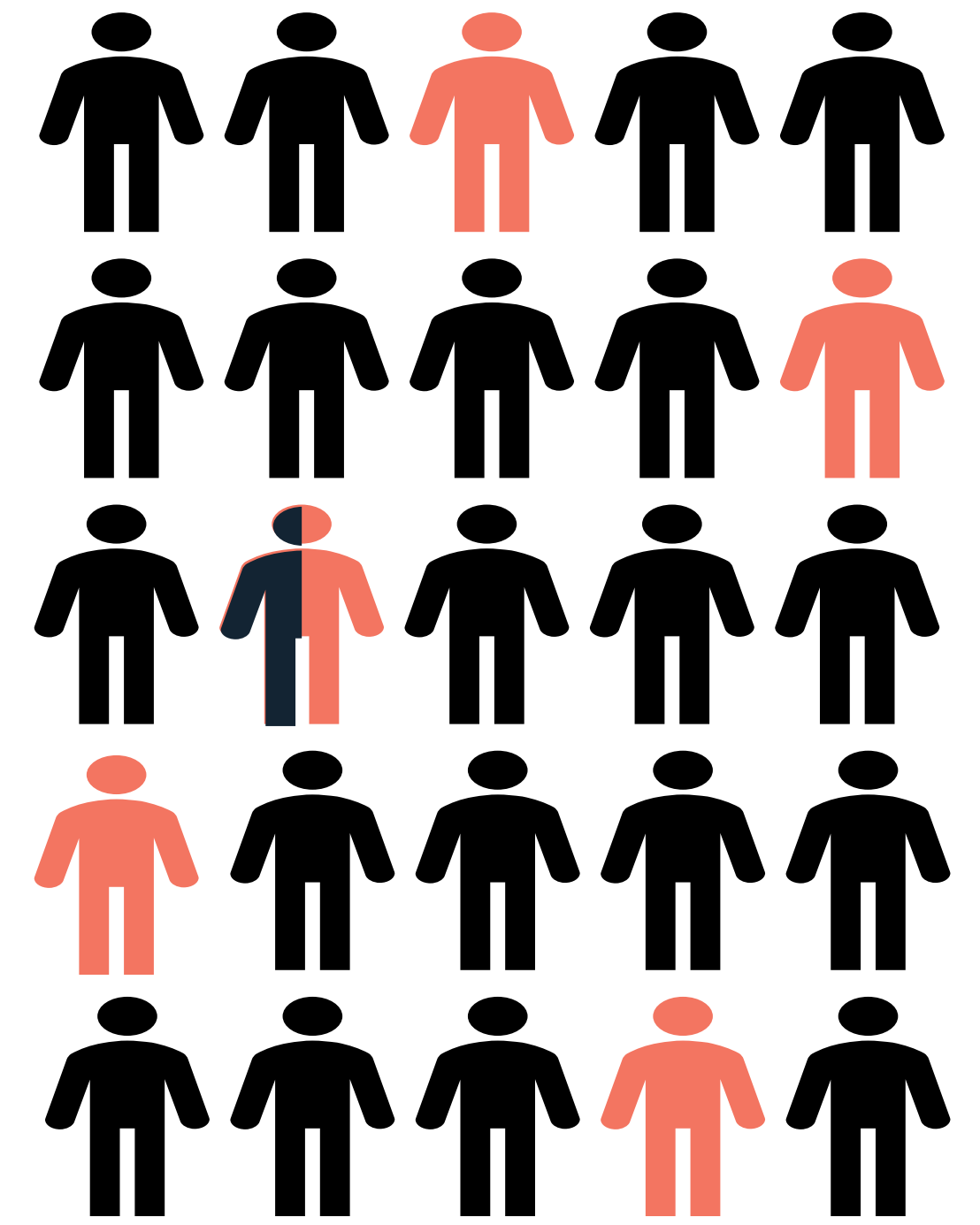
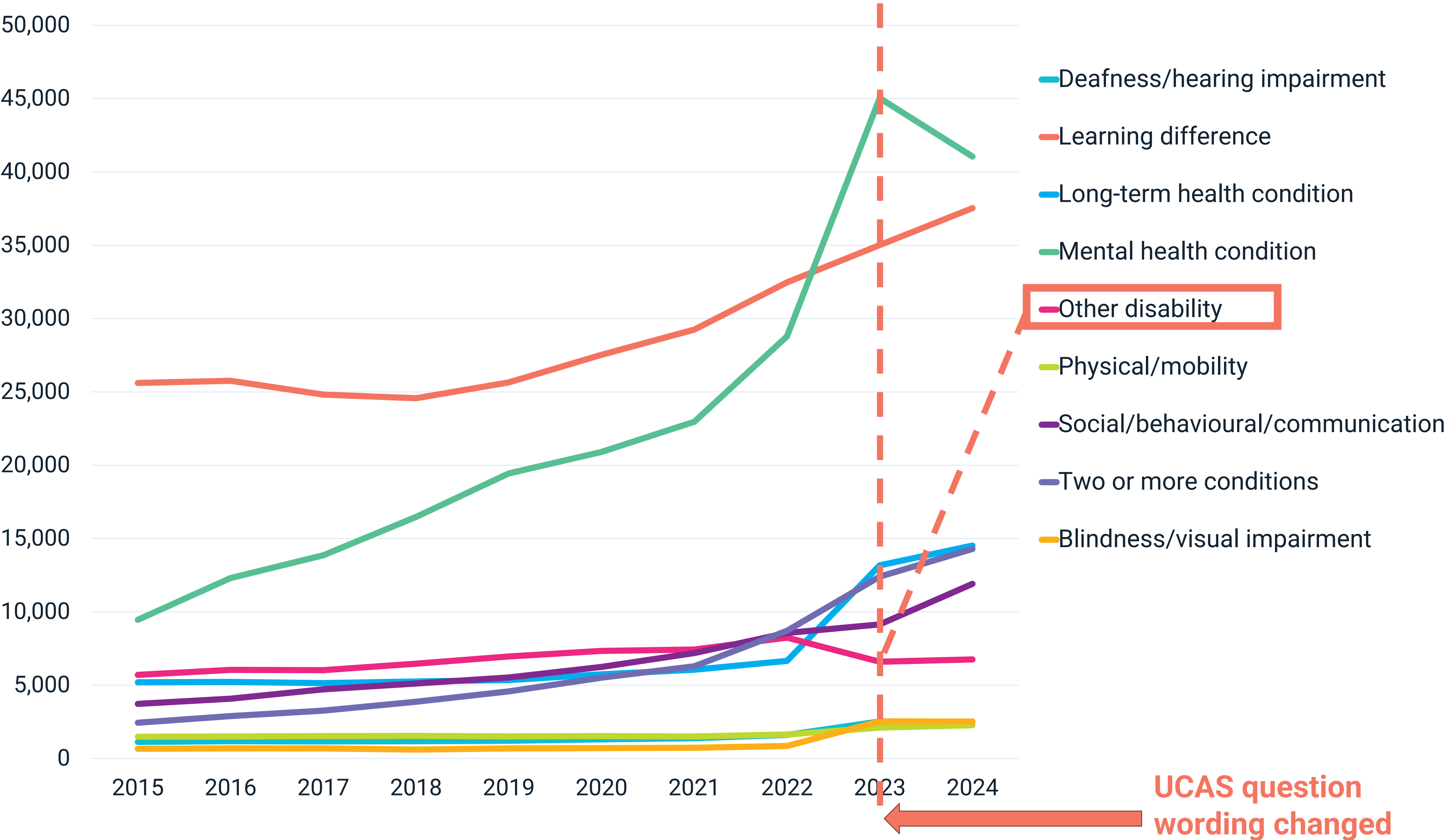
MORE STUDENTS PLANNING TO LIVE AT HOME



The proportion of applicants intending to live at home has increased to **30%**.

This growth has been driven by applicants from **London**

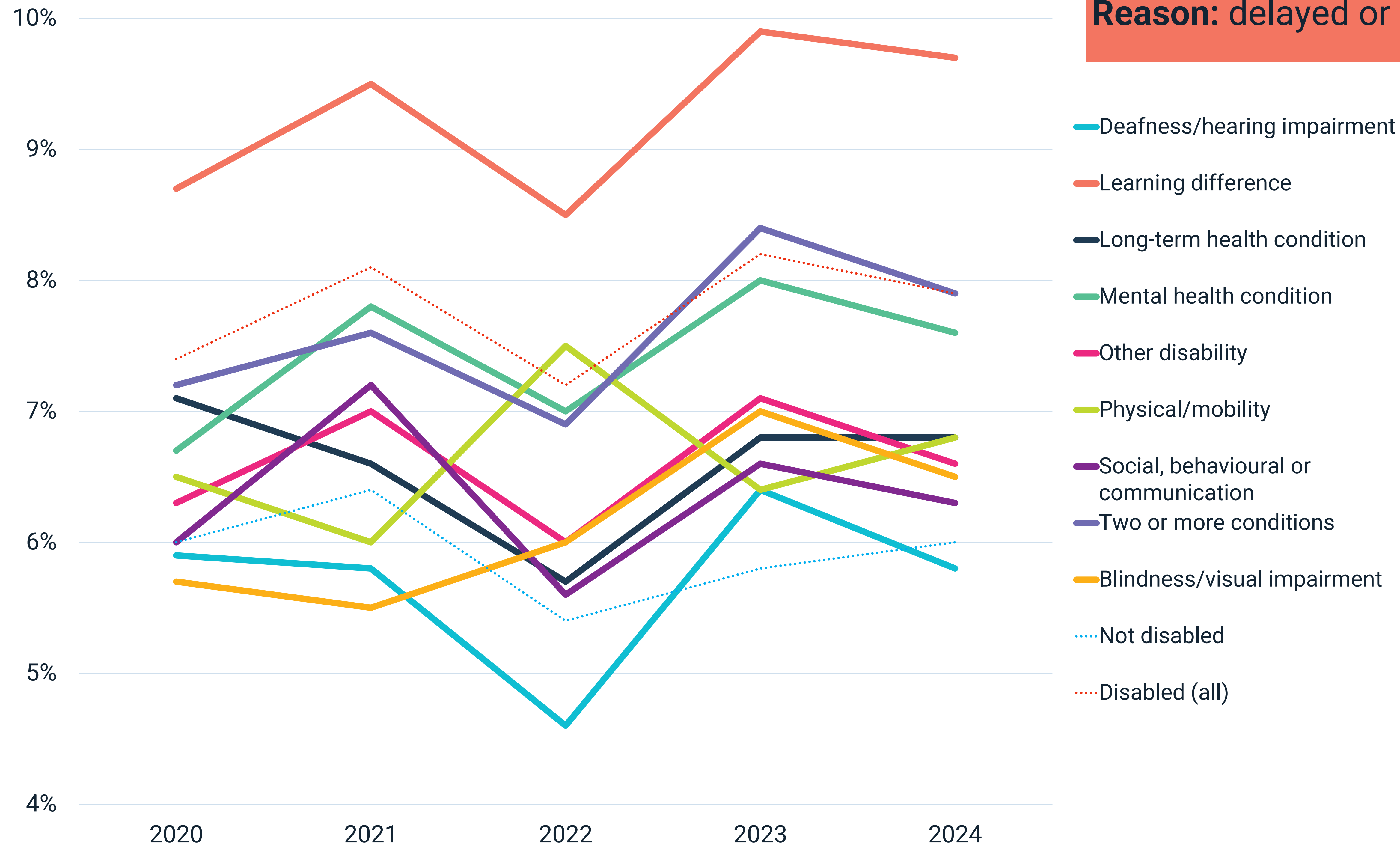
141% RISE IN APPLICANTS SHARING A DISABILITY ...



