

# **ETONE COLLEGE SIXTH FORM**



**Supporting with Careers and Next Steps**

## **INTRODUCTION**

At Etone College, we are committed to ensuring every student has the opportunity, support, and ambition to achieve their very best. As you begin the UCAS process, you are taking an important step towards shaping your future whether that leads you to university, an apprenticeship, employment or another exciting pathway. This booklet has been designed to guide you through every stage of your UCAS journey. Inside, you will find clear advice on researching courses and universities, writing an impressive personal statement, and meeting key application deadlines. Our aim is to help you make informed, confident decisions about the next stage of your education.

## **Understanding UCAS**

### **Why go to university?**

There are many great reasons to go to university and study for a degree. You'll end up with a degree at the end of your studies, which could help you get your career started. You will be taught by industry experts and well-respected academics, who will help you understand your specialities and grow your passion for your chosen subject. University is not just about learning academically. You will also grow as a person, making new friends, expanding your social life, gaining the experience of living independently and learning how to look after yourself. During your time at university, you can join clubs and societies, as well as having access to placement and work experience opportunities. You will be in control of your time and your learning, meaning you can focus on what interests you the most.

### **What course to choose?**

You can add up to five choices on your UCAS application form. These can be from different universities or different courses at one university. Please note that for applications for Medicine, Dentistry, and Veterinary science, you must choose only four with your fifth choice being another course.

**You can only apply to either Oxford or Cambridge in the same year but not both.**

You will need the following information:

- The university or college name
- The course and/or course code
- The campus location
- When you are planning to start your course
- If you plan to live at home while studying or not

The UCAS application fee for 2026 will be £28.95. UCAS have introduced free school meals application fee waiver payment option. This is only available to students who are currently receiving free school meals.

Once you have decided what subject you want to study you need to decide which course will suit you. All universities and college structure their courses differently.

**Subjects:** What exactly does the course cover? How much time is spent on each module? What is the pattern of a typical teaching week? Most courses will be taught through a mixture of lectures, seminars, and tutorials.

**Course Structure:** How much time will be spent in lectures, seminars, personal study, and assignments? How big are the class sizes? Are lectures in person or are there some still online? Many degree courses last 3 or 4 years. A four-year course may include a period of time spent abroad or in industry.

**Course assessment:** How is the course assessed? Is it by final examination, continuous assessment or a bit of both? Which does it focus on, and which are you better at? Do they match? Some modules on courses may be compulsory whilst others will be optional.

**Work placements:** Does the course include work experience? If it does, how is this organised? Will you have to find a placement or is it organised for you? Will it be a sandwich course – e.g., will you have to take a full year out of your study to work?

**Grade requirements:** Find out what the required grades are. These may be worked on a UCAS points system. Most universities will want particular grades in subjects to read the course at their university.

### **Which university?**

**Consider the following:**

**Style:** Traditional universities that have a focus on subject-based courses and research, to modern universities with a greater focus on vocational courses.

**Location:** Some are based in large cities, other in smaller towns, a major influence on the environment and lifestyle.

**Size:** Large universities can have more than 20,000 students whereas some of the smallest have only a few thousand.

**Culture & facilities:** What equipment and resources does the course and university/ college have? Look at the IT and the library facilities. What is the staff – student ration? What facilities exist to undertake visit or research outside the formal provision? Look at diversity of students who attend.

**Destination list:** Find out what the previous students on the course did after graduation. The association of Graduate Recruiters publishes an annual report called ‘What Do Graduates Do?’ This provides information about the destinations and employment rates by academic subject/ discipline.

**Tuition fees:** These can vary between universities/ colleges. Also check if there are any scholarships or bursaries available.

**Living cost:** Check out the different types of accommodations available, cost of transport to and from your chosen university/ college and price of food. All of these can vary enormously.

**Questions to ask yourself:**

- Do you want to live at home or move away?
- How far away?
- Do you prefer a city, town, campus-based university?
- How good are the transport links?
- What sort of accommodation is offered to first year students?
- How expensive is it to live in the places that you are considering?

- What do the places you are considering offer – good shops, nightlife, sports facilities, extra-curricular activities, student support, access to countryside, other factors for you?
- What is the local economy like? Are you likely to be able to find part-time work?

