

Replying to UCAS Offers & Applications for Student Finance

Replying to Offers

When you receive your last decision from UCAS/UCAS Conservatoires you will be advised by email to respond to your offers by your personal deadline – this is shown in UCAS Track:

UCAS		UCAS Conservatoires	
Last decision by	Reply by	Last decision by	Reply by
		4 Jan	1 Feb
		16 March	13 April
20 May	10 June	15 May	1 June
13 July	14 July	13 July	29 July
		4 Aug	8 Sept

Once you have accepted an offer, you and the university are bound together by UCAS:

- If you firmly accept an unconditional offer, you have a definite place at that university
- If you firmly accept a conditional offer and then meet all the conditions, the university is obliged to accept you and you are obliged to go there to study



UCAS Offer and Reply Combinations

- **Unconditional Firm** – You have a place on your first-choice course
- **Conditional Firm** – A place on your first-choice course if you meet the offer conditions
- **Conditional Firm & Conditional Insurance** – A place on your first-choice course if you meet the offer conditions. If not, a place on your second-choice if you meet the offer conditions
- **Conditional Firm & Unconditional Insurance** – A place on your first-choice course if you meet the offer conditions. If not, a confirmed place on your second-choice course

Remember...

When making your decisions there are a few things to bear in mind:

- Make sure it's a university you would still like to go to because UCAS rules require you to honour that decision, although you can now self-release into UCAS clearing
- Typically, about 8% of applicants use their Insurance choice each year, e.g. by going to their Insurance choice having not met the conditions of their Firm choice
- In some subjects, such as humanities subjects, it can be easier to get a place in Clearing, even at prestigious universities. So, making just one Firm choice may be better than choosing a second you don't really want
- Holding an Insurance offer just for the sake of it would delay your entry into Clearing
- Make sure you reply to all of your offers. If you don't, and ignore the UCAS reminders, you will be 'declined by default' and lose your offers

Student Finance

Student finance usually consists of a Tuition Fee Loan and a means-tested Maintenance Loan to cover/help with your university costs. All full-time undergraduate students are eligible for student finance, provided they meet some basic criteria.

You must apply to Student Finance England as well as notify them of any changes to your circumstances, such as leaving or changing your course.

You apply for each year of your course and it can take up to six weeks to process student finance applications. ***Applications should open in February 2021 but the date is yet to be confirmed.***

Your Tuition Fee Loan will be paid directly to the university by Student Finance England. Your Maintenance Loan will be paid into your bank account in three instalments in October, January and April. Maximum loan amounts for 2021/22 entry are:

- £7,987 if you're living with your parents during term time
- £9,488 if you're living away from home outside London
- Nursing and Midwifery students will receive a payment of at least £5,000 a year from the NHS Learning Support Fund (nhs.uk) to provide extra help with the cost of travel to placements - this does not need to be paid back

Both Tuition Fee Loans and Maintenance Loans must be paid back once you graduate and you are earning above a minimum salary.

Further Reading

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/types-offer/replying-your-ucas-undergraduate-offers>

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/education/student-finance>

<https://media.slc.co.uk/sfe/quickstartfinanceguide/index.html>

<https://www.ucas.com/finance/undergraduate-tuition-fees-and-student-loans>

Please contact the Careers Department at careersstaff@staidans.co.uk if you would like individual information, advice and guidance – we will be happy to help.

Careers Department

St. Aidan's and St John Fisher Associated Sixth Form

December 2020