More than 1 in 4

UK applicants shared a disability or mental health condition in 2024 (over 133k)

... BUT THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO DEFER ENTRY



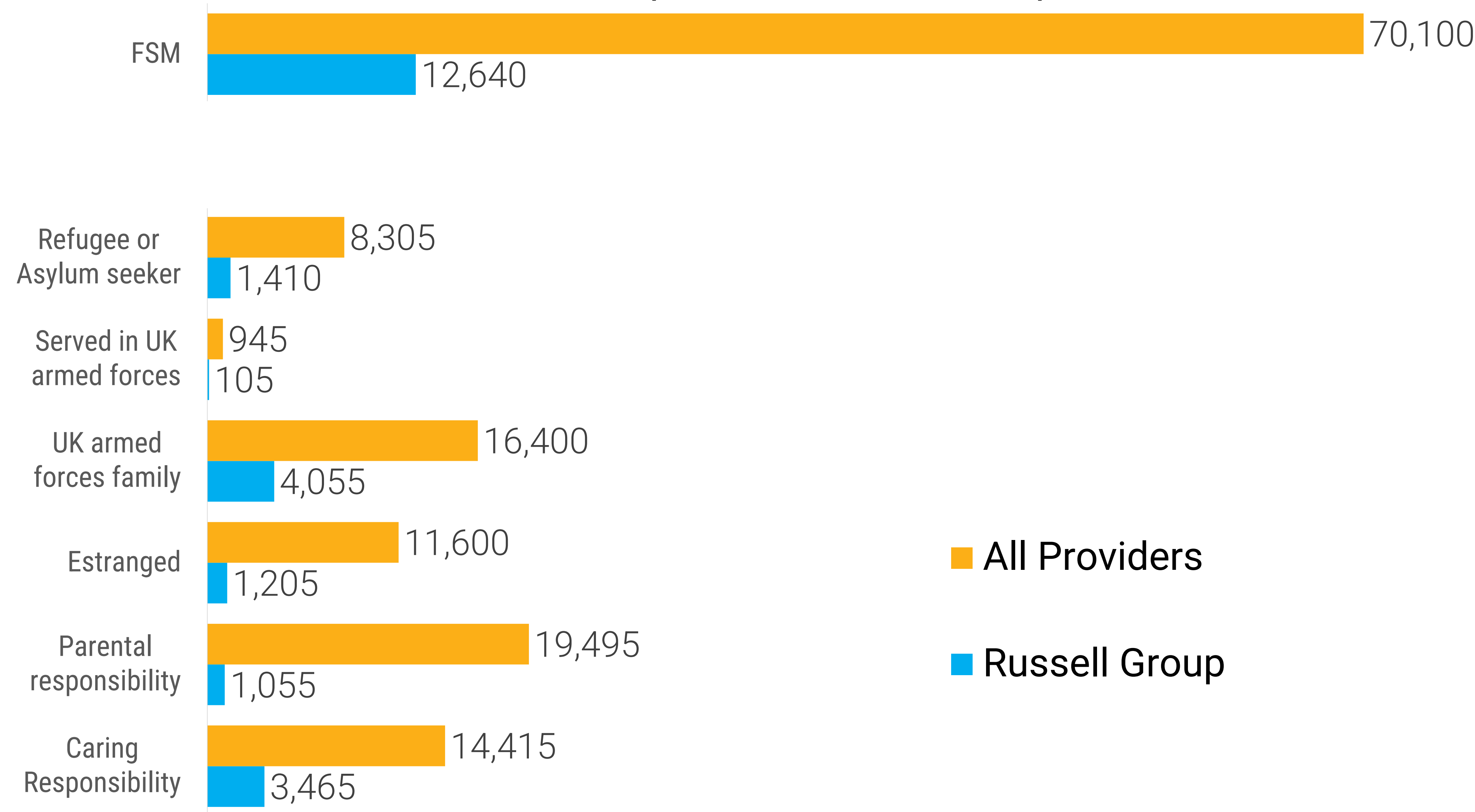
Reason: delayed or missing support

Action 1: Earlier engagement to support a longer or more complex journey to HE

Action 2: Encourage students to share their individual needs early

APPLICANTS CAN NOW SHARE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CIRCUMSTANCES

UK Acceptances for each WP question, 2024

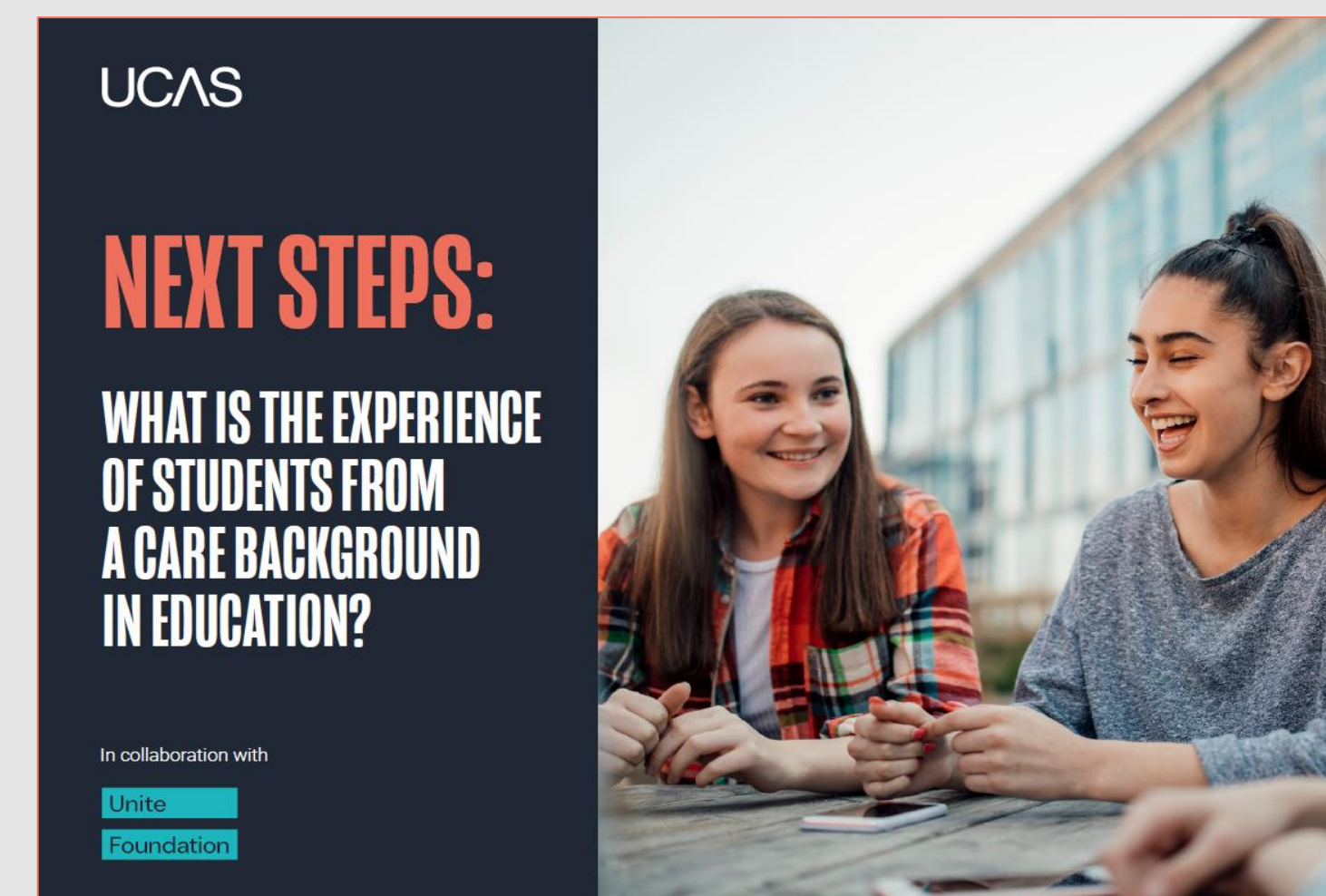
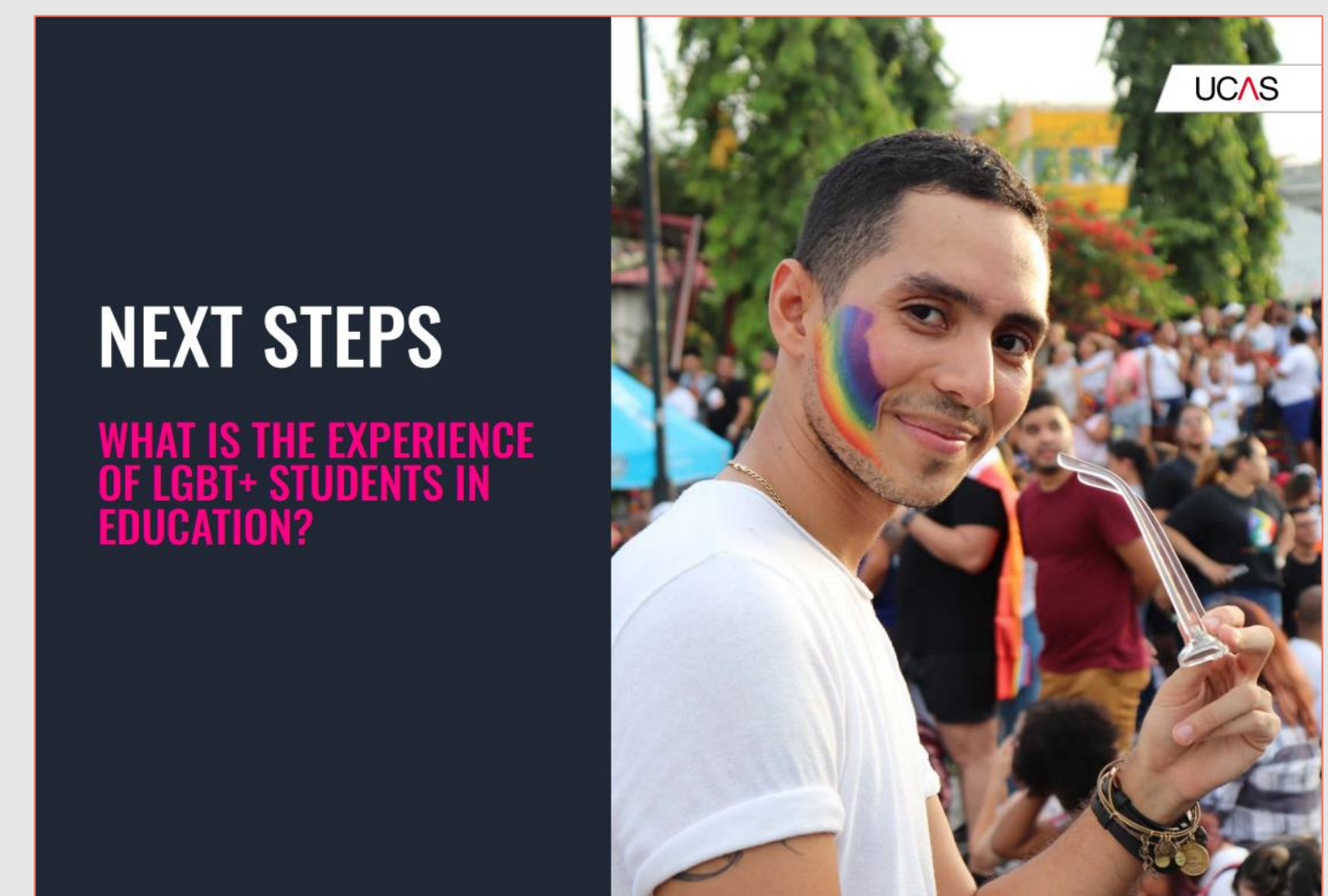
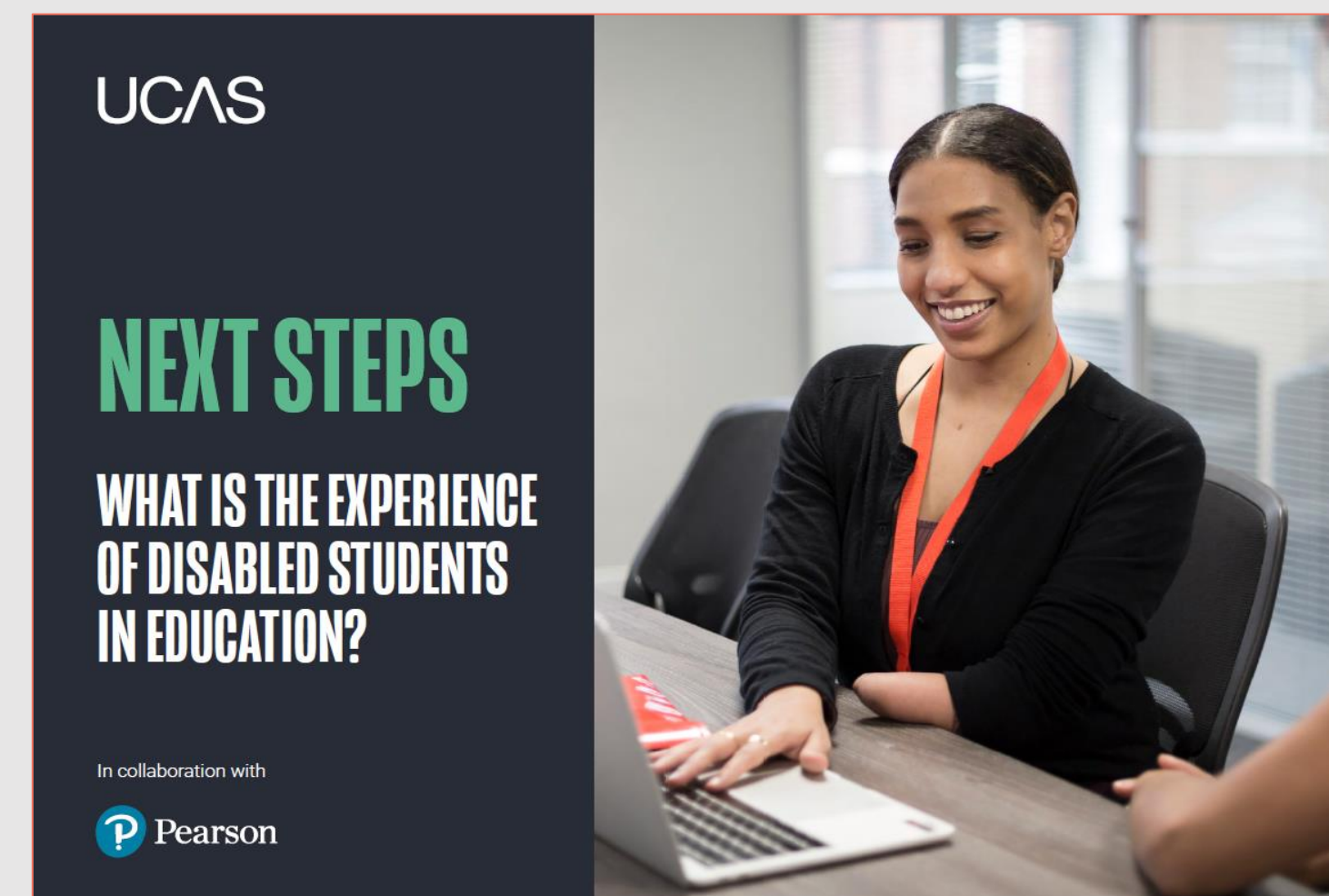
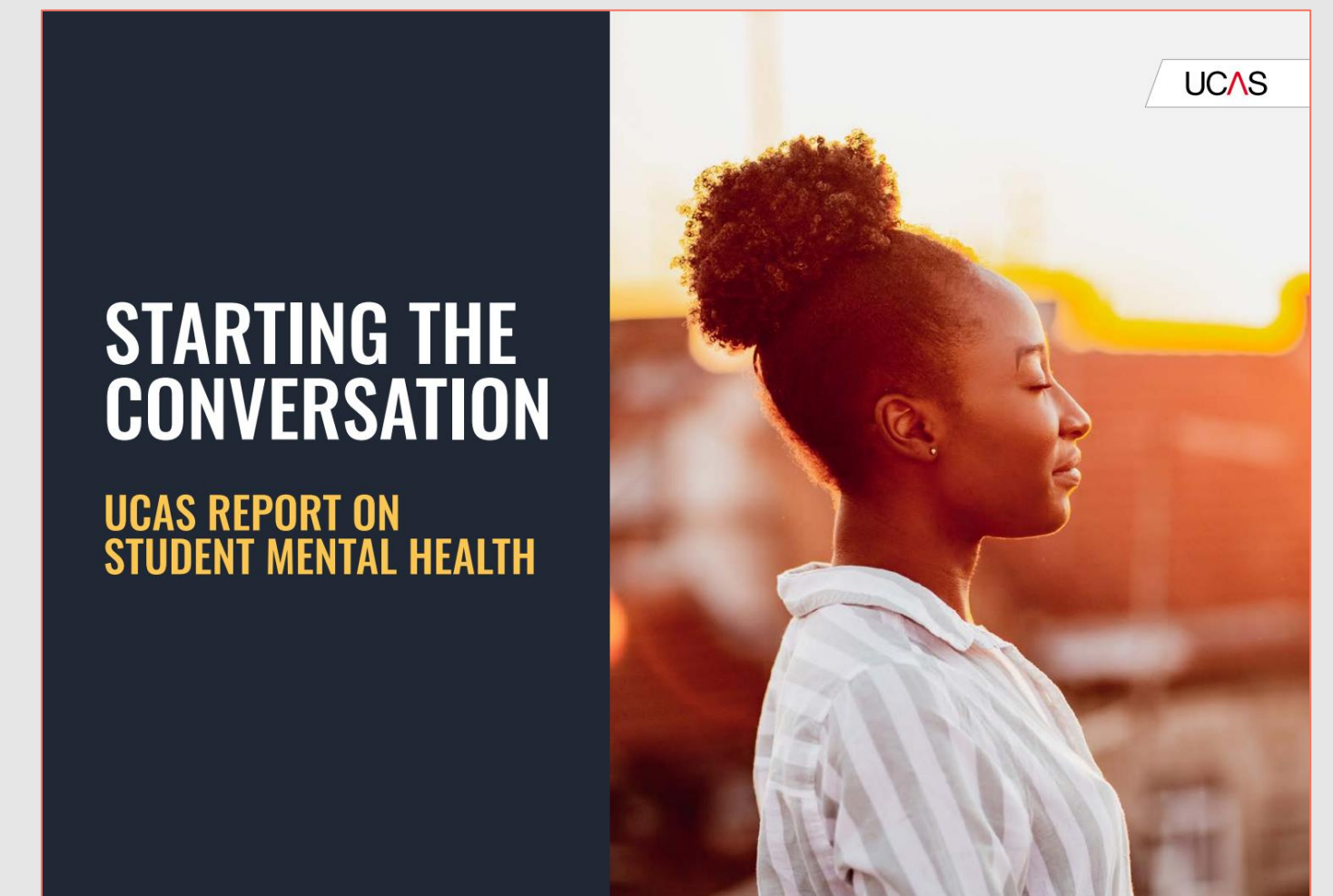
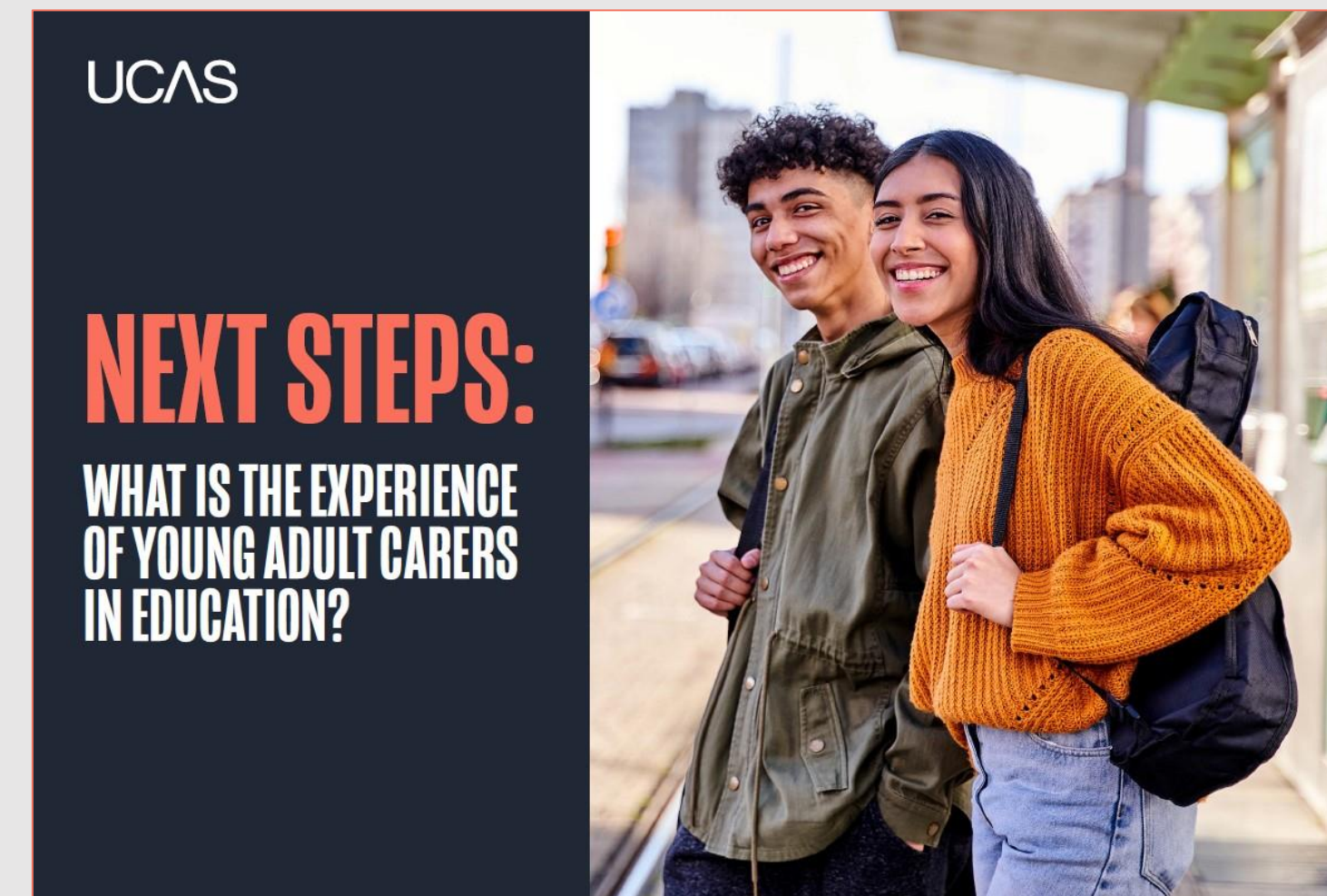


150K
students shared their circumstances via the new questions in 2015

UCAS' DATA AND INSIGHT REPORTS

- UCAS applicant and acceptance data
- Student survey data
- Comparison to third-party research and national data
- Identification of hidden or potential barriers
- Recommendations

[Link to all UCAS' insight reports](#)



FAIR ACCESS SNAPSHOTS

[Home](#) / [About us](#) / [News and insights](#)


FAIR ACCESS SNAPSHOTS

[Explore this section](#)


UCAS' fair access snapshots offer an at-a-glance overview of the new widening access and participation data gathered in the 2023 cycle.

There will be a separate snapshot for each of the seven questions, updated annually – all published on this page.


UCAS' fair access snapshots




Students estranged from their parents




Students with parenting responsibilities




Students from UK Armed Forces families




UK Armed Forces veterans and Service leavers



Students with caring responsibilities



Students in receipt of free school meals



Displaced students

UCAS FAIR ACCESS SNAPSHOT:

STUDENTS ESTRANGED FROM THEIR PARENTS

UCAS

INTERSECTIONALITY: GENDER

ESTRANGED

43.8% Female, 56.2% Male

NOT ESTRANGED

42.5% Female, 57.5% Male

The gender imbalance seen in UK applicants overall is amplified for those estranged from their parents. Young men who have disengaged from HE due to their circumstances may require additional support to consider this as a viable pathway.

INTERSECTIONALITY: ETHNICITY

ESTRANGED

56.9% White, 19.5% Black, 9.5% Asian, 8.2% Mixed, 5.9% Other/unknown

NOT ESTRANGED

64.9% White, 9.7% Black, 15.7% Asian, 5.8% Mixed, 3.9% Other/unknown

Students estranged from their parents are more likely to be from a minority ethnic group. While *Stand Alone* research finds a higher number of Black African and Black Caribbean students estranged from their parents, geography plays an important role – further data and research is needed to understand this picture better.

STUDENTS ESTRANGED FROM THEIR PARENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO ENTER HE WITH VOCATIONAL OR TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS

Entry qualification type

Qualification	Estranged (%)	Not estranged (%)
Access to HE Diploma	~15%	~10%
A levels only	~45%	~15%
A levels/BTEC combination	~5%	~5%
BTEC only	~10%	~5%
SQA Highers	~5%	~5%

Unstable family circumstances may impact post-16 choices and attainment. Students estranged from their parents are much less likely to enter HE with A levels only, and more likely to hold vocational or technical qualifications, or the Access to HE Diploma. Similarly, Scottish applicants are more likely to hold only SQA Highers, however *alternative pathways* in Scotland are different to those elsewhere in the UK, so not directly comparable.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES

Health & Social Care

Nursing & Midwifery

Allied Health

Students who are estranged from their parents are more likely to apply to subjects related to health and social care – similar to the courses preferred by *care-experienced students*. This preference may be related to their tendency to take post-16 vocational and technical qualification choices.



Access all 2023 Fair Access Snapshots

WHAT THIS **MEANS** FOR YOU

- **Identifying** the right students (where possible)
- Understanding their **barriers** and **challenges**
- Learning what **support** is available, where you can get more information - and **signposting** it
- **Involving** parents, carers, and other supporters
- Having **earlier** conversations
- Encouraging **aspirational** choices
- Building **confidence** and **knowledge**



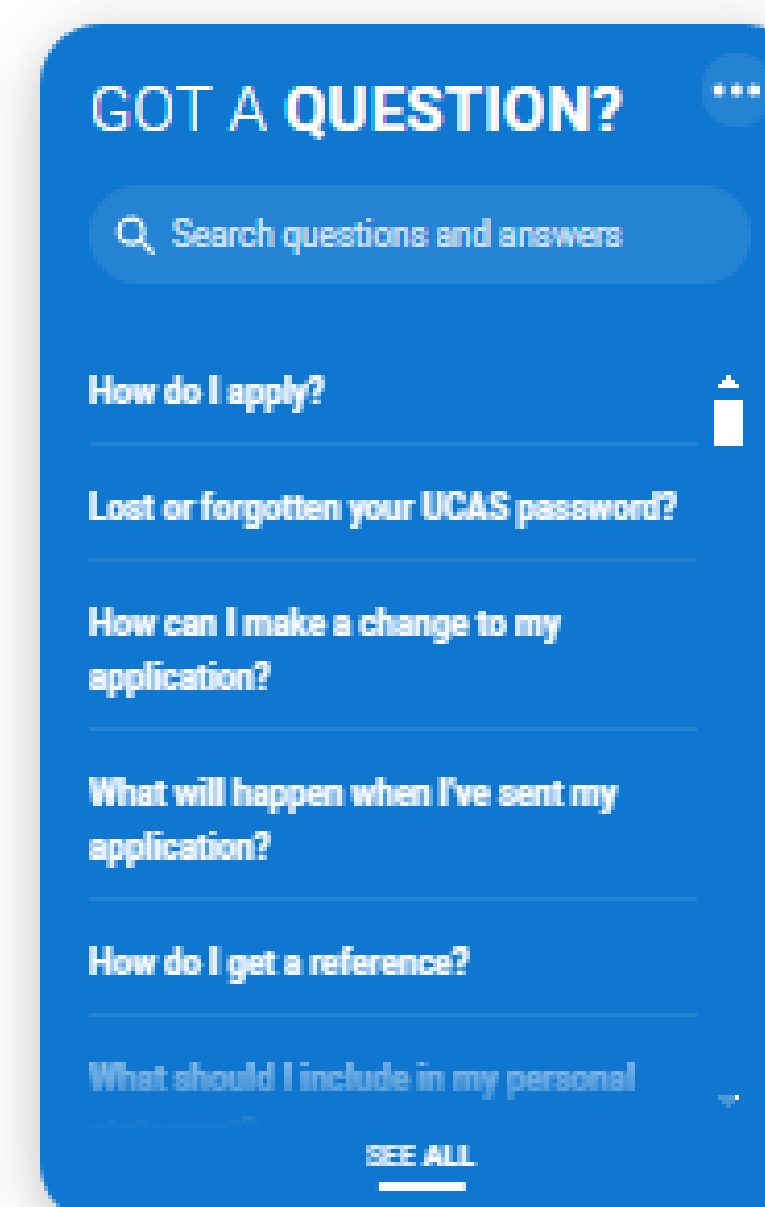
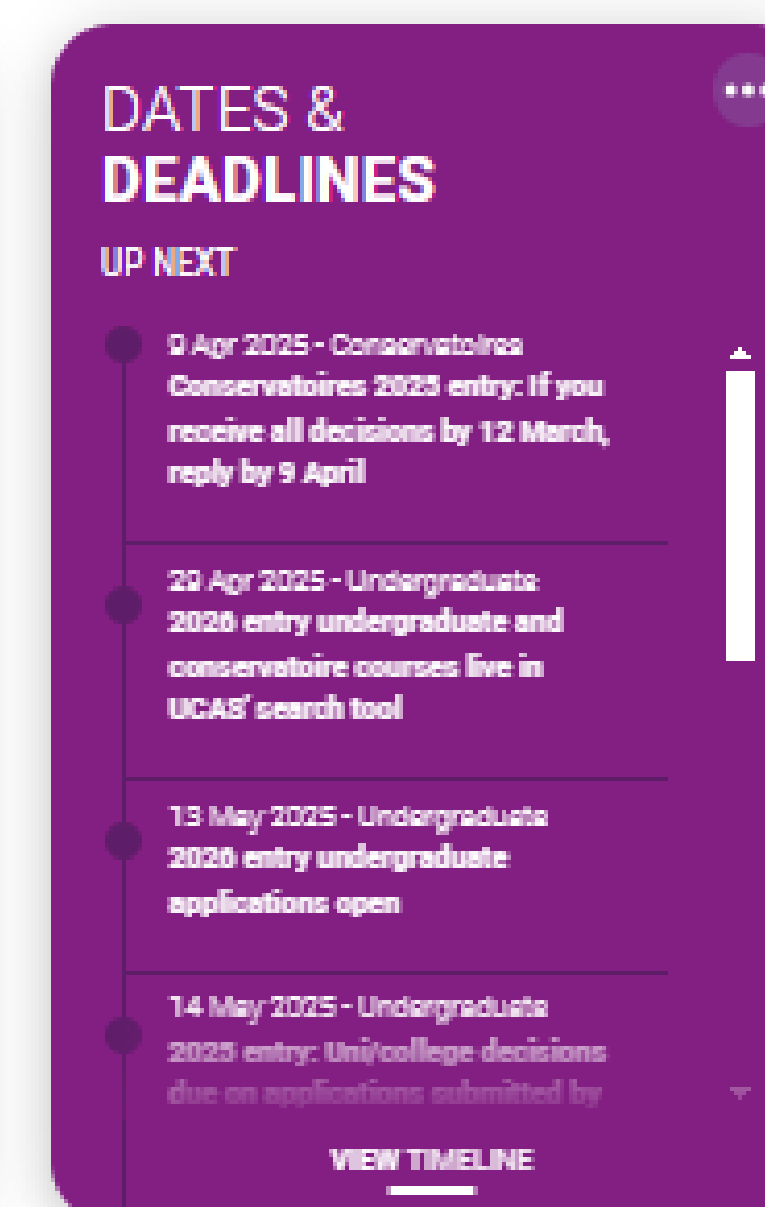
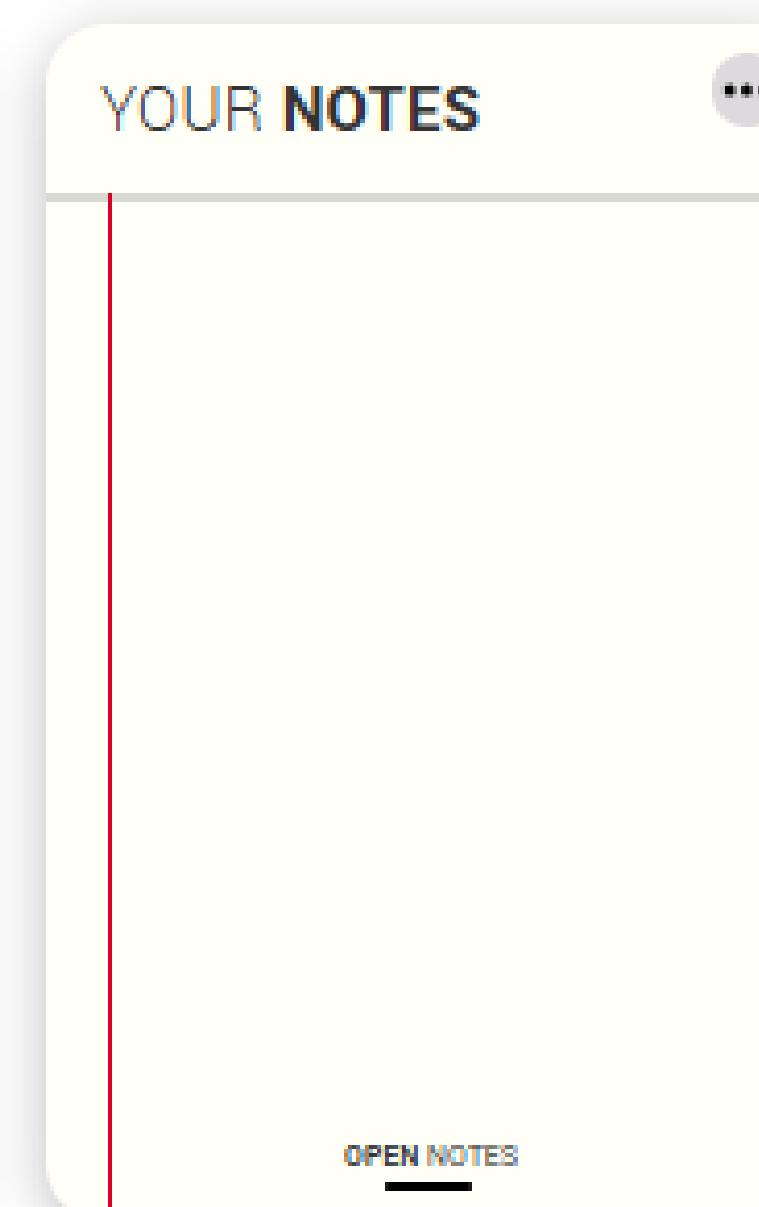
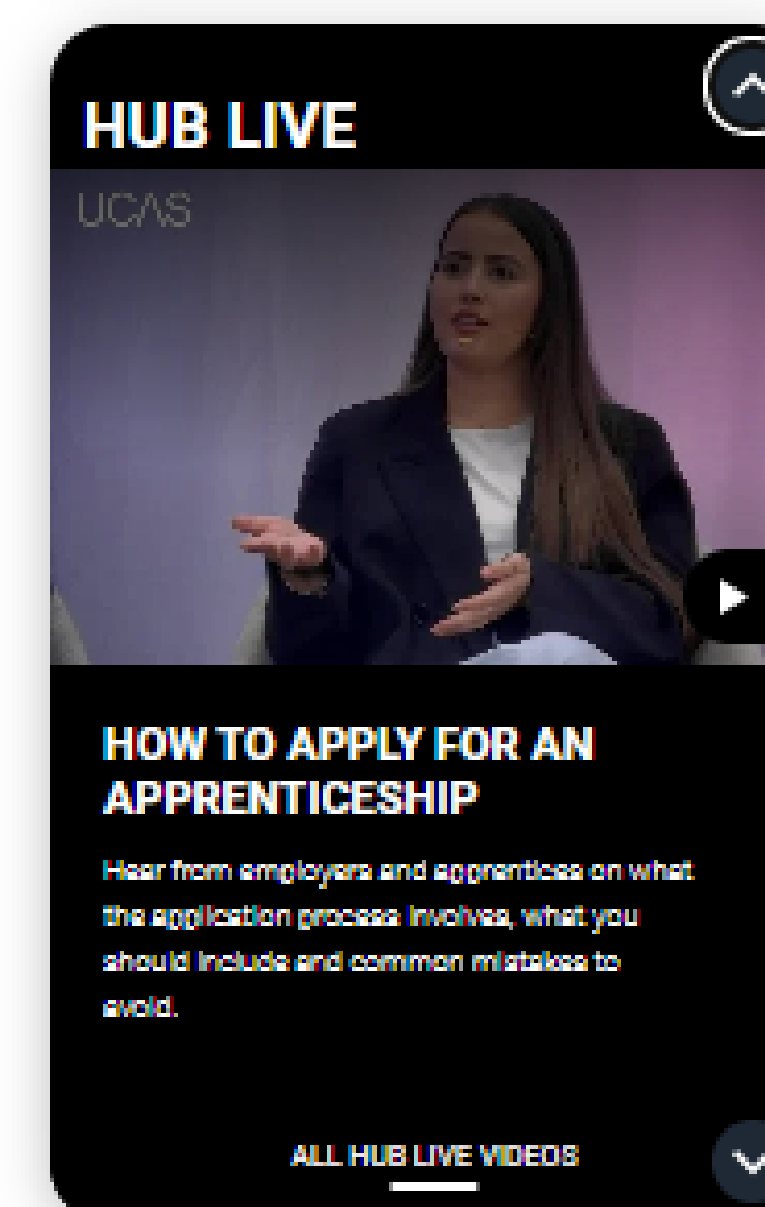
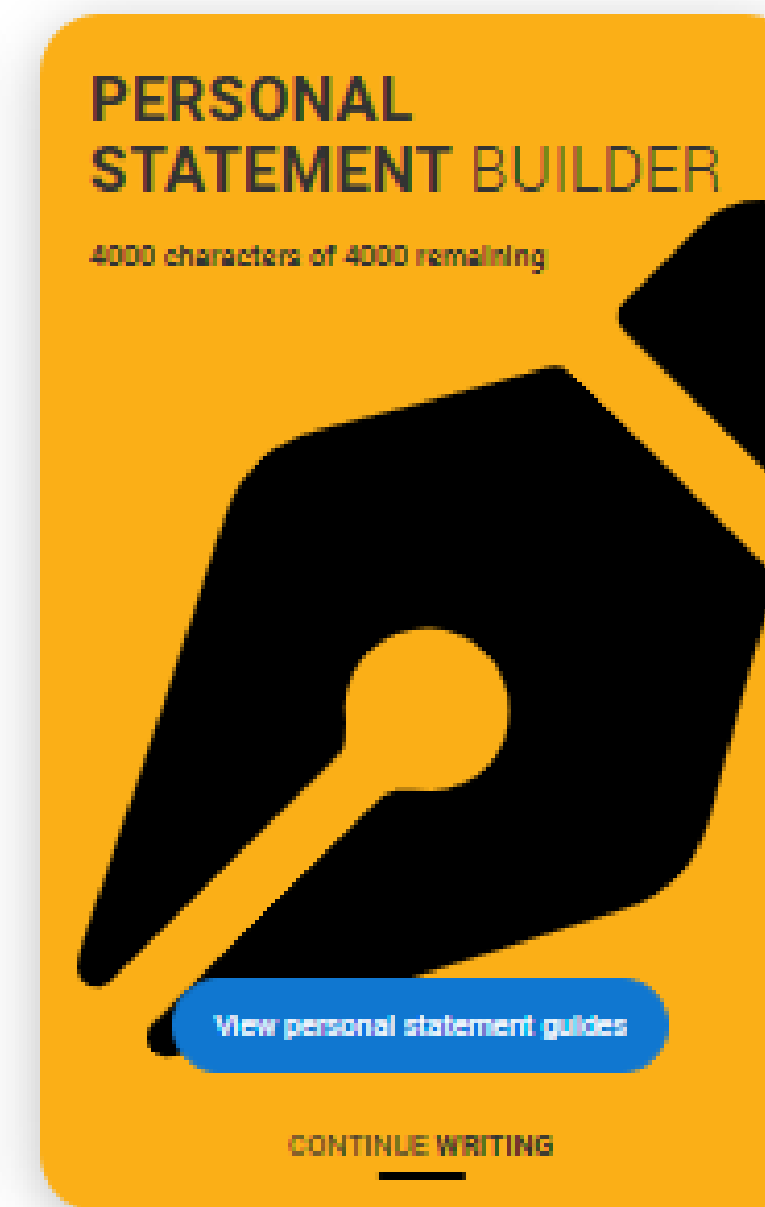
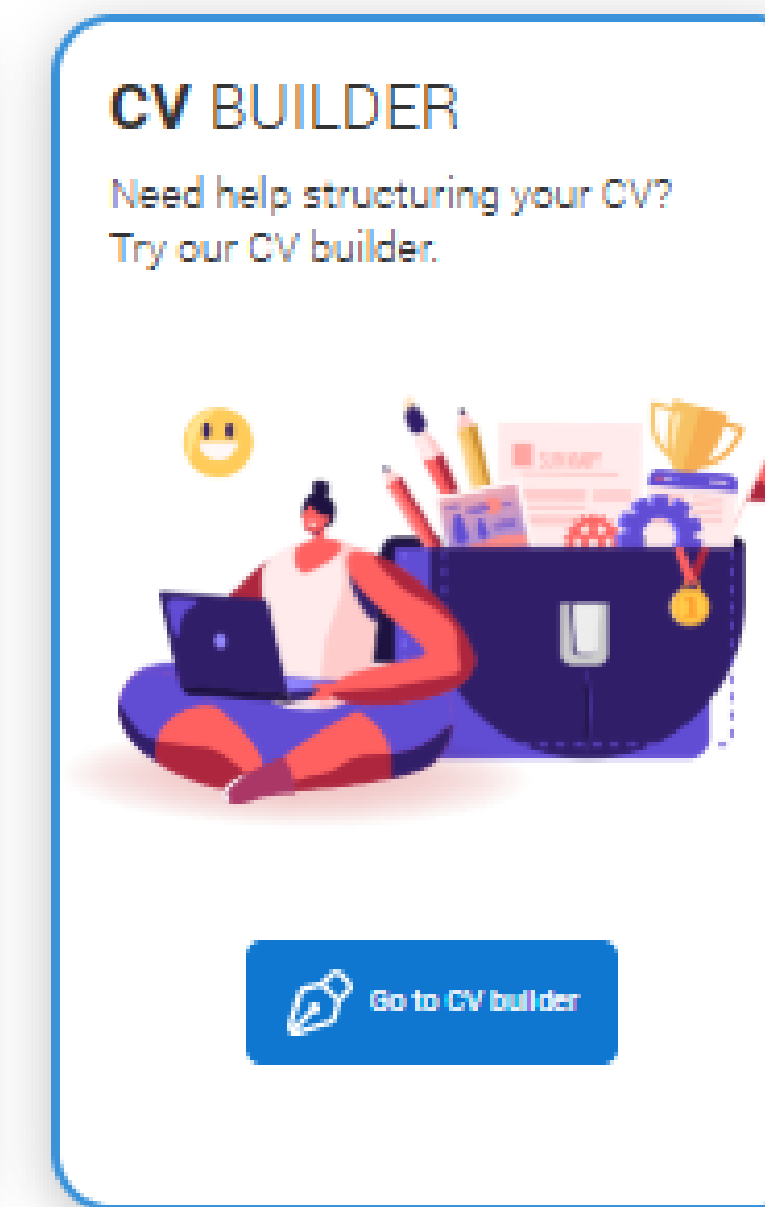
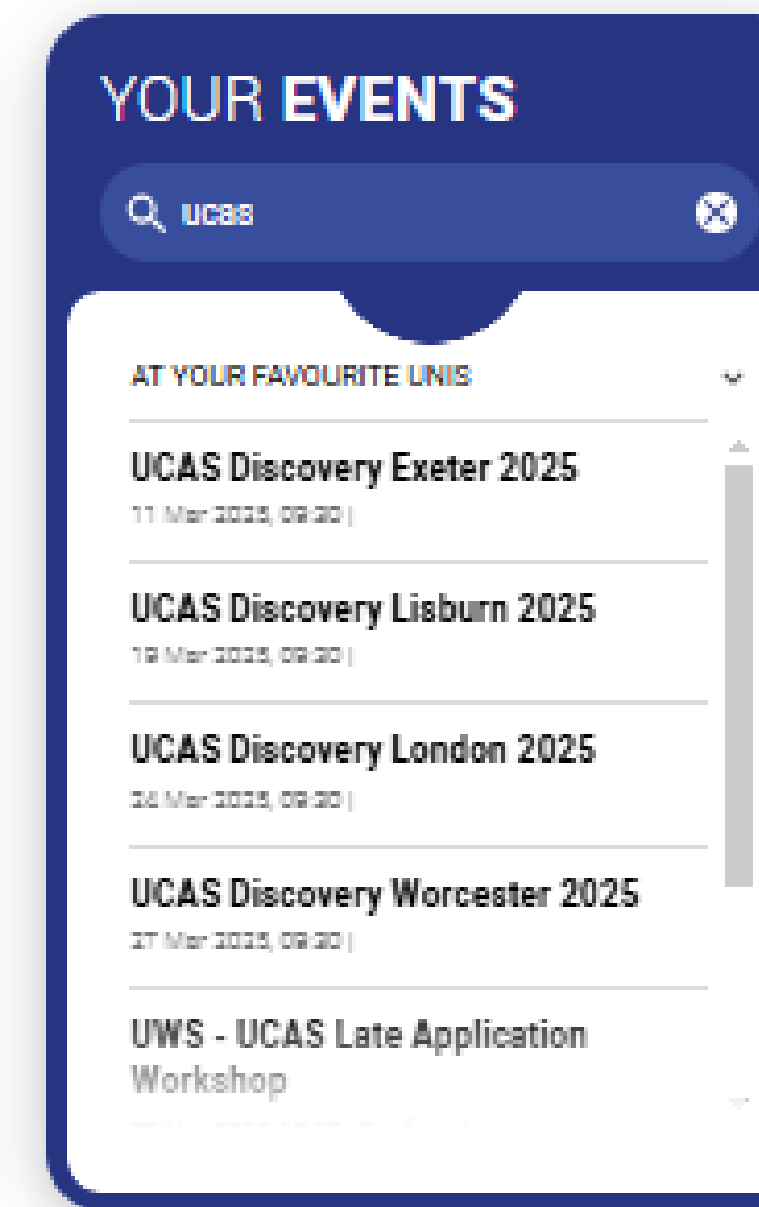
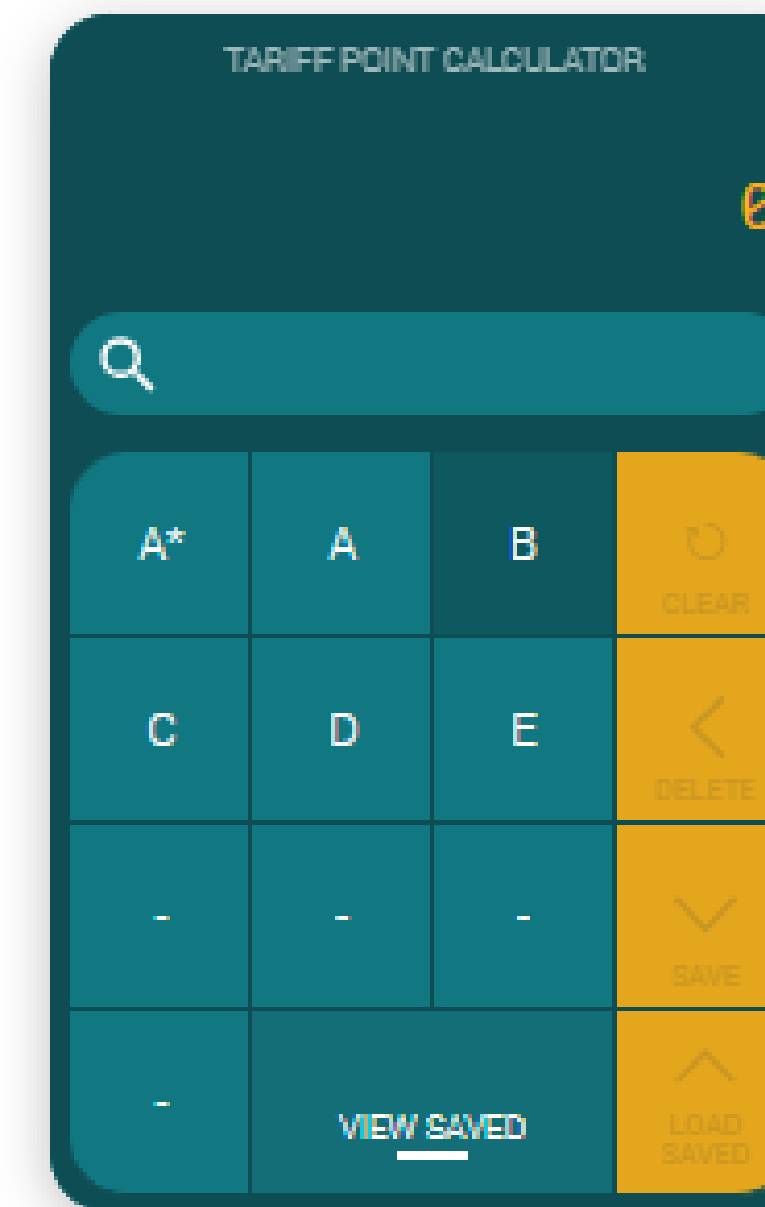
INFORMATION AND ADVICE