**Open Days:** Look to see what universities are offering in terms of virtual/ open days, summer experiences and contact current students and talk to them to find out what it is like to study there. Look at [www.whatuni.com/open-days/search](http://www.whatuni.com/open-days/search) to find when universities are holding their open days. There are plenty of opportunities to visit universities on weekends and during school holidays.

## **Russell Group Universities**

### **What are they?**

Russell Group Universities are a group of 24 leading UK universities known for their high academic standards, excellent teaching and research facilities and qualifications that are recognised globally. They also offer opportunities for internships, studying abroad, and networking. There is strong support for career progression and access to enrichment programmes, summer schools and mentoring. Russell Group universities are often considered the most prestigious in the UK.

### **Here is the list of all 24 member institutions of the Russell Group:**

1. University of Birmingham
2. University of Bristol
3. University of Cambridge
4. Cardiff University
5. Durham University
6. University of Edinburgh
7. University of Exeter
8. University of Glasgow
9. Imperial College London
10. King's College London
11. University of Leeds
12. University of Liverpool
13. London School of Economics and Political Science
14. University of Manchester
15. Newcastle University
16. University of Nottingham
17. University of Oxford
18. Queen Mary University of London
19. Queen's University Belfast
20. University of Sheffield
21. University of Southampton
22. University College London
23. University of Warwick
24. University of York

## **Oxford and Cambridge University**

**Applying to either Cambridge or Oxford – together known as 'Oxbridge' can be different to other university applications.**

Both Oxford and Cambridge University have rigorous and fair application procedures designed to let the best candidates shine. Oxford and Cambridge tend to run traditional academic courses with an emphasis on small-group tuition and assessment is more often based 100% on examinations.

### **Choosing between Oxford and Cambridge**

You cannot apply to both Oxford and Cambridge in the same year, so you will have to choose one or the other. Some courses are offered at one of the universities, but not the other.

### **What makes Oxford and Cambridge so special?**

Both Oxford and Cambridge are based on a collegiate system. Both universities are made up of individual colleges, as well as different academic departments. Academic departments are responsible for core teaching and assessment. Colleges provide academic and pastoral support and arrange small group tuition sometimes with a tutor or supervisor from another college. Each college has a diverse range of students studying across a range of subject areas and academic levels. When you make your UCAS application, you will be able to specify a preferred college but your college choice will not affect whether you are accepted.

### **Teaching methods**

Teaching methods are similar at both universities. You will have lectures, seminars, classes, and lab work as appropriate for your course. Oxbridge students also benefit from highly personalised teaching time with subject experts. Oxford calls them 'tutorials', while Cambridge calls them 'supervisions'.

As well as your academic ability and potential, admission tutors look at your skills and motivation to go beyond what is required for your current studies. This might include evidence of independent study or willingness to embrace new ideas. Can explore and discuss ideas and opinions in a logical and considered way? Showing you have self-discipline is very important, as you will need to manage your time well.

**The Oxbridge application deadline is earlier than the standard UCAS deadline. It is at 6pm (GMT) on 15<sup>th</sup> October every year.**

### **University Admissions Tests**

One test used by both universities is the UCAT (University Clinical Aptitude Test). You will need to take this if you are applying for the standard medicine course (A100) or graduate entry medicine course (A101) at either university.

Oxford requires applicants to take written tests before an interview in most other subjects. Please note that separate registration may be required for tests.

Cambridge requires applicants to take pre-interview tests for around half of its courses. For other subjects, Cambridge requires a written test to be taken while at the university for the interview (if interviewed). You will not need to register for at-interview assessments.

## **Written work**

Both universities require some applicants to send samples of written work as part of their application. Both will expect this work at different times, so double-check the deadline when you apply to ensure you do not miss it.

## **Interviews**

For the most competitive degrees, the applicants who most closely meet the selection criteria may have multiple interviews. The purpose and structure of interviews are very similar at both universities. Essentially, they are like a mini-tutorial or supervision, where the tutors will give you a small passage to read or perhaps set a small problem and then ask you to discuss it.

## **The UCAS Application- How to apply**

**The UCAS timeline:**

### **2026 entry application deadlines**

For courses starting in 2026 and for deferred applications, your application should be with UCAS by one of these dates depending on what courses you apply for. If your completed application including all your personal details and your academic reference is submitted by the deadline, it is guaranteed to be considered.

**2nd October 2025- (18:00 UK time) Application deadline for conservatoire music applications. Applications for dance, drama, and musical theatre courses may have a different deadline – check conservatoires’ websites for information.**

**15<sup>th</sup> October 2025- (18:00 UK time) Deadline for applications to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and for most courses in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine/science.**

**14<sup>th</sup> January 2026- (18:00 UK time) Equal consideration date for applications for most undergraduate courses**

### **Sign up for the UCAS Hub**

Register in the UCAS Hub and complete the registration questions confirming the year you want to start your studies and that you are interested in ‘undergraduate’ level of study. you will need to add the college Buzzword to link your application to the college. You will then be taken to your UCAS Hub dashboard where, where you will see a tile called ‘your application’. Simply click ‘Start’ to begin. You will need to complete the following sections:

#### **1. Personal details**

Simply fill in your first and last name, date of birth, and gender. Make sure you enter your first name and middle name(s) exactly as they are stated on official documents, such as your passport or birth certificate.

#### **2. Nationality details**

Here you can fill in your where you were born and your nationality. You can submit up to two nationalities in case you have dual citizenship. If you were not born in the UK, you will be asked when you first entered the country. If your nationality is not a British citizen, you will be asked about your status, such as:

- Whether you have settled, or pre-settled status
- If you need a student visa
- Whether you have previously had a visa before
- Your immigration status
- When your course starts (and ends)

### **3. Where you live**

You will need to provide your current address. Please select the one where you spend most of your time and about where you have been living three years prior to the start of your course so you may need to add more than one. Your home address will be used to confirm your fee status.

### **4. Contact details**

Here you can input your phone number, email address, and postal address. You will also be able to 'nominate' access, allowing someone else (a family member or teacher for example) to talk to UCAS and manage your application on your behalf.

### **5. Supporting information**

This is where you can add additional information about whether you or a parent has lived and worked in the EU, EEA, or Switzerland.

### **6. Finance and funding**

Most applicants from the UK will be in the category UK, CH1, IoM, or EU student finance.

### **7. Diversity and inclusion**

In this section, UCAS will ask about:

- Ethnicity
- Religious beliefs
- Sexual orientation
- Care support information
- Parental information, such as their education level and occupation

Please note, you do not need to answer these questions to submit your application.

### **8. More about you**

You will only see this section if you have a UK home address.

This section is for you to let UCAS know about any extra supporting information you would like them to consider on your application and to make universities aware of any additional support you may need. Some of the things to include are:

- Mental health conditions or long-term illnesses
- Estranged from parents
- Caring responsibilities
- Parenting responsibilities
- Refugee status
- Parent or carer who serves in the armed forces
- Whether you've served in the armed forces
- If you're in receipt of free school meals

## **9. Education**

You must enter all your qualifications from secondary education onwards including if you received a grade 'U'.

This includes:

- Results of all GCSE and BTEC subject grades studied at school or self-studied.
- All previous results where you have retaken exams, or entered for multiple sittings, even if those results have improved.
- Make sure you include any extracurricular qualifications (for example, music grades)

The qualification search tool will help you find your specific subject.

## **10. Employment**

You can add any of your previous or current paid employment details in this section. You will need the company name, address, and dates of employment.

## **11. Extra activities**

You can boost your application by adding any additional courses, summer schools, taste courses etc.

## **12. Personal statement**

This is the section where you can add your finished personal statement. The three questions will help you to scaffold your answers and ensure you include exactly what universities and colleges want to see, to help you succeed in your applications. Each answer will have a minimum character count of 350 characters, which is clearly labelled on the question boxes, along with an overall character counter, so you can keep track.

### **The new personal statement questions:**

**Question 1: Why do you want to study this course or subject?**

This is your opportunity to showcase your passion and knowledge of your chosen subject area and to demonstrate to universities and colleges why it is a good fit for you and your future ambitions.

- Your motivations for studying this course
- Your knowledge of this subject area and interests
- Your future plans and why this is a good fit for you
- Personal life experiences e.g. being a carer, the environment where you grew up or lived, an inspirational friend, colleague or family member, a book you read, a news article or blog/vlog, a YouTube video, a podcast, a show you saw etc
- Understanding of the area and the qualities you might need to succeed in

### **Question 2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?**

This is your chance to shout about the relevant or transferable skills you have gained from your education and highlight your understanding of how they will help you succeed in this subject area.

- How your studies or training relate to your chosen course(s) or subject area
- What relevant or transferable skills you have that make you a great candidate
- Any relevant educational achievements
- Specific modules or topics
- Essays or projects that explore a particular viewpoint or technique
- EPQ – Extended Project Qualification
- School, local, or national competitions
- Private lessons and qualifications e.g. music, stage school or sports if relevant to the course
- Tutoring or mentoring
- Online courses leading to a qualification

### **Question 3: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?**

This is your chance to talk about any other activities you have undertaken outside of your formal education or personal experiences which further demonstrate your suitability for the course.

- Work experience, employment, or volunteering
- Personal life experiences or responsibilities
- Hobbies and any extracurricular or outreach activities
- Achievements outside of school or college
- Volunteering, tutoring, trips and visits
- Podcasts, TED talks, documentaries etc.
- Duke of Edinburgh

## **13. References**

References and predicted grades will be completed by your teachers for each of your subjects and the Head of Sixth Form. You will be able to see your complete reference when your application is ready to be sent to UCAS.

## **University Pathway Programmes**

University pathway programmes are courses designed to prepare students for higher education, particularly if you do not meet the standard entry requirements or want extra support before starting your degree.

What Are Pathway Programmes?

- Short courses, usually 1 year, that lead to undergraduate study.
- Help students improve academic skills, English language, or subject knowledge.
- Designed for students from different educational backgrounds, including international students or those needing extra support.

**Types of Pathway Programmes:**

1. **Foundation Programmes**- Prepare students for a specific subject at university (e.g., Engineering, Business, Science).
2. **International Foundation Programmes**- Focus on English language skills and academic study skills for international students.
3. **Access Courses** - For students who did not take A-Levels but want to qualify for university.

**Who Are They For?**

- Students who did not achieve required A-Level grades.
- Students who want to improve English or study skills.
- Those looking for a smoother transition to university life.
- Students interested in highly competitive courses where extra preparation is helpful.

**How They Work**

- **Duration:** Usually 1 academic year (sometimes 6-9 months for summer/intensive courses).
- **Content:** Combination of academic modules, study skills, and English (if needed).
- **Assessment:** Coursework, exams, or projects.
- **Progression:** Successful completion guarantees or prepares you for a specific undergraduate programme.

**How to Apply**

1. Research programmes: Check universities offering pathway/foundation courses.
2. Check entry requirements: Some programmes need GCSE's, others accept predicted A-Level grades.
3. Apply via UCAS or university website: Deadlines vary, often earlier than standard degree courses.
4. Submit supporting documents: Personal statement, references, predicted grades.
5. Attend interviews/assessments if required.

**Benefits of Pathway Programmes**

- Improves subject knowledge and study skills.
- Provides a smoother transition to university.
- Increases chances of success in competitive courses.
- Offers personalised support, including tutorials and mentoring.
- Some programmes include guaranteed progression to degree courses.

## **University Summer Schools & Wider Opportunities**

University summer schools and enrichment programmes give you a taste of university life and can strengthen your UCAS application.

### **What Are Summer Schools?**

- Short courses, usually 1–3 weeks, held during the summer holidays.
- Run by universities to introduce students to a subject area or academic discipline.
- Include lectures, workshops, lab sessions, and social activities.

Some examples are STEM programmes (Engineering, Medicine, Computing), Humanities courses (Law, English Literature, History) and Business, Economics, and Management taster weeks.

### **Who Can Apply?**

- Year 12/13 students (16–18 years old).
- Open to students thinking about competitive courses or those wanting to explore a subject.
- Some are free, while others may have fees, travel, or accommodation costs.

### **Benefits of Attending**

- Gain insight into university teaching and life.
- Strengthen UCAS applications and personal statements.
- Improve academic and study skills.
- Network with other students and university staff.
- Explore career options in your chosen field.

### **How to Find Summer Schools & Opportunities**

- Check university websites for “summer schools,” “taster programmes,” or “widening participation” schemes.
- Explore national schemes such as Sutton Trust Summer Schools, UNIQ Summer Schools (Oxford), Cambridge University Summer Programmes

Many universities run programmes for students from under-represented backgrounds. Some examples are taster lectures and workshops, mentoring schemes, university visits and residential programmes. They can boost your UCAS application.

