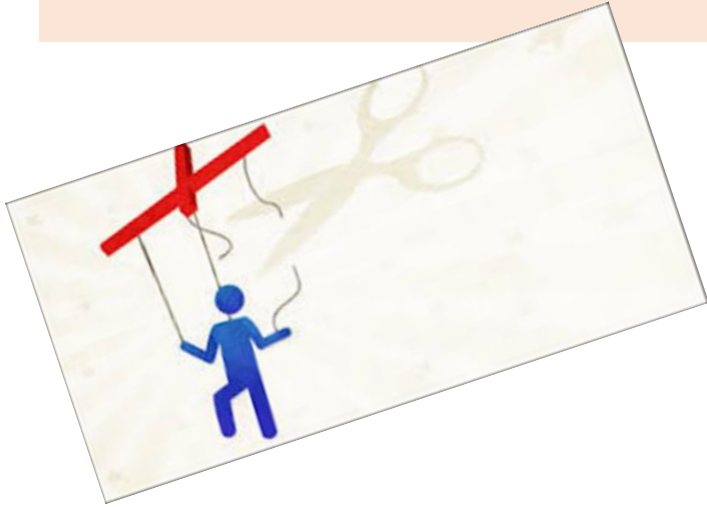


# Researching your Higher Education options

# Why Choose Higher Education?

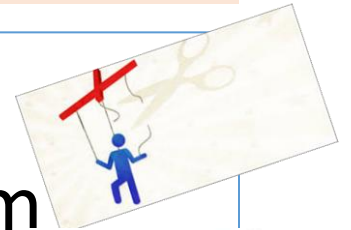


# Why might you choose to go to university?



# Why Choose Higher Education?

- Increase Your Knowledge
- Get Your First True Taste Of Independence And Freedom
- Gain A Qualification That's Internationally Recognised
- Develop The Essential Skills You'll Need In Your Career And Working Life
- Increase Your Earning Potential
- Experience Student Life



If I'm interested in going to university, what should I be doing now?

# What is UCAS?

- For those who don't know, UCAS is the organization that deals with university applications in the UK.
- You don't apply to individual universities but choose up to 5 university courses on the online UCAS application form.
- UCAS really has 2 purposes for Sixth Form students
  - For **Year 12** – it is a really useful tool for advice and research.
  - For Year 13 – it is the application portal. It is the only way to apply to UK universities.

# Applying For Courses

- You can apply for up to 5 courses, either at the same university or at different universities.
- BUT...
- You can only apply for up to 4 courses in medicine, dentistry, veterinary science or veterinary medicine.
- You can only make 1 application to Oxbridge.

# Key Dates And Deadlines

- September
  - UCAS opens to receive applications
- 15<sup>th</sup> October
  - deadline for all medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and veterinary science applications, and for all applications to Oxbridge.
- 15<sup>th</sup> January
  - application deadline for most other courses



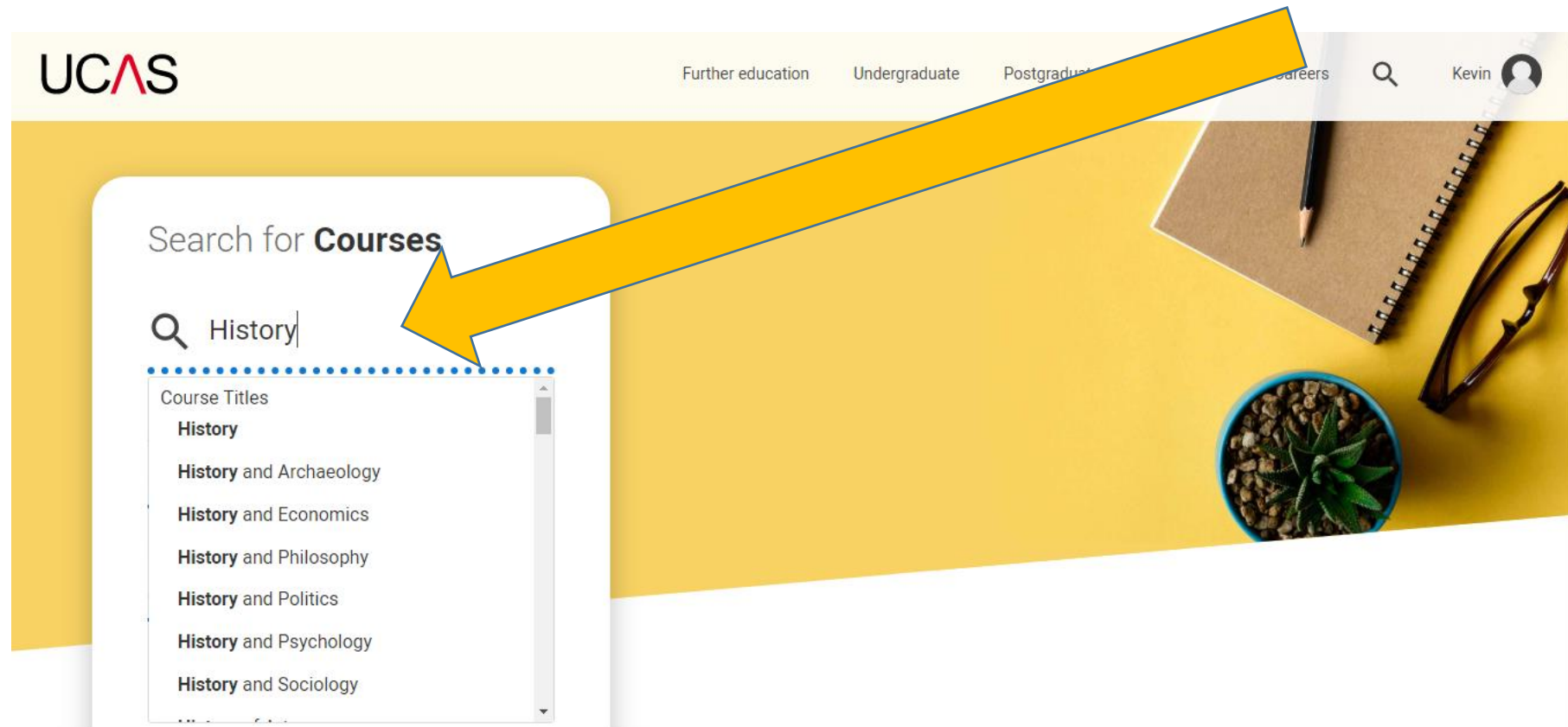
# How can I research my options?

There are a range of resources you can use during the current situation

- The UCAS website - <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/what-and-where-study/choosing-course/choosing-undergraduate-course>
- University websites (remember these are also marketing tools!)
- Virtual open days - <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/events/find/scheme/virtual-and-digital?keywords>
- Chat to current students online - <https://www.ucas.com/chat-to-students>
