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**UCAS CLEARING 2021**

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**STUDENT SERVICES**

**INFORMATION BOOKLET**

**Version 1 – correct as at 8 June 21.**

**What is Clearing?**

Clearing is your opportunity to make a new or initial choice(s) and is how unis and colleges fill any places they still have on their courses. The system operates between **5th July and 19th October**. Clearing is open to all learners have / wish to apply for university (uni) or college.

**What is Clearing Plus?**

If you find yourself in Clearing this year, UCAS match you to courses you may be interested in, using what they know about you from your application, and what universities and colleges are looking for in a student.

If you’re unplaced or have started a new application, a button will appear in Track – ‘My matches’. This will take you to your top 50 course matches. You’ll then be able to tell universities and colleges you’re ‘interested’ in their courses. If they still have vacancies and you meet their entry requirements, they may call you.

Don’t worry, if you want to apply for something different you can still find courses available in Clearing using our search tool.

**Can I apply for Clearing?**

You can apply for [Clearing](https://www.studential.com/student-underground/UCAS-clearing-2017-how-do-I-enter) if:

* You are applying after 30 June 2021
* You have [not received any offers](https://www.studential.com/student-underground/UCAS-extra-brief-guide).
* You have declined all your offers or [not responded by the due date](https://www.studential.com/student-underground/replying-to-UCAS-offers-dont-miss-the-deadline).
* Your offers have not been confirmed because you have not met the conditions (for example, you have not achieved the required grades).
* You paid the multiple choice application fee (£26)
* You [declined your firm place](https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/results-confirmation-and-clearing/what-clearing/declining-your-firm-place-track) using the ‘decline my place’ button in Track.

If you only made a single choice on your original application, you can pay a further £6 and apply to other universities and colleges through Clearing.

**I’m already worried I’ll have to go into Clearing – what can I do?**

If you’re concerned that you under-performed in your exams and may [enter Clearing](https://www.studential.com/student-underground/UCAS-clearing-2017-how-do-I-enter), there are a few things you can do to give yourself a head start before Clearing begins:

* Find out what courses were still on offer in [UCAS Extra](https://www.studential.com/university/applying/UCAS-application-guide/Extra) at the end of June.
* Check out the entry requirements for these courses (although you should not assume they will be lowered for Clearing, however in some cases they might be) and be realistic in terms of the grades you expect to gain.
* Take a look at the university websites for these courses to make sure you are happy with the course content and you will be taught everything you want to learn.
* Make a list of these courses so you can look out for them when the Clearing list is published on results day.
* This way, when you call up an institution about a particular course you will have the advantage of knowing something about it and will sound like a much more attractive candidate than someone who had never even heard of the course until 15 minutes before ringing them.

Also, the more informed you are, the less likely you will be to make a bad choice on the spur of the moment.

**How does clearing work?**

Your [eligibility for Clearing](https://www.studential.com/student-underground/UCAS-clearing-2017-how-do-I-enter) will show up on your [Track page](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login), where you will find your Clearing Number (universities will need this so that they can access your application) and the 'Add a Clearing Choice' button. In Clearing, applicants contact institutions directly to discuss the courses available and whether their application can be considered. You can contact as many universities as you like, and may receive offers from several. Don't feel that you have to accept the first offer that you receive: remember that you will be spending at least three years studying the course, so make sure that the [university or college](https://www.studential.com/university/applying/guide/choosing-a-university) and [course](https://www.studential.com/university/applying/guide/choosing-a-degree) are right for you before you accept a place. Each university will give you with a course code and institution code. When you have decided which offer you want to take up, you must enter the details on [Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login).

You can only enter one choice, and you must have discussed your application with the university first. If you enter a choice without doing this you are likely to cause yourself significant delays and may even lose out on a course you were really keen on. The last date you can enter a Clearing choice in 2021 is **19th October** - this is also the last date a university or college can accept an applicant in Clearing.

**When does Clearing start?**

Clearing fully kicks off on [A Level results day](https://www.studential.com/university/applying/A-level-results-day-guide-2019), which is **Thursday 10th August 2021**. If you know before this that you will be in Clearing, you can start looking for information and trying to decide where you want to go. Universities may publish vacancy information on their website as soon as it’s available. This may potentially be from the start of results week, so keep your eyes peeled. Clearing in 2021 will remain open until 19th October.