Where to signpost students from under-represented backgrounds

THE UCAS HUB: TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

- Explore the Careers Quiz, What to Study Next, Subject Spotlights and Virtual Work Experiences for **career and course inspiration**.
- Use the Tariff Calculator, Personal Statement Builder, and CV Builder to stay on track and **plan your path**.
- Search for events, open days, videos to get expert help and **questions answered**.



UCAS

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS PAGES

[Link to the individual
needs student pages](#)

Students from Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater (GTRSB) communities

Students from GTRSB communities who are considering higher education might find it useful to find out more about how they can be supported to apply to university, and to understand more about the support they may be able to receive on campus.

The GTRSB into Higher Education Pledge¹ is a firm commitment by a university or college to support GTRSB students into and within higher education, and to ensure a welcoming and inclusive environment.

More information and support can be found from:

- The Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and other Travellers (ACERT) website²
- The Friends, Families and Travellers website³
- The Traveller Movement website⁴

Homeless students

People who are homeless and want to progress to higher education may find there are a number of challenges to overcome – such as qualifications, financial issues, and access to expert information, advice, and guidance.

- The Foyer Federation⁵ provides housing to young people aged 16-25, along with help to reconnect with learning and increase employability. If you've spent time in a foyer, you may be able to access funding to help you go to university.
- Crisis Skylight centres⁶ across the UK can offer careers information, advice and guidance – including access to courses and qualifications.

If you're homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, the CentrePoint helpline⁷ is there for anyone aged 16-25 in England to get advice. They also offer careers support and training programmes⁸ to help you get to where you want to be.

Sharing your individual needs in the UCAS application

When you apply through UCAS, you will have the opportunity to share any individual needs or circumstances, including many of those listed above. Sharing this information helps the university connect you to the right support – they may send you more information or contact you to discuss what would help you succeed.

Universities are diverse and inclusive environments, and people from all backgrounds are welcomed – the support is available because they recognise some people may have different challenges and priorities, so this is in place to make sure you can make the most of your time. Visit the pages above to find out more about what may be available.

The information you share will always be treated sensitively, and only used by those responsible for arranging support and helping you with your application (e.g. the student support team). It is never used when universities decide whether to offer you a place, but it might be used to make you an offer that looks at your achievements in context.

We recommend that you read the relevant pages above and research what help the university can offer before making an application – it is important that you make a decision that is right for you.

► England

► Wales

► Scotland

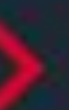
► Northern Ireland

► Channel Islands and the Isle of Man



Contextual admissions

Some students face additional challenges during their education which may impact their results. Universities recognise these challenges, and can make adjustments through 'contextual admissions'. Find out more about what this is, who is eligible, and how you qualify.



Refugees, asylum seekers or those with limited leave to remain who are considering applying to higher education, should always speak to the relevant UK government department for the most up-to-date information.

Young people

Young people with one, or both, parents serving in the UK Armed Forces, should let the university or college know about their circumstances and check that they are eligible for the Armed Forces Covenant.

Transition

When moving from school or college into higher education, or when transitioning into civilian life, there are a number of resources and initiatives available to help with applying for a higher education course.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS PAGES

DISABLED STUDENTS' ALLOWANCE (DSA)

Explore this section

The Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) scheme aims to ensure everyone has the support and adjustments they need to succeed in their studies.

Undergraduate / Applying to university / Individual needs

STUDENTS FROM A UK ARMED FORCES BACKGROUND

Explore this section

Universities and colleges welcome students from a diverse range of backgrounds and experience.

What's on this page?

- Service children
- Veterans and service leavers
- Spouses

Undergraduate / What and where to study / What can I do next? / Students with individual needs

STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM)

Explore this section

Being eligible for free school meals (FSM) means you might be able get help to meet different costs, and access other forms of support if you want to go to university.

Undergraduate / What and where to study / What can I do next? / Students with individual needs

STUDENTS WITH IMPRISONED PARENTS

Explore this section

Universities and colleges welcome students from a diverse range of backgrounds and experience. You can choose to disclose that you are a student with an imprisoned parent in your personal statement in the context to your circumstances.

Personal statement for estranged students

Being an estranged student means you'll be studying without the support of your parents due to a breakdown in your relationship. We've worked with Stand Alone to help you to think about the skills, experience, and strengths to write about in your personal statement.

Money and student life / Money / Scholarships, grants, and bursaries

FINANCE AND FUNDING FOR CARE EXPERIENCED STUDENTS

Explore this section

Many students are worried about managing their money – and if you've experienced care in the past, this can be even more so.

Who is a student with a parent in care?



PATRICKA, UK ARMED FORCES SERVICE LEAVER

Explore this section

Patricka Brice-Laughton has completed a HNC in Construction and the Built Environment (Civil Engineering) at Huddersfield College & University Centre and is currently in her first year at University of the West of England studying for a (Hons) Construction Project Management.

Was there any connection between this course and your military career?

No connection to my military career as I was a system engineer in The Royal Corp of Signals, but I did drafting and building technology at secondary school and college before joining the army.

What transferable skills and characteristics do you think have been helpful in your studies? Do you have any advice for how UKAF veterans and Service leavers could talk about their military experience in their UCAS personal statement and university interviews?

Some work experiences can be relevant to use in certain scenarios – time management, communication skills, hardworking, and adaptable.

Undergraduate / What and where to study / What can I do next? / Students with individual needs

STUDENTS WITH CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Explore this section

If you're responsible for providing unpaid care to a family member, partner or friend, you may be able to get extra support during your studies.

What's on this page?

- Who is a carer?

How do I get to university? Refugees and Asylum Seekers

2

- Improving your English
- Doing volunteer work



Watch on YouTube

doing some volunteer work,

Refugees and asylum seekers - how do I get to university?

This video from Refugee Education UK and the University of Sussex helps to explain how you can apply for university if you are a refugee or asylum seeker in the UK.

Tuition fees and financial help

FAIR ACCESS MISSION CARDS

YOUR MISSION
WHAT SUPPORT CAN
I GET IF I HAVE CARING
RESPONSIBILITIES?

YOUR MISSION
WHAT SUPPORT CAN I
GET IF I AM FROM A UK
ARMED FORCES FAMILY?

YOUR MISSION
WHAT SUPPORT CAN I GET
IF I AM ESTRANGED FROM
(NOT SUPPORTED BY)
BOTH OF MY PARENTS?

YOUR MISSION
WHAT SUPPORT CAN I GET IF
I AM DISABLED (INCLUDING
LEARNING DIFFERENCE,
NEURODIVERSITY, MENTAL
HEALTH CONDITION AND LONG-
TERM HEALTH CONDITION)?

**THE BIG
Q&A**

UCAS DISCOVERY UK TOUR

FIVE QUESTIONS TO GET YOU STARTED AT UCAS/DISCOVERY:

- ▶ Is there a named contact for care-experienced students in the support team? Can you give me their details so I can contact them with any questions or get more information?
- ▶ Does the university or college offer a bursary or other financial support for people from a care background? If so, where can I get more information about eligibility criteria?
- ▶ Is there any support with accommodation for care-experienced students? If so what type of help is available? (e.g. 365-day accommodation, help with guarantors, priority access to university accommodation)?
- ▶ Are there any outreach activities or programmes I could participate in – either specifically for care-experienced students or otherwise?
- ▶ What support is available to help me manage my mental health and wellbeing at university or college?

TIP:

If you are currently in care, check your Local Authority's 'local offer' and ask them about the care leavers' bursary.

DISCOVER MORE



[Link to UCAS Discovery Day event](#)

UCAS

TALK TO US

[Link to the Fair Access Mission Cards](#)



ADVISER RESOURCES



Tools and resources supporting fair access

THE UCAS OUTREACH CONNECTION SERVICE

Outreach Connection Service

Grid

List

Filters

Achieve HE - Support for Independent Students

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

General information and guidance

At charity/provider premises (Also available online)

Year 9/S3, Year 10/S4, Year 11/S5, Year 12/S6, Year 13, Pre-16, Post-16, Mature

Details

Advancing Access CPD sessions (for Teachers and Advisers)

ADVANCING ACCESS

Masterclass/Subject insight

At school/college premises (Also available online)

Year 11/S5, Year 12/S6, Year 13, Post-16

Details

Advocacy Academy

EDGE HILL UNIVERSITY

Skills and attainment raising activity

At charity/provider premises (Not available online)

Year 12/S6, Post-16

28 Oct 2024 - 31 Dec 2024

Details

Ambition Nottingham 16-18

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

Long term programme

Online only

Year 12/S6

Medicine and dentistry, Subjects allied to medicine, Biological and sport sciences, Psychology, Veterinary sciences, Physical sciences, Mathematical sciences, Engineering and technology, Computing, Social sciences, Law, Business and management, Language and area studies, Historical, philosophical and religious studies, Education and teaching, Geography, earth and environmental studies

01 Jan 2025 - 31 Jul 2026

Details

Black Access Programme

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Long term programme

At charity/provider premises (Not available online)

Year 12/S6, Post-16

Details

Campus Tours

UCEN MANCHESTER

Campus visit

At school/college premises (Not available online)

Post-16, Mature

Biological and sport sciences, Engineering and technology, Computing, Social sciences, Education and teaching, Design, and creative and performing arts

10 Oct 2024

Details

Outreach Connection Service

The Scholars Programme

THE BRILLIANT CLUB

Type of opportunity: Long term programme

Location: At school/college premises (Not available online)

Start date: To be confirmed

End date: To be confirmed

Requires application: Yes, by 01 Sep 2025

Session length: 1 hour (20 minutes)

Age suitability: Year 2/S3, Year 9/S2, Year 10/S4, Year 11/S5, Year 12/S6, Year 13, Post-16, Mature

Measures of disadvantage: POLAR 1, POLAR 2, JUNIOR MEDIAN, SENIOR MEDIAN

Summary: The Brilliant Club Scholars Programme gives pupils from non-selective state schools the opportunity to study with a PhD researcher to experience university style learning. It helps pupils develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to secure a place at a highly-selective university. Students by a PhD researcher through a series of seven tutorials. Learning is a challenging, first experience and a graduation visit to a comparable university. It also provides impact on attainment.

Criteria: Use in target postcode, Attend a state-funded school or college, An interest of free school meals (FSM), Prior generation of state funding to attend university

Information link: <https://thebrilliantclub.org/thebrilliantclubprogramme/for-schools/theprogramme/>

Fees: There is no associated cost for this opportunity, more information will be on the providers website

Outreach Connection Service

UCAS' Outreach Connection Service has been developed for UK teachers and advisers, offering an efficient and timesaving online tool for them to support disadvantaged and underrepresented students to higher education.

Find out more

Know of an outreach opportunity?
Check if they know about the OCS and
are registered – it's free

Watch a recording of a recent 'ask us anything' session about the OCS

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Explore this section 

We've worked with experts, such as the National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP) to outline some of the ways in which you can help your students make a successful transition.



Some students may be hesitant to tell their university, so we've worked with experts (including Student Minds and the University Mental Health Advisers' Network (UMHAN)) to explain the process of declaration to you students, and offer practical ways to help them manage the transition to independence.



Here are some practical ways in which students research their options and have developed with experts such as the National Network for Career Development. Become, the National Network for Career Development and Who Cares? Scotland.



Here, with the charity Stand Alone, we outline the ways in which you can help students in at each stage and explain what support they may be able to access.



We have worked with expert organisations, including STAR Network, Refugee Education UK and We Belong to help clarify what you can do to help and support young students' aspirations for higher education.



A carer is anyone who has a commitment to a family member or friend who could not cope for themselves. This may be due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or domestic violence/misuse.



Balancing studying with family life can present challenges, so student parents will find it useful to know what support they can access to manage their priorities. Here, we offer some practical tips to help them along their journey to higher education.



We have worked with the Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance to explain how you can practically support Service children along their journey to higher education.



Students who have served in the UK Armed Forces Reserve may find there are unique challenges in higher education. We have worked with the Ministry experts at the University of South Wales to offer them explore their options and prepare for their next



Discover what students are eligible for free school meals (FSMs), how to support them, and how it's declared.



There are an estimated 312,000 children of prisoners in the UK and they are often described as 'invisible'. Disclosing they are a child of a prisoner on their UCAS application will not disadvantage them, but instead give the provider a fuller picture of their circumstances.



UCAS' Outreach Connection Service has been developed for teachers and advisers, offering an efficient and timesaving online tool to help disadvantaged and underrepresented students to higher education.

Supporting Care Expert

Students who have spent time in care are entitled to support with going to university. Here are some practical ways in which you can support care experienced students research their options and prepare for their next step, which we have developed with experts such as the Care Leavers' Covenant, Become, the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) and Who Cares? Scotland.

What's on this page?

- Online training module introduction to supporting data augmentation
- Shown through the app loader process
- Pre-app loader and reloader phase
- What they're applying
- Post-app loader
- During confirmation and clearing
- Preparing for the transition to university or college
- Remote support

Online training module: Introduction to supporting care experienced children through the application process

For anyone supporting a case experienced person with the UbiSAP application, this free training module can be found on the UbiSAP Professional Development Platform. This resource is accompanied by the test kit and takes you through the different stages of the application from the research phase to completion, offering practical tips and resources.

Step-by-step guide

Step-by-step guide
This guide assumes knowledge of the UICSS application with university applications, or need more guidance? If you're a student, our step-by-step guide will give you details.

Pre-application and research phase

Pre-application and research phase

Forward planning is extremely important for some experienced students to ensure they can take the appropriate funding and support as early as possible. Some students to discuss their plans with their support worker as part of their pathway plan, as they are entitled to help with making these plans from their local authority.

- Identify students with experience of being in care and inform them that support is available to help them go to university or college (the pastoral team in your school or college may be able to help with this).
- Encourage students to become Peer Mentors. We will provide them support each university or college offers to care experienced students, and details of the named contact at each institution. Encourage students to get in touch to find out about the support they offer. Becoming a Peer Mentor helps you reach higher education and has the support students are entitled to at all stages.
- The new [NHS.uk Go to Work](#) is directed to universities and colleges demonstrating effective support for care experienced students from the age of 16 until through to graduation. Most institutions will be able to apply from autumn 2021, but some that participated in the pilot have already received the award - check the care experience page on the institution's website.
- Students may be eligible for an annual bursary from the local authority, and they should also check for other grants and financial support for care experienced students - read more of [LocalGov](#). In Scotland, direct students to the [SAS2 website](#) for more information.
- Remind students to discuss their plans with their support worker (usually their social worker or personal adviser) as part of their pathway plan, and anyone else who supports them (e.g. foster carer).

What's on this page?

- Pre-application and research phase
- When they're applying
- Post-application
- During Confirmation and Clearing
- Preparing for the transition to university or college
- Further support and resources

[Link to all teacher toolkits](#)

BACK TO BASICS

THE UCAS APPLICATION:

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SUPPORTING APPLICANTS THROUGH THE UCAS PROCESS

UCAS



THE UCAS HUB: WHAT IS IT?

This is where applicants can access tools and information to:

- explore and research their options
- shortlist choices
- apply to courses
- track and reply to decisions

Register for the Hub any time!

Applicants don't have to be ready to apply, or even apply at all – it's a great place to explore all options and pathways, whether they:

- have a clear idea of what they want to do and how to get there
- have some ideas but need more information
- don't have a clue where to start!

HOW TO COMPLETE THE UCAS APPLICATION

Click Start on the Your Applications tile in the Hub dashboard.

Link to your school or college using the Buzzword provided. If you are not applying from a school or college, skip this step.

Enter the Buzzword from your school, college, or centre

Enter the required information for each section and mark as complete. You can save the application at any time and complete it later. You can't mark the section as complete until all required information is added (marked with an asterisk*).

Mark this section as complete*
You must complete all mandatory fields in this section before you can mark as complete before you can send your application.

Save this section

The dashboard will show progress for each section

RECEIVED NO OFFERS? THERE ARE STILL OPTIONS!

If the applicant is unsuccessful in all choices (or they have declined all offers), they may be able to find a place through Extra.

This service is available February to July to apply to one additional course at a time. Eligible students will see the Extra option in their Hub.

When Extra closes, applicants holding no offers can still apply for vacancies through Clearing (see below).

NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL? THERE ARE STILL OPTIONS!

It can be a difficult time for applicants who don't get the grades they need but it's not the end of the road.


Firstly, wait for the decision in the Hub – the student won't be accepted. If they miss a grade doesn't necessarily mean they are unsuccessful, they can use Clearing (below) to find an alternative place or explore other options.

FINAL DECISIONS – CONFIRMATION

Applicants awaiting results (e.g. A levels, Scottish Highers, BTECs) for a conditional offer, can see if they have been accepted in their UCAS Hub. This usually happens on results days in August.

READ OUR FULL GUIDE TO RESULTS DAY – INCLUDING WHAT HAPPENS AND NEXT STEPS

Top tip: check if there are any other conditions to be secured (e.g. passing DBS checks)



THE UCAS APPLICATION:

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SUPPORTING CARE-EXPERIENCED APPLICANTS

UCAS



TOP TIPS TO HELP CARE-EXPERIENCED APPLICANTS DISCOVER THEIR OPTIONS

CHALLENGE	WAYS TO HELP
"Is this for me?" Student feels overwhelmed or daunted by the process or practicalities	Help the student feel this is possible by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">discussing plans with a care leaver's pathway plan personal adviser, and checking with costs, accommodation access and participation teams about programmes orasking university widening access and participation teams about opportunities listedUCAS adviser at school or college will also be able to check opportunities needlinking the applicant with the student support team in advance to discuss needconnecting the student to a role model (e.g. via Unibuddy, mentoring scheme)
"I can't afford it" Student is worried about the cost of going to university, or attending interviews and open days	Forward planning is important, so: <ul style="list-style-type: none">reassure students that student finance is for everyone and explain how itplan support to attend open days, events and interviews – can the localask the local authority about the Higher Education Bursary (England and(Scotland) and work with the Local Authority team (e.g. at PEP andcheck bursaries and scholarships available from individual universities
"My grades aren't good enough" Student thinks their grades will prevent them getting a place	Some universities make contextual offers to care-experienced students – check university websites <ul style="list-style-type: none">read about contextual admissions – check university websitesin Scotland? Care-experienced students are eligible for thestudents in Scotland, may also be able to enter university directcollege – contact the university directly to check and read thecare-experienced students.

HELPING CARE-EXPERIENCED APPLICANTS SHARE OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

More about you

Tell us about any circumstances that you might need support for during your studies.

Start this section

In the 'More about you' section, students can share any other circumstances and support needs.

All information about personal circumstances will be:

- treated sensitively and only shared with those who arrange support.
- used positively – it is never used to decide whether to make an offer. Some applicants are worried about this so may need reassurance.

This UCAS blog explains why it's important to share a care background, and the FAQs page gives more information about how this information is used.

Universities may get in touch for more information. Some may require supporting evidence to give access to certain types of support (e.g. a bursary or accommodation) – they will let you know what they need (usually a letter from the school or local authority).

HELPING CARE-EXPERIENCED APPLICANTS GET READY TO GO!

GET THE PRACTICALITIES SORTED

- Prepare to move to their accommodation.** Have they planned their move (where applicable) with their Personal Adviser? The local authority may be able to help with costs.
- Check what equipment they need.** Find out what is provided and what they need to buy. Some universities offer starter packs (e.g. kitchen equipment and bedding) to care leavers, and the local authority may be able to help. If they are worried about the cost of books, the library will be able to help.
- Know where to get help.** Many universities have a dedicated care-experienced adviser (most are listed on Propel).
- Get ready for independent living.** Cooking and budgeting skills are really helpful preparation for university life.

- Look after their mental health and wellbeing.** Check what mental health and wellbeing support is available and how to access it. The **Charlie Waller guide for care leavers** gives sound advice on making the transition to university while looking after your mental health and wellbeing.
- Keep in touch.** Leaving your support network can be settling into a new environment can be difficult. Try to find some time to check in with the young person to see how they are getting on.