- Many, many free websites – a few great examples are
  - The Complete University Guide - <https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/courses>
  - Success at schools - <https://successatschool.org/advice/university>
  - The UniGuide - <https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/>

# How to use UCAS Course Search

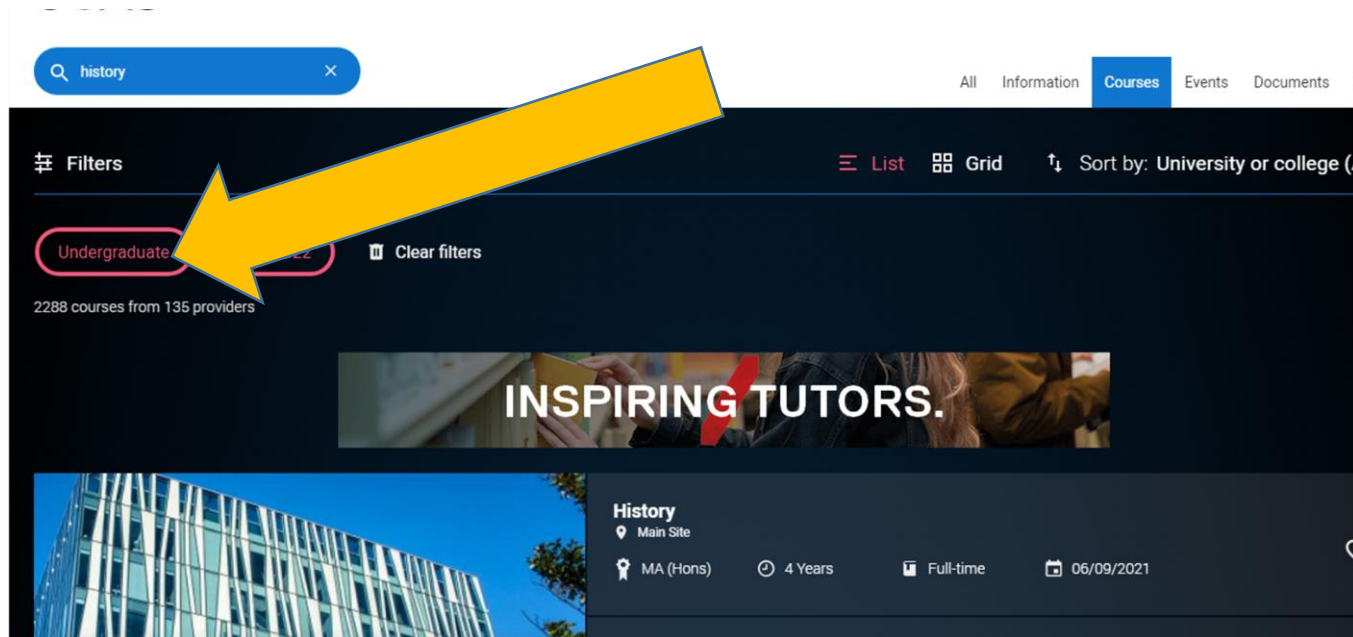
- First off – follow this link - <https://digital.ucas.com/search>
- Next – try typing the subject you are interested in here. Remember, you are interested in **Undergraduate Courses**



You will probably want to choose Entry Year 2021-22

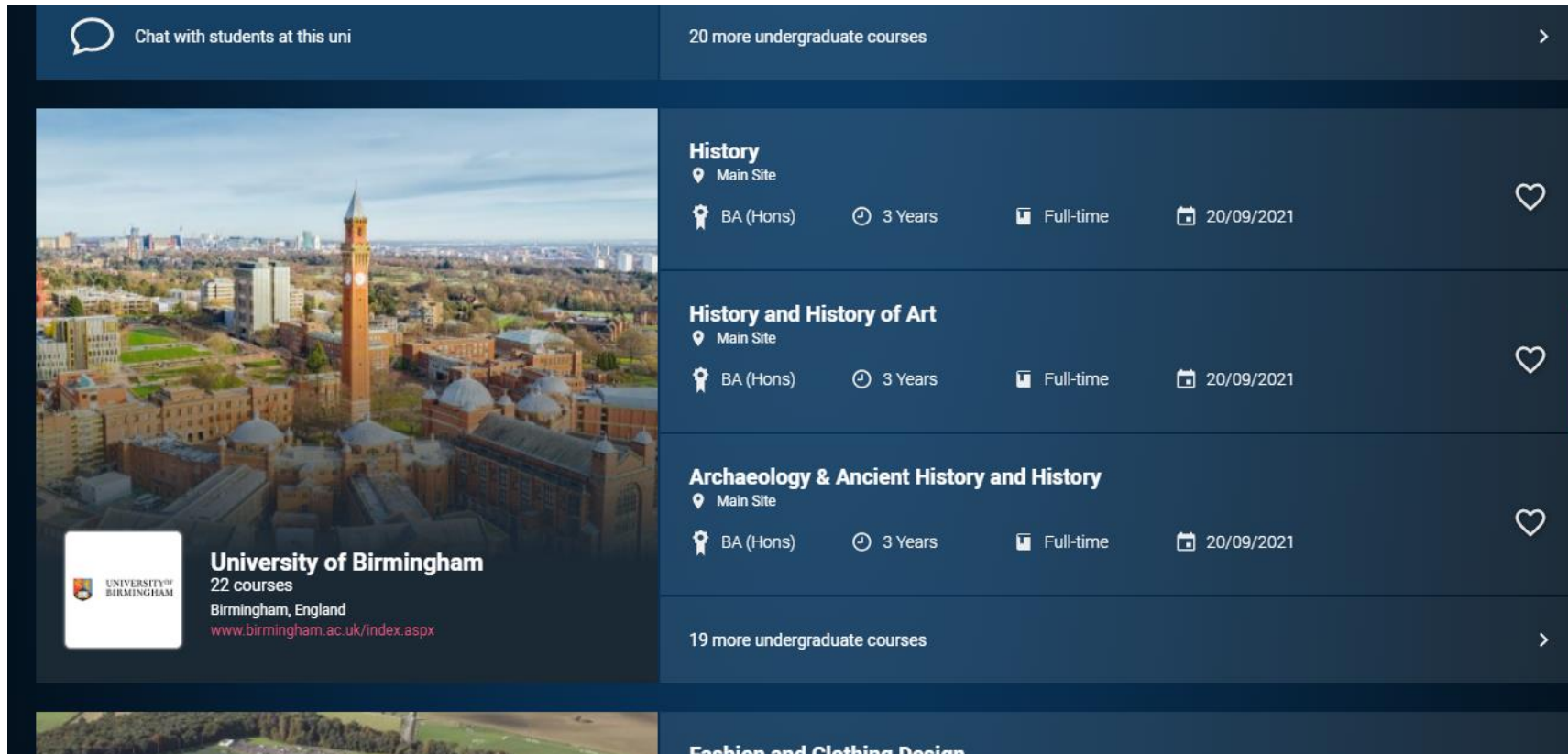
# How to use UCAS Course Search

- Next, you will see a list of courses, usually organized by alphabetical list of universities – my simple search for ‘history’ came back with 2288 courses containing some element of history, at 135 different universities!



# How to use UCAS Course Search

- If you click on one of the courses, you will get more detail on that course. Let's use Birmingham as an example



The screenshot displays the UCAS Course Search interface for the University of Birmingham. At the top, there is a dark blue header bar with a chat icon and the text "Chat with students at this uni" on the left, and "20 more undergraduate courses" with a right-pointing arrow on the right. Below the header, the main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features a large aerial photograph of the University of Birmingham campus, including the iconic clock tower. Overlaid on the bottom left of this image is the University of Birmingham logo and the text: "University of Birmingham", "22 courses", "Birmingham, England", and the website URL "www.birmingham.ac.uk/index.aspx". The right column lists three undergraduate courses, each with a heart icon for favoriting. The first course is "History", the second is "History and History of Art", and the third is "Archaeology & Ancient History and History". Each course entry includes a location pin icon and the text "Main Site", a degree icon and "BA (Hons)", a clock icon and "3 Years", a book icon and "Full-time", and a calendar icon and "20/09/2021". At the bottom of the right column, there is a link to "19 more undergraduate courses" with a right-pointing arrow. The bottom of the screenshot shows the beginning of a fourth course entry, "Fashion and Clothing Design".

Chat with students at this uni

20 more undergraduate courses

**History**  
Main Site  
BA (Hons) 3 Years Full-time 20/09/2021

**History and History of Art**  
Main Site  
BA (Hons) 3 Years Full-time 20/09/2021

**Archaeology & Ancient History and History**  
Main Site  
BA (Hons) 3 Years Full-time 20/09/2021

19 more undergraduate courses

**University of Birmingham**  
22 courses  
Birmingham, England  
[www.birmingham.ac.uk/index.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/index.aspx)

**Fashion and Clothing Design**

# How to use UCAS Course Search

- You can see that you can find out about the course, the application process and the important entry requirements
- There are also links to 'virtual open days'

The screenshot shows the UCAS Course Search results for a Bachelor of Arts (with Honours) - BA (Hons) course at the University of Birmingham. The filter bar at the top includes the following details:

- Qualification type: Bachelor of Arts (with Honours) - BA (Hons)
- Location: Main Site
- Start date: 20 September 2021
- Study mode: Full-time
- Duration: 3 years
- Apply button

The main content area features a 'Course summary' section with a TEF Gold award badge. Below this, it states: 'University of Birmingham has opted into the TEF and received a Gold award. Find out more about the TEF.' The summary text continues: 'Studying History is an exciting chance to investigate global unfamiliar territory and to question some of the myths, preconceptions and prejudices that surround the subject. We offer a wide choice of specialist courses taught by academic staff world-renowned for their teaching and research. The size and quality of the department enables us to offer you a wide range of options across'.

On the right sidebar, there are 'Open days' listed for the University of Birmingham - Undergraduate Virtual Open Day - College of Life and Environmental Sciences, and the University of Birmingham - Undergraduate Virtual Open Day - College of Engineering and Physical Sciences. Both are for Undergraduate students.

Arrows from the text on the left point to the following elements on the page:

- Course summary
- How to apply
- Entry requirements
- Fees and funding
- Provider information

# How to use UCAS Course Search

- Entry requirements are a vital part of research – here is an example of the grades you would *usually*\* need to study this course here

Entry requirements		
Qualification requirements		
UCAS Tariff	Not accepted	
A level	AAB	To include A level History, Medieval History or Ancient History at grade A.
Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma (first teaching from September 2016)	DDM	BTEC Extended Diploma: DDM, plus an A at A-level in the required subject/s mentioned above. BTEC Diploma: DD, plus an A at A-level in the required subject/s mentioned above. BTEC Subsidiary Diploma: D, plus AB at A-level, including an A in the required A-level subject/s mentioned above.
International Baccalaureate Diploma	32 points	6,6,5 in Higher Level subjects.

*\*more about this later!*

# What should I be considering in my research?

As well as entry requirements, other academic considerations could include...

- What modules does the course cover? What options can I choose?
- How is the course taught? Big lectures or small group work? Is there any information on remote learning?
- How is the course assessed? Coursework or exams?
- Is there a chance to study abroad?
- Can you get help with work placements?
- Reputation? – Russell Group (one of the 24 most prestigious in the country) or excellence in a particular field?

# What should I be considering in my research?

Of course, there are a range of other considerations...

- Location from home – near or far? City centre or rural?
- Campus based? This is where all the facilities are mostly all on one site (often including accommodation)
- Chances of gaining part-time work?
- Do they guarantee accommodation in the first year?
- Good sports/music/drama facilities to support your extracurricular interests?
- Fees and bursaries? - most will charge the full rate, but lots offer bursaries – e.g. £2000 per year for getting AAA



# Types of degree?

Your research may lead you to come across different types of degree – here is a summary of what some of the terms mean –

- **Single honours**: study one subject.
- **Joint honours degree**: divide your time 50:50 between two subjects.
- **Sandwich courses**: courses with one year in industry or a year abroad.
- **Foundation year**: if you don't have the right qualifications, some universities and colleges offer this to help students prepare for and enter higher education.

# Contextual admissions?

- One area to also think about is whether the university has a '**contextual admissions**' policy - This means, that some universities may make lower grade offers to students if they fall into a particular category. Some of the criteria include -
  - Low household income
  - Whether there is a low participation in Higher Education from people in your postcode area
  - Your school's performance historically
  - If your parents did not go to university
- Quite often, if you meet one of these criteria, you may receive a lower offer. To find out more, you can either Google the contextual offers policy for a specific university, or this website, Advancing Access, has brought together links to all the Russell Group institutions <https://www.advancingaccess.ac.uk/2/content/3/resources/44>

# Researching bursaries and scholarships

There are a range of bursaries and scholarships offered by universities. They are awards of free money, unlike loans, so you don't need to pay them back. They can be awarded for a range of reasons – financial hardship, academic excellence, sporting/musical achievements, or to promote a widening participation agenda. There is further advice here at the [CompleteUniversityGuide](#), and <https://www.thescholarshiphub.org.uk/> is also a good place to start. For those applying for a Russell Group university, [Advancing Access](#) has useful information and links.

# What about competitive courses? Do you need to take a test?\*

- University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT) – register between 1st July and end of September, testing between 1 August and 1 October
- Biomedical Admissions Test (BMAT) – register from 1<sup>st</sup> Sept, test date 4<sup>th</sup> Nov
- National Admissions Test for Law (LNAT) – book from 1<sup>st</sup> August, Take from 1<sup>st</sup> September
- Oxford Tests – register by 15<sup>th</sup> Oct – tests on WEDS 4th NOVEMBER
  - History Aptitude Test (HAT)
  - English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT)
  - Mathematics Admissions Test (MAT)
  - Modern Languages Admissions Test (MLAT)
  - Physics Aptitude Test (PAT)
  - Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA)
  - Sixth Term Examination Papers (STEP)
- Cambridge – Some courses have pre-interview tests on 4<sup>th</sup> November, some give you tests at interview

\*all dates are subject to change during the COVID-19 situation

# Don't Forget...

- Please email us, or ask your mentor, if you want a careers interview
- Please check One Note, Twitter, and the Sixth Form newsletter for a range of taster days, summer schools and virtual work experience opportunities
- Read read read (and listen, and watch)
- National Apprenticeship Week is 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> February

@Highdown6thForm