**How do I enter Clearing?**

**If you missed your firm and insurance offers and they both rejected you:** If you missed both your firm and insurance offers, then you don't need to do anything. Your Clearing number will show on [Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login). Start calling up universities - with your Clearing number admissions tutors will be able to see your full application and might ask you to apply. If they do this then they are offering you a place - if you wish to take up that place then add it as a Clearing Choice. The university will give you a date by which you must enter their course details on [Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login). If you want to be formally considered, you need to click on your 'Add Clearing choice' button and enter the course details. Remember that you can only enter details for one choice. If you didn't have an insurance offer, then the above also applies to you. However, if you didn't have an insurance place because you only originally applied to one university, you will need to pay an extra £6 since you will have paid the reduced fee of £18 with your original application.

**If you change your mind about your firm or insurance offer:** If you no longer wish to go to your firm and/or insurance but you met the offer (or they're accepting you with lower grades) then you'll have to ring the universities concerned and beg them to release you. They'll probably ask for reasons why, and they might not process your request straight away. It could take up to 2 weeks for it to go through officially, which is a long time in terms of Clearing. Therefore it’s important to do this as soon as possible so you don't miss out on the best places. Ideally, if you knew that this applied to you before results day then you will already have done it. Once your release has been processed, your Clearing number will show on [Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login). Start calling around universities - with your Clearing number admissions tutors will be able to see your full application and might ask you to apply. If they do then they are offering you a place, and if you wish to take it up you should add it as a Clearing Choice on your [UCAS Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login) page.

**If you are not holding any offers:** If you are not holding any offers, but did apply through UCAS before 30th June, you will have automatically been entered into Clearing, and your Clearing number will be on [UCAS Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login) from mid-July. Start phoning around universities - with your Clearing number admissions tutors will be able to see your full application and might ask you to apply. If they do then they are offering you a place, and if you wish to take it up you should add it as a Clearing Choice on your [UCAS Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login) page. You may be in this position for a number of reasons, e.g. if you rejected all your offers; if you were unsuccessful in your applications; or if you changed your mind about the courses you wanted to apply for.

**If you have not applied through UCAS yet, or applied after 30th June:** If you apply through UCAS after 30th June (12th June for Art & Design courses) then you'll only be going through Clearing. You need to complete a UCAS application as normal on the UCAS website, including all of the usual things such as a [personal statement](https://www.studential.com/university/applying/UCAS-application-guide/personal-statements) and a reference. The only difference is that you will not be able to choose [5 universities/courses to apply for](https://www.studential.com/university/applying). This will cost the usual £26 fee. Your Clearing number will show up on [Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login) in mid-July or as soon as your application has been processed by UCAS if submitted later than this. Start ringing around universities - with your Clearing number admissions tutors will be able to see your full application and might ask you to apply. If they do then they are offering you a place, and if you wish to take it up you should add it as a Clearing Choice on your [UCAS Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login) page.

**Do I have to wait until my Clearing Number appears on UCAS Track to apply?**

Yes - but that doesn't mean you can't approach universities informally. Most of the Clearing process happens over the phone - it's only the last step that requires a Clearing number and the 'Add a Clearing Choice' button on [UCAS Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login). If you had to be released by either your firm or insurance, you will need to wait for confirmation that this has been done, which may take up to 2 weeks.

**Will universities accept lower grades through Clearing?**

Some will, but some won't - it depends on a lot of things. The only way you'll know for sure is by asking them or looking on their website. They may be willing to accept you with lower grades if you're enthusiastic about the course, or if you have relevant work experience or extracurricular activities, so make sure you sell yourself as much as possible when talking to the admissions tutor. This is why it may help to have a copy of your personal statement to hand.

**How many universities can I apply to?**

You can approach as many universities as you like by phone or by email, although remember that you can only add one Clearing Choice on [UCAS Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login). Don't add a Clearing choice on [UCAS Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login) before a university asks you to apply to them - if you do they will likely just reject you (and until they reject you, you can't apply anywhere else!). Research each Clearing choice thoroughly before adding them on your [UCAS Track](https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/login) page – remember that you are committing yourself for the next 3 or 4 years of your life!

Don't just choose the first university that shows any interest in you, because there will be plenty of Clearing places available and any of them could offer you a place where you’ll be really happy.

**Can I use Clearing if I want a deferred offer?**

Yes, you can, although universities usually expect to deal with applications for entry for the current year (i.e. 2021). If you want a deferred offer, