

Why university?

Searching for a uni and course, applying to UCAS and student finance

**Southampton
Solent**
University

**MAKE
WAVES**



Why is making the right choice important?

- Usually takes 3+ years
- Costs money
- Variation between universities and courses
- Some jobs need specific degrees
- Different courses and jobs suit different people.



Why is university a great option?

- Career prospects – earn more
- Required for some vocations
- Employable skills
- Learn from industry professionals and make industry links
- Confidence, independence and responsibility
- Study a subject you enjoy
- Opportunities to travel
- Make lifelong connections
- Time to make big career decisions



What can you study?

Architecture,
Interiors and
Construction

Art and Design

Business,
Marketing and
Finance

Computing

Digital Art,
Animation,
Games and VFX

Education

Engineering

Fashion and
Beauty

Film, TV, Media
Production and
Technology

Health and
Medical
Science

Law

Maritime

Music and
Performing
Arts

Psychology and
Mental Health

Social Work,
Criminology
and Sociology

Sport and
Fitness

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Are you looking to study full time, part time or an apprenticeship?

Full time:

- 8-12 hours contact time plus independent study
- 3 years+
- Tuition fee loan

Part time:

- Usually 1 day a week/ half a day a week
- 3 - 6 years to complete
- Tuition fee loan

Apprenticeship:

- 80% at work, 20% at university
- 1 day a week or a condensed block each term
- 3 - 6 years to complete
- Fees paid by employer usually



How do you shine?

Exams

Revision leading to examination

Project Work

Graded, varies from course to course

Presentations

Research and oral communication key

Written Essays/Reports

Research and written communicate key

Practical Assessment

Variation from course to course

Observations

Assessment of your performance over time

Work Placements

Unit based or longer and usually assessed via tutor visits, logs and employer feedback



Traditional vs Technical

Traditional

- Emphasis on research and reading for a degree
- Develop strong transferable skills for work.

Technical

- Focused on your chosen career
- Incorporate practical learning, placements or work experience
- Develop strong transferable skills for work.



Other factors to consider.

1. Research & compare courses – Look at the units!
2. Entry requirements
3. Placement opportunities
4. Facilities
5. Hobbies and Interests
6. Student support
7. Extra opportunities
8. Industry links
9. Will the course support your ambition?
10. What skills will you learn?
11. Graduate destinations



How do I apply?

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The UCAS logo is displayed in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. The letter 'A' is stylized as a red triangle. The entire logo is enclosed within a thick red rectangular border. The background of the slide features abstract, flowing red and white wavy lines.

UCAS

Your one stop shop

Course searches

Resources

Updates

Open day information

Video guides

Deadline dates

Apply

Beginning your UCAS application:

1

Register in the UCAS Hub and complete the registration questions. These are:

- The year you want to start your studies
- Which level of study (undergraduate or postgraduate)

You'll then be taken to your UCAS Hub dashboard, where you'll see a tile called

2

Begin filling out the application form. You must complete all mandatory questions and you can't skip any sections.

These must all be complete before your application can be sent. But you don't have to do it all at once, you can sign in and save your progress at any time.

Your UCAS Application:

Personal details:

- Name
- Address
- Contact details
- Date of birth

Extra information:

- Ethnic origin
- National identify
- Occupational

Course choices:

- List up to five choices
(some restrictions apply)

Education history

- GCSEs, A levels, BTECs
- Level 3 qualifications
- Any pending qualifications

Employment:

- Paid full-time or part-time roles
- Voluntary work

Personal statement:

- A chance to celebrate YOU and your amazing achievements
- Show your personality and interests

Reference:

- Teacher, advisor or professional that knows you academically

Review, pay and submit:

- Fee will be £28.50 (2025 entry)
- Allows you to add five choices
- Access to UCAS Extra and Clearing

Student finance

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Available funding

Student Finance England (SFE) provides financial support on behalf of the UK Government to students from England entering Higher Education in the UK.

The **two** main costs students are:

- Tuition Fees loan – £9535 per year
- A Maintenance Loan

Depending on your circumstances and course, you may be able to get additional financial help and support.