MAKING FRIENDS

Universities are diverse and inclusive environments, offering a range of clubs and societies to help like-minded students connect. Check what's on offer via student services or the students' union.

Some universities have groups just for care-experienced students to meet and support each other – they may also be interested in these groups.

This is Us from the Unite Foundation

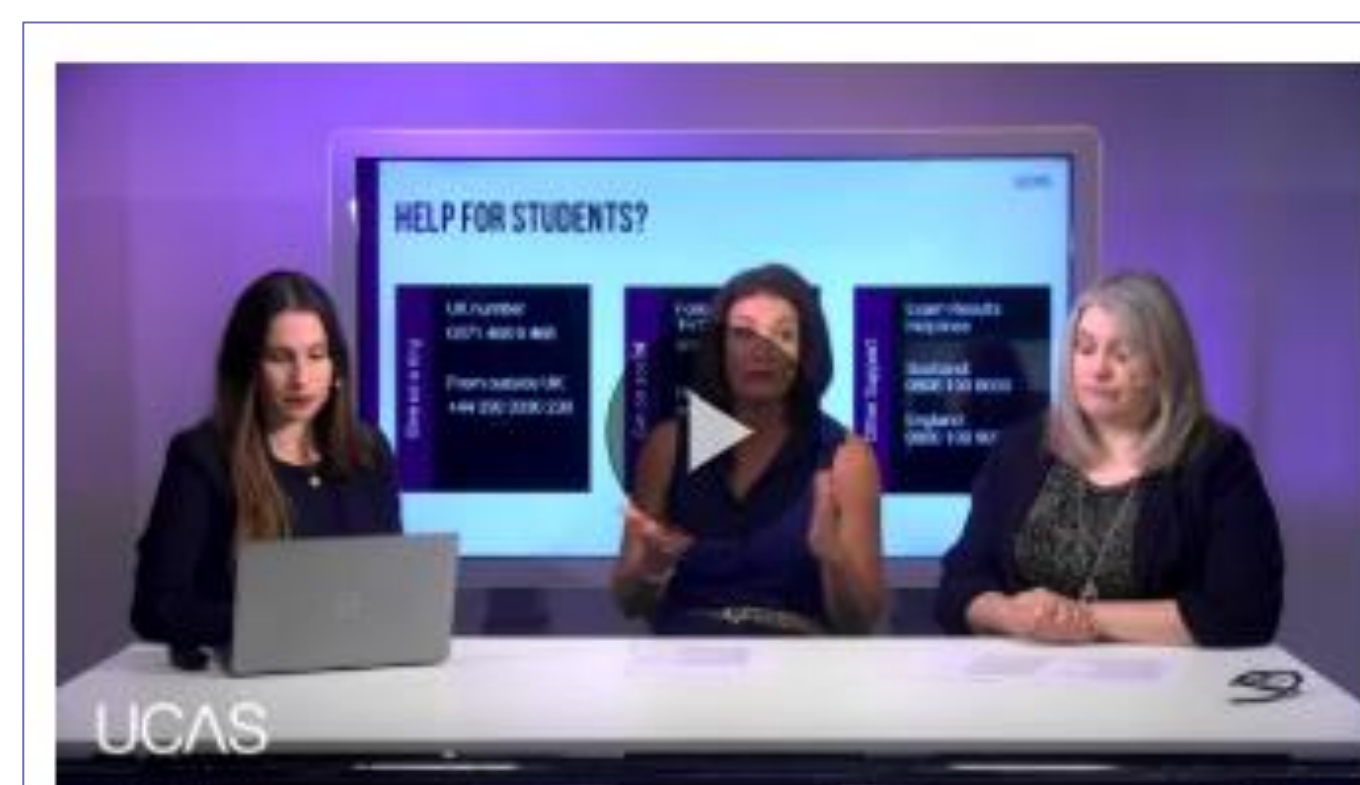
This is a student-led community offering a safe online space for care-experienced students to connect, share info, arrange meet-ups and more. It's free, and open to all ages and years of study.

Unify from the Rees Foundation

Provides online sessions where care-experienced students of all ages and experienced students can meet and chat about their experiences of student life, and provide mutual support and advice.



TRAINING TO SUPPORT ADVISERS



Supporting students for results day

31:43

The latest insights from education experts to help you support your students on results day. We provide key updates and discuss practical strategies to guide students through their results, next steps, and any challenges they may face.



Confirmation and Clearing for teachers and advisers 2025

What will I learn?

This course will prepare you with everything you need to know ready for



Adviser Fundamentals

Our one-day in-person [training](#) at UCAS Headquarters for Registered Centres



Personalised training

We can work with you to [develop bespoke training](#) specific to your teams' needs.

Adviser Live webinars

[Hear from](#) UCAS colleagues and sector experts on the latest topics. Live or on demand!

Professional Development Platform

Learn more about UCAS, with **free short training courses** via our dedicated [professional development platform](#).

FAIR ACCESS MODULES ON UCAS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM

UCAS

HomeUCAS Learning DashboardCommercial customers

Professional Development Platform

The home of UCAS operational training

Search the site...

Click here

HE Providers

Our provider training area is only for colleagues working at a university or college offering higher education courses through UCAS.

Click here

Adviser

Our adviser training area is only for careers staff and those supporting higher education courses through UCAS.

[Link to the UCAS PDP](#)

Exploring widening access and participation: supporting your students

50%

Home / Advisers / Exploring widening access and participation: supporting your students

Rate us: ★★★★★ 0.0 (0)
Like: ♡ 0
Bookmark: 📖

← Back to Advisers

What will I learn?

Our experience at UCAS is that students from under-represented backgrounds often need extra support when applying to HE. We know they often find it difficult to ask for help, and can feel that if they they may be discouraged from accessing education or training. You can read about the cohort of 2023 in our [Fair Access Snapshots](#).

The core unit explores how to start those conversations with students as early as possible, so that they become a normal part of the wider education and careers provision. We look at who the under-represented groups are, and offer some ways in which they can be supported which meets their individual needs.

In the optional units, we focus on some of the individual groups and how they can be encouraged and supported through their applications to higher education courses, but have been updated and brought together here to enhance your learning.

How long will it take me?

You can expect to spend 3 hours to complete all the units in this course. You don't have to complete the course in a single sitting - use the exit links in each

Core units: Exploring WP

Option units

Exploring widening access and participation (WP): What is WP?

★★★★★ 0.0 (0)

Talking about the student's individual circumstances

★★★★★ 0.0 (0)

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

★★★★★ 0.0 (0)

Who might benefit from a WP conversation?

Prepare yourself, before you prepare them.

Who runs outreach programmes?

Opportunities for under-represented groups

What happens to the information when the application is submitted?

Students with care experience: Three reasons to tick the box

This case study from Kingston University, Beth Taswell, Access and Support Advisor, explains how they use this information to connect prospective students to the support education – and right through to graduation.

ADDITIONAL ADVISER RESOURCES

Monthly newsletters

Stay up to date with all the latest UCAS news and guidance.

Sign up:

ucas.com/adviser-updates

UCAS for Advisers(Linked In)

Get timely updates and reminders focused on advisers' needs – videos, webinar links, events and training all year round.

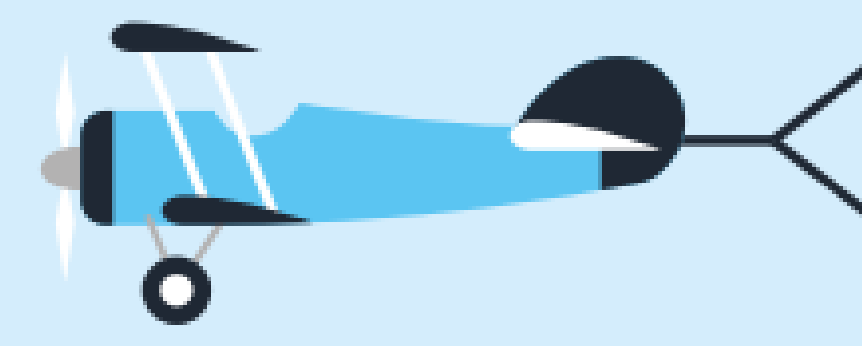
www.linkedin.com/showcase/ucas-for-advisers

Dedicated web pages

A dedicated area of our website with our latest news, events, guides and resources to support careers guidance and UCAS applications.

ucas.com/advisers

YOUR HUB JOURNEY



UCAS

UCAS

See me after for a map and other resources to take away!

1

GET STARTED: REGISTER ON THE HUB

2

BUILD YOUR PROFILE

Explore your favourite subjects, universities, employers, courses, apprenticeships, and more. Create a list of all your options.

3

TAKE THE CAREERS QUIZ

What would you like to do? Find careers that match your personality, interests, and skills.

4

TRY SUBJECT TASTERS

Grab the popcorn and hear real lecturers covering topics you would actually study. Try before you apply. You even get a certificate at the end!

5

EXPLORE THE WORLD OF WORK

Get work experience with top employers like Airbus, the Met Office, and Amazon Future Engineer. Perfect for CVs, applications, and personal statements.

9

CHAT TO CURRENT STUDENTS

Get messaging! Ask questions, get advice, and see if the university, subject, and location are a good fit for you.

8

DIVE INTO SUBJECT AND INDUSTRY GUIDES

Discover what it's like to study a subject, the career and salary opportunities available, and see what current students and apprentices think.

7

UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE OR APPRENTICESHIP?

Compare all your options side-by-side. Take a closer look at apprenticeships, courses, and job opportunities.

6

FAVOURITE YOUR TOP CAREERS

Click or tap the heart to save what you love as favourites. Not sure which is right for you? We'll show you what's out there.

10

ATTEND A LOCAL UCAS DISCOVERY EVENT

Chat with people from different universities and companies. Open your eyes to new options and grab some giveaways.

11

KNOW YOUR FINANCE OPTIONS

Learn about potential study costs and funding options, including student loans and scholarships.

12

BOOK AN OPEN DAY

Get ready for a great day out! You'll get to see the facilities on campus, speak to current staff and students, and explore the local area.

13

MAKE A SHORTLIST

Shortlist your favourite options: university courses, apprenticeship pathways, and further education. Use the Historical Entry Grades Tool to understand the grade profiles previously accepted by universities.

14

STILL DECIDING?

See if a gap year or internship is the best choice for you.

15

START YOUR APPLICATION

Clear on your next step? Then it's time to start applying!

EXPLORE
THE HUB:
[UCAS.COM/HUB](https://ucas.com/hub)



Illustrations designed by Storyset on Freepik.com

BEFORE YOU GO!



Things you need to know (and do) now!

KEY DATES FOR 2025/26

** 18.00 UK time*

2 September 2025

First day UCAS can receive a completed application

26 February 2026

UCAS Extra opens

31 March 2026

Advisory decision date for providers

13 May 2026

Reject by default date

15 October 2025*

Deadline for courses in medicine, veterinary medicine/science, dentistry, and courses at Oxford or Cambridge

14 January 2026*

Equal consideration date for all other courses

30 June 2026

Last date to send an application

05 July 2026

Clearing opens

DOWNLOAD YOUR **APPLICANT** STATUS REPORT NOW!

Placement summary

Active applications



Filter applications

Unplaced	185
Placed insurance choice	0
Placed firm choice	0

- Use the **filters** to tailor your ASRs.
- ASRs have **full conditions of offer** as well as your students' predicted grades.
- [The Adviser Guide](#) outlines the abbreviations and symbols used in providers' summary offers.
- Bulk download your applications in one cohort.

RESULTS DAY



Adviser portal opens 7am

THANK YOU

ANY QUESTIONS?

GET IN TOUCH:



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