## **University Admissions Tests**

Some universities require you to sit an admissions test as part of the application process. If you apply for a course that requires an admissions test, you will need to check the registration

deadline for the test, when and where you will sit it and what it includes. Most admissions tests happen between August and November the year before you are due to start university. Some have a registration deadline before you need to submit your UCAS application.

### **Common Admissions Tests, when & how to Register**

UCAT for Medicine and Dentistry- **July 2026 registration deadline**

BMAT for Medicine and Biomedical Sciences- **Early October 2026 registration deadline**

LNAT for Law- **October 2026 registration deadline**

### **How to Prepare**

Use official practice papers and review core subject knowledge. Try mock tests under timed conditions and also consider online courses or tutorials.

### **During the Test**

Arrive early with ID and stationery and read all instructions carefully. Make sure you manage your time wisely and try to stay calm and focused.

### **After the Test**

Results are sent to universities for consideration along with your application. Universities will then decide if they want to move forward by either inviting you for an interview or making an offer.

## **UCAS: Accepting Your University Offers**

### **Types of Offers**

- **Conditional Offer**- You must meet exam requirements for example: AAB at A-Level
- **Unconditional Offer**- You already meet entry requirements and can accept immediately

### **Firm & Insurance Choices**

- **Firm Choice:** Your firm choice should be the course and university you are most excited about and the one you really want to go to.
- **Insurance Choice:** Your insurance choice is your safe backup plan which should have lower grade requirements.

### **How to Accept Your Offer**

1. Log in to UCAS Hub once you have considered all your offers carefully.
2. Go to "Your choices"
3. Select Accept Offer next to your chosen university
4. Confirm Firm and Insurance choices

### **After Accepting**

- Check university portal for enrolment

- Arrange accommodation
- Apply for student finance
- Attend welcome events

If things do not always go to plan and you do not receive any offers or you are not happy with the offers you have received, you can use UCAS Clearing once it is open to add another choice.

## **Results Day 2026**

### **When is Results Day?**

A-Level Results Day is on Thursday 15th August 2026. You can check your UCAS Track for live updates on offers.

### **What to do before Results Day**

- Double-check your UCAS Track login works.
- Have a plan for your options: firm offer, insurance offer, Clearing.
- Keep contact details for university admissions teams handy.
- Prepare your personal statement and predicted grades. You may need them if you call universities.

### **On Results Day log in to your UCAS Track**

- Met your firm offer → Congratulations!
- Met your insurance offer → You will be automatically accepted there
- Did not meet any offers → You will be eligible for Clearing

### **Confirm Your Place**

- Firm acceptance: Confirm on UCAS Track if required
- Insurance acceptance: Confirm place if not automatic
- Clearing: Begin searching for courses immediately if eligible. The Sixth Form Team will be on hand to help you.

### **If you exceeded your offers**

- Contact universities if you wish to upgrade to a more competitive course.
- Some universities allow changes or transfers based on higher grades

## **CLEARING**

Clearing is a second chance to get a university place if you did not get any offers, did not meet your offers, or applied late.

### **Who Can Use Clearing?**

You can use Clearing if you did not receive any offers, you decided to reject all your offers, you did not meet your offer conditions or if you decided to apply after 30 June 2026.

## **Research Courses**

Use the UCAS Clearing search tool: [www.ucas.com/clearing](http://www.ucas.com/clearing) to filter by subject, location or university. This will bring up all the live courses available.

## **Contact Universities**

Call or email the admissions teams and be prepared to provide your UCAS ID, grades/predicted grades and a short personal statement summary. Ask if places are available and if you are able to apply. Then wait for the university to decide if they will be making you an offer.

## **Add a Clearing Choice**

Once a university has confirmed that they are making you an offer through Clearing, log in to UCAS and Select “Add Clearing Choice” and enter the course code. UCAS will then update your application. You can only hold one Clearing place at a time. The university should then confirm your place immediately or within a few days. The update will then show up on your UCAS Hub and you will then need to follow the university’s instructions to enrol.

## **Student Finance & Budgeting 2026**

**Tuition Fee Loans** cover tuition fees up to £9,250 per year and is paid directly to your university.

**Maintenance Loans** help cover rent, bills, food, and travel. The amount you will receive depends on household income & your current living situation. The Maintenance Loan is paid in three instalments during the academic year.