Tuition fee loans (TFL)

- Maximum tuition fees in 2025-26 are £9,535 for f/t courses
- Tuition fees do not have to be paid up front.
- Eligible Home (UK) and EU* students can apply for the TFL
- Tuition fee loans are paid directly to the university
- Eligibility depends on your residency status in the UK and any previous study that you may have done (in the UK or elsewhere).
- Loans are repaid after graduation, depending on your income.
- * Students with EU settled and pre-settled status



Maintenance loan

- Maintenance loans are for living costs: food, rent & bills
- Eligible home (UK) students can apply
- They are paid to you in three termly instalments into your bank account.
- The amount of loan available to you depends on:
 - Where you live while you study (London more)
 - Your household income – means tested
 - The length of your degree, e.g. integrated masters or foundation years



Maintenance Loans for Living Costs 2025-26

(Estimates - To be confirmed Late Feb/March 2026).

Household Income	*Max Maintenance Loan for Living Costs	**Max Maintenance Loan for Living Costs (For students' entitled Benefits)	Max Maintenance Loan for Living Costs (if living in the Parental home term time)	**Max Maintenance Loan for Living Costs for students' entitled to State benefits (if living in the Parental home term time)
£25,000 or less	£10,544	£12,019	£8,877	£10,472
£30,000	£9,791	£10,853	£8,131	£9,281
£35,000	£9,038	£9,687	£7,385	£8,088
£45,000	£7,530	£7,850	£5,893	£6,210
£55,000	£5,432	£6,023	£4,401	£4,402
Over £62,349	£4,915	Over £62,349 = £4,795	Over £58,307 = £3,907	Over £58,307 = £3,907

**Students entitled to State Benefits could also get grants: Adult Dependents' Grant; Parents' Learning Allowance; Childcare Grant; Disabled Student Allowance.

Applying for SFE

You will be able to register for their mailing list and get notified when its time to apply!

Applying early is important as it can take up to 12 weeks to approve

You do not need to confirm your University or course at this stage

sfe

Welcome to Student
Finance England

Get Ready!

Are you going to uni or college in 2025 to 2026? Use our [student toolkit](#) and [student timeline](#) to start planning your future today!

Get ready for 2025 to 2026!

Sign up now to find out when full-time undergraduate applications open for 2025 to 2026.

Sign up

How to apply

- You apply online **every year** to Student Finance for your student funding:
www.gov.uk/studentfinance
- Applications usually open in March
- Students can [sign up to Student Finance England's mailing list](#) to be one of the first to know when applications open.
- You do not need confirmed course details, just an idea of your first choice
- Applications can take 30 minutes to complete



How to apply

- If you apply for the means-tested element of the maintenance loan your parents (or partner) should be sent a link to submit their information
- Students can [visit the gov.uk payment page](#) for information, guidance and easy steps to follow to make sure they get paid on time.
- The recommended deadline is usually around the end of May.
- Later applications can still be made



Additional financial help and support

Non - repayable

University Bursary Scheme – a limited number of means tested bursaries offering up to £500 per year

International scholarships, including academic and sports scholarships

Lisa Wilson Scholarship

Course Cost Support Grants

Support Grant for financial hardship

Unpaid Placement Support Grant

Bursaries for:

Care Leavers (£1,500)

Those who have been in a Foyer or Supported Accommodation (£1,500)

Bursaries for:

Student estranged from their parents (£1,500)

Those with significant ongoing responsibilities, while studying, to care for an adult family member (£1,200)

Loan repayments

- Repayments start the April *after* you have left your course.
- Payments are not linked to the amount you owe but **how much you earn** (current threshold is earnings over **£25,000 Gross**. This threshold will increase from 2027/28 financial year.
- Earnings include money from employment or self-employment and, in some cases, earnings from investment and savings.
- Repayments are taken directly from your salary through PAYE.
- Any outstanding balance is written off **40 years** after entering repayment.
- You can make additional repayments or repay in full at any time without incurring a charge
- You still make repayments if you move overseas. There may be different income thresholds depending where you are living.



Loan repayments

Annual GROSS income before tax	Amount above the threshold	Approximate Monthly repayment**
Up to £25,000	£0	£0
£28,000	£3,000	£23.00
£30,000	£5,000	£38.00
£35,000	£10,000	£75.00
£40,000	£15,000	£113.00

- You pay 9% of your income over the threshold (i.e., £28K is £3,000 over the threshold x 9% / 12mths)

*** repayment figures given are rounded to the nearest pound.*

Earning whilst learning

Did you know?

- 55% of students work part time during their studies.
- There are a range of part time roles available in the university city/town, such as the bars, cafes, clubs, within the entertainment sector and in retail.
- Universities can help students find work, help with CV writing and provide general guidance on employability.



Useful facts:

UCAS deadlines:

Oxbridge/ Vet/ Medicine/ Dentistry: 15th October 2025

Most other courses: 14th January 2026

Students can still apply after this date although space can be limited

UCAS offers: Students will be notified of offers through UCAS, who will also email them.

All course options and basic information can be found at www.ucas.com

For more detailed information, look at the uni website

Or call the university admissions team- they are very helpful!

Student finance opens early March. Students can sign up to be notified here:

<https://studentfinance.campaign.gov.uk/>

Accommodation can usually be applied for once a student confirms their choices on UCAS. The uni will email them with info about how to apply.

Other useful resources

- University websites
- University social media
- Unibuddy
- Careers events
- Open Days- onsite and virtual
- Virtual Tours
- College tutors
- Family & friends



Open Days – on-campus and virtual

- Course talks
- Chat to academics
- Chat to students
- Facility and accommodation tours
- Extra-curricular
- Additional support

Top Tips

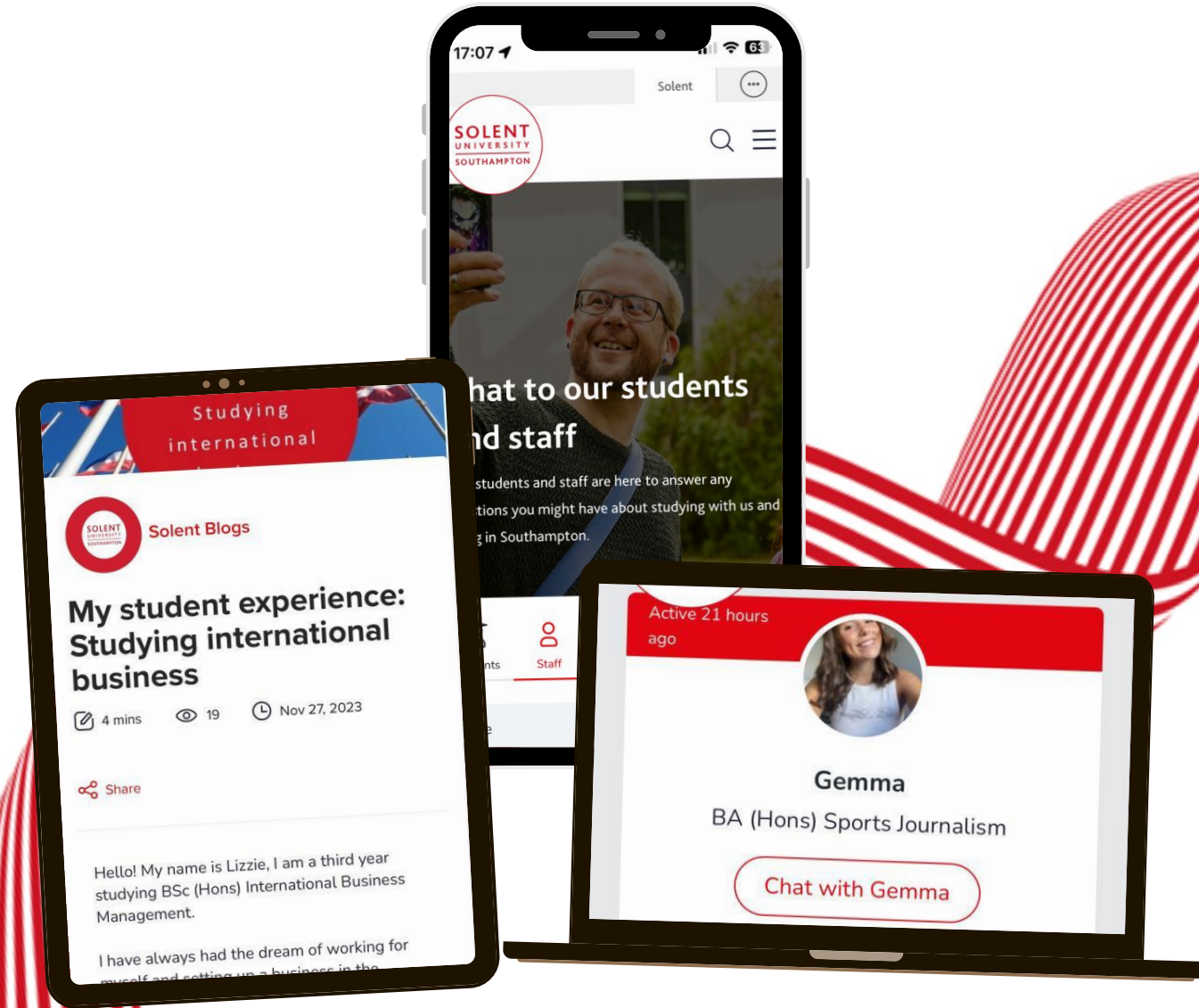
- Plan ahead, including travel
- Prepare your questions, get involved
- Bring someone with you
- Think about the general atmosphere





