

# UCAS - Making the right decision

Your offer will either be conditional or unconditional – here are some key things to think about to help you decide which is the right option for you.

## MAKING THE RIGHT DECISION



## Is it where you want to go?

Going to university or college is a big commitment, and it's important that your firm choice is your preferred choice for the right reasons. Before you accept an offer, here are a few things to research to make sure it's where you want to go:

- Do you really want to study there for the next three, four, or more years?
- Is the course right for you?
- Does the course have exams, coursework, or both?
- What's the difference between a lecture and a seminar?

- Have you thought about where you will live and how much it will cost?
- Is it a city or a campus university?
- What are the societies and night life like?
- Have you been to an open day or taken a virtual tour?

Remember, you can always talk to the university or college directly to make sure it's right for you, or speak to a teacher or careers adviser.

## Conditional offer – things to think about

- It's likely you'll need to achieve certain grades or Tariff points in your qualifications – is the offer realistic for you?
- You get an insurance choice if your offer is conditional, so use it wisely to maximise your chances – but make sure that's somewhere you'd still like to go!
- Work hard to get the best grades you can in your school or college qualifications.
- If you don't meet your conditions, don't panic – check **Track** to see if your university or college has been able to confirm your place.
- You may also be able to find a place through **Clearing** or **Adjustment**.

## Unconditional offer – things to think about

- An unconditional offer might take the pressure off, but your school or college qualifications are still important. Finishing your studies, doing the work, and taking your exams are all really important to prepare you for university or college – you're going to have to work when you get there too!
- A lot of employers take A levels and other qualifications into consideration when reviewing job applications.
- If you make an unconditional offer your firm choice, or a conditional offer that is made unconditional, you've committed to studying at that university or college.
- You might be entitled to a scholarship or other reward if you do really well in your exams.
- You don't get an insurance choice.
- You might not be able to enter **Clearing** or **Adjustment**.
- Even though you've already met the academic requirements, you might also need to do some other tasks, such as undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check, provide proof of your qualifications, or meet some financial or medical requirements.

# Replying to your UCAS Undergraduate offers

If you have an unconditional offer, you can select it now to confirm your place. If your offers are conditional on exam results or other requirements, you can pick two so you have an extra one as a back-up.

## How to make your replies

When your last decision comes in, we'll send an email as usual to say there's an update (or a letter advising you about replying).

- Then you go to **Track** to make your replies.
- You'll have a deadline shown in **Track** to do this by – how much time you have depends on the time of year, varying from one to five weeks.

## Types of reply

These are the types of reply you can make:

Firm acceptance – this is your first choice.

- If it's an unconditional offer, the place is yours! So that course provider will expect you as their student.
- Or if it's conditional, the place is yours if you meet the offer conditions. So just in case you don't, you can pick a second offer as a backup – your insurance acceptance.

## Insurance acceptance – the back-up choice to a conditional firm acceptance.

- If you're choosing an insurance, go for something with lower offer conditions – make sure it's somewhere you'd still be happy to go to though.
- That way, if your results are lower than expected, you might still meet the conditions at your insurance choice; then you'd have your place confirmed there.
- Remember, you'll only attend your insurance choice course if you don't meet the conditions of your firm choice, but you do meet the conditions of your insurance. You can't choose between your firm and insurance when you get your results, so make sure you're happy with which is your firm and which is your insurance before you reply.

## Decline – you'll need to decline any other offers you get.

However, if you decide you don't want to accept any of the offers, you can decline them all and add more courses in our **Extra** service. Alternatively, you can see what courses still have vacancies later on in our **Clearing** service.

Please note: You can only accept one firm choice and one insurance choice (if you choose to have one). You must decline all other offers.

## Offer and reply combinations

- Unconditional firm (UF) – You're in!
- Conditional firm (CF) – You're in if you meet the conditions.
- Conditional firm (CF) and conditional insurance (CI) – You've made a first and second choice – you'll be in at the first if you meet the conditions. If not, you might have met the conditions of the second – if so you'll be on that course instead.
- Conditional firm (CF) and unconditional insurance (UI) – You've made a first and second choice – if you meet the conditions of the first you'll be on that course. If not, you'll definitely be on the second.

## Reply dates

These are based on when we get the last decision in from your universities or colleges. Check **Track** to see your personal deadline.

- If you receive your last decision on or before 31 March 2019, your reply date is 1 May 2019 (if your postal address is in the EU).
- If you receive your last decision on or before 2 May 2019, your reply date is 6 June 2019 (includes applicants with a postal address outside the EU, but not applicants using **Extra** to find a place).
- If you receive your last decision on or before 6 June 2019, your reply date is 20 June 2019 (except if you're using **Extra** to find a place).
- If you receive your last decision on or before 11 July 2019, your reply date is 18 July 2019 (including **Extra** choices).

## Offers for courses with early start dates

If you want to accept a place on a course that starts before your reply date, you should contact the university or college concerned to discuss what to do. If they give you an earlier deadline to reply, you should be aware that they may withdraw their offer if you do not to accept it before their specified deadline.