## **Applying for Loans**

You can apply online at Student Finance England. <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance-register-login>. You will need to have personal & household income information ready. Apply early (Feb–May 2026 for September intake).

## **Repaying Loans**

- Repayment starts after graduation only if income is above £27,295 per year
- The loan written off after 30 years

## **Introduction to Apprenticeships**

An apprenticeship is an exciting and practical route into a career — one that allows you to earn a salary while gaining valuable qualifications and experience in your chosen field. For many sixth form students, apprenticeships offer a fantastic alternative to full-time university study, providing a direct path into employment and professional growth.

## **What Is an Apprenticeship?**

An apprenticeship is a paid job combined with training. You’ll work for an employer while studying part-time towards an industry-recognised qualification. Apprenticeships are available in a huge range of sectors from engineering, healthcare, and business to digital media, law, and

the creative industries. Depending on the level, apprenticeships can take you all the way from post-16 training to degree and even master's level study.

### **Why Choose an Apprenticeship?**

- **Earn while you learn** -You will receive a wage and gain practical experience from day one.
- **Gain real-world skills** -You will develop technical and professional abilities employers are looking for.
- **Achieve recognised qualifications** - From Level 2 (Intermediate) to Level 7 (Degree) apprenticeships.
- **Progress your career** - Many apprentices are offered permanent roles or use their experience to move into higher positions.
- **Cost** – Your training is funded by the government and your employer.
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### **Is an Apprenticeship Right for You?**

If you enjoy hands-on learning, want to enter the workplace sooner, and are motivated by gaining experience as well as qualifications, an apprenticeship could be the perfect fit. It requires dedication, independence, and strong time-management skills but the rewards are long-term and highly valuable.

Start by exploring your interests and researching the types of apprenticeships available. You can also visit:

- [www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)
- [www.ucas.com/apprenticeships](http://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships)

### **Apprenticeships: How and When to Apply**

#### **Understanding the Timeline**

Apprenticeships do not all start or open at the same time. Vacancies appear throughout the year. However, most larger companies start their recruitment process between November and May for apprenticeships beginning the following summer or autumn.

#### **Finding Apprenticeships**

You can search for live apprenticeship opportunities through:

- The National Apprenticeship Service: [www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](http://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)
- UCAS Apprenticeship Search: [www.ucas.com/apprenticeships](http://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships)
- Employer Websites: Many large companies advertise directly on their website
- GOV.UK – [www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](http://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)
- Not Going Uni- [www.notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk)
- Indeed- [www.indeed.co.uk](http://www.indeed.co.uk)
- Reed- [www.reed.co.uk](http://www.reed.co.uk)

#### **Preparing Your Application**

When applying, you will usually need to submit:

- A CV highlighting your education, skills, and work experience.
- A personal statement or cover letter explaining why you are interested in the apprenticeship and the company.
- Sometimes, online assessments or video interviews are required.

### What is funded?

- The government pays for the training and assessment part of an apprenticeship (not your wages).
- There are special extra payments available for younger apprentices (typically aged 16-18) and for those who have had particular support needs (for example, care leavers or apprentices with an Education, Health & Care Plan).

### Different types of Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are your chance to earn, learn, and build real-world experience while working towards qualifications employers value. There is a route for everyone whether you are practical, creative or academic.

#### LEVEL 2 — INTERMEDIATE APPRENTICESHIPS

-  *Equivalent to GCSEs (Grades 4–9)*
-  Duration: 12–18 months
-  Entry: Some GCSEs (including English & Maths)

#### LEVEL 3 — ADVANCED APPRENTICESHIPS

-  *Equivalent to A Levels*
-  Duration: 18–24 months
-  Entry: 5 GCSEs (Grade 4 or above, incl. English & Maths)

#### LEVELS 4–5 — HIGHER APPRENTICESHIPS

-  *Equivalent to a Foundation Degree or HND*
-  Duration: 2–3 years
-  Entry: A Levels, T Levels, or Level 3 Apprenticeship

#### LEVELS 6–7 — DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

-  *Equivalent to a Bachelor's or Master's Degree*
-  Duration: 3–6 years
-  Entry: A Levels or equivalent qualifications

#### SPECIALIST & EMERGING APPRENTICESHIPS

##### Examples:

-  Artificial Intelligence & Data Analysis
-  Sustainable Energy / Environmental Tech
-  Creative Media & Content Production

-  Social Media & Marketing
-  Financial Services & FinTech
-  Cyber Security

## **Writing your CV- What to include?**

### **1. Personal Details**

- Name, phone, email (professional)

### **2. Personal Statement / Profile**

- 2–3 lines summarising strengths, goals, and interests
- *Example:* “Motivated A-Level student with strong teamwork and analytical skills, interested in pursuing Law.”

