

Higher Education – simply making a good application...

1. Starting point = www.ucas.com

2. Choosing a subject

- a. On the UCAS website click on 'course search' and then on 'search by subject'
- b. If you don't know what subject you want...
 - i. Stamford Test – free on UCAS website
 - ii. Centigrade – link from UCAS website - £15 but well worth it if you are really stuck...

3. Choosing universities

- a. You must only apply to courses/universities for which you are predicted the right grades. The end of first year predicted grades will be published after half term.
- b. Convert your predicted grades into 'UCAS points' (UCAS Tariff):
 - i. AS levels (not taken to A2): A = 60; B=50; C=40; D=30; E=20
 - ii. A levels: A*=140; A=120; B=100; C=80; D=60; E=40
 - iii. BTEC National: DDD=360; DDM=320; DMM=280; MMM=240; MMP=200; MPP=160; PPP=120
- c. League tables will show you the UCAS points gained by successful entrants. Use, for example, the Times *Good University Guide*:
http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education/good_university_guide/
or the Guardian *University Guide*:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/universityguide>
and find the relevant **subject league table**. There will be a column headed 'entry standards' or 'average entry tariff'. These are the average UCAS points of entrants.

...or you can look in *University Degree Course Offers* (book) in College Library.
- d. Remember to check the 2011 entry points/grades on the university's website – they can go up from one year to the next.

4. Personal Statement - what you need to get across

- a. Knowledge – of the degree course and of your subject area
- b. Attitude – enthusiasm; commitment; willingness to learn
- c. Skills – *course related* (provide *examples* that show you have the particular skills needed for the course you want – this is vital for vocational courses.)
- d. Skills – *personal*: self-motivation; organization of time and work; ability to meet new challenges, ability to overcome difficulties – again, provide *examples* of these
- e. Personality – they need to want to meet you...
- f. Finally, you can't write a good Personal Statement if you have applied for two courses that are significantly different – so don't.