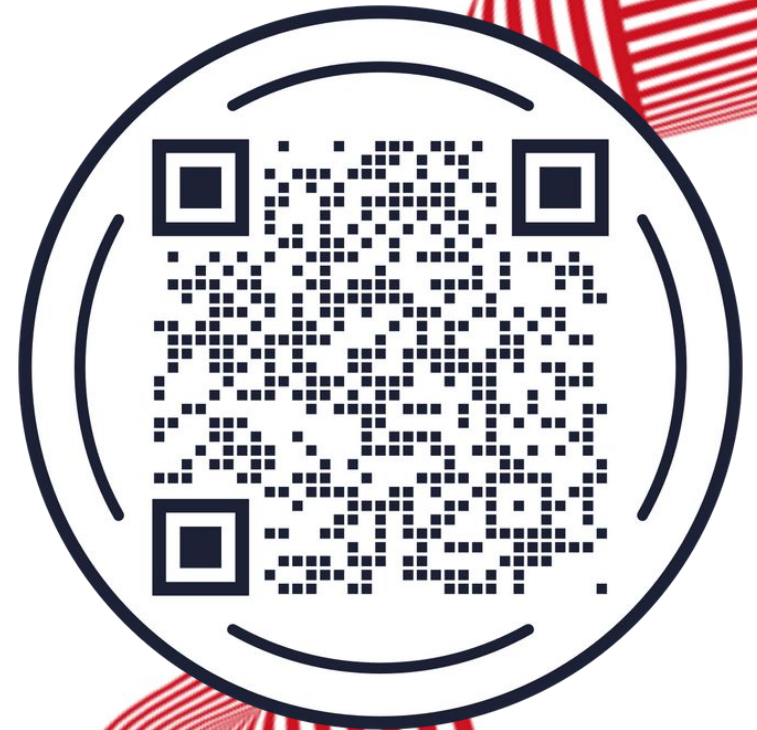
Connect with us on Unibuddy

- Chat to current students and staff
- Check out our Unibuddy blogs
- Stay up to date with Solent





Book an open day



solent.ac.uk/open-days

Thank you for listening!

A series of white, wavy, parallel lines that flow from the bottom left towards the top right, creating a sense of movement and rhythm across the red background.

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Contact:
Schools and Colleges Team
Schools.colleges@solent.ac.uk