### **3. Education**

- School/college, subjects, predicted grades
- Optional: GCSEs and key achievements

### **4. Work Experience / Volunteering**

- Focus on responsibilities and skills gained
- *Example:* “Volunteer at Nuneaton Library – organised events and developed communication skills.”

### **5. Skills**

- Examples: Teamwork, problem-solving, IT, communication, leadership

### **6. Achievements & Interests**

- Sports, clubs, music, awards – show commitment and initiative

### **7. References**

- You ideally need two referees. One can be your current or most recent employer for a professional reference which talks about your skills and the other could be someone who has known you for a long time and can provide a personal reference. You must ensure you have the correct contact details for the referees and that you have asked them if they are happy and willing to provide a reference for you if approached by a company.

Your CV is your first impression. Keep it clear, professional, and relevant. Tailor it for each application, highlighting your achievements and showing your potential. It should be no longer than two A4 sides of paper.

## **Studying abroad or taking a gap year?**

Taking time to study abroad or go on a gap year can be an exciting way to gain new experiences, develop skills, and explore future career paths. Studying abroad means spending part of your education in another country, either through exchange programmes, full university programmes (some UK degrees offer international study options) and short summer or winter courses.

### **Benefits:**

It can improve language skills and cultural understanding. You can experience different teaching styles and learning environments and enhance your CV or university applications.

### **Things to Consider:**

- Cost: Tuition fees, accommodation, travel, and living expenses
- Visa requirements: Some countries require student visas
- Language: Some courses require proficiency in another language
- Accreditation: Ensure qualifications are recognised in the UK
- Make international friends and networks

### **Popular Gap Year Options:**

- Volunteering abroad (e.g., teaching, conservation)
- Internships or work placements in your area of interest
- Travel & cultural experiences
- Skill development: language courses, certifications, online learning

### **Planning Your Gap Year:**

- Set goals: Decide what you want to achieve
- Budget: Plan for costs like flights, insurance, accommodation
- Research providers: Check reputable companies for volunteering, travel, or internships
- Safety: Make sure you have travel insurance and check country-specific advice
- Timing: Ensure your gap year aligns with your UCAS or job plans

### **UCAS & Gap Year Advice:**

You can defer your university place for a year if you plan a gap year but you will need to notify your chosen universities in advance. You can then highlight any gap year experiences on your personal statement and explain what you hope to achieve from your experience.

### **Study Abroad Resources**

- Save the Student – A UK-based guide with a dedicated section on studying abroad, covering costs, destinations and how it works. **[www.savesthestudent.org](http://www.savesthestudent.org)**
- EF Education First – Offers information on study abroad programmes (including in the UK) and other international courses for 16-18 and 18+ students. **[www.ef.co.uk](http://www.ef.co.uk)**
- Year Out Group – Although focused on gap years, it offers advice around taking time out and travelling which overlaps with international study options. **[www.yearoutgroup.org](http://www.yearoutgroup.org)**
- Ultimate Gap Year – Advice on planning gap years, volunteering, travel and staying safe during a year out. **[www.gap360.com](http://www.gap360.com)**
- UCAS – Offers official guidance around gap years and deferring university places.

## **Final Note**

Remember that applying to university is not just about forms, deadlines, and choices, it is about discovering who you are, what drives you, and where you want your future to take you.

The UCAS process can feel challenging at times, but every stage from researching courses to writing your personal statement helps you grow in confidence and independence. Take pride in the effort you put in, and trust that your hard work will open doors to exciting new opportunities.

At Etone College, we believe every student has the potential to succeed. Whether your path leads to higher education, an apprenticeship, or another route altogether, the skills and experiences you developed here will serve you well in the years to come. Our Sixth Form Team, teachers, and tutors are here to continue supporting you throughout your journey.

We wish you every success in your next chapter and look forward to celebrating all that you achieve.

**Etone College Sixth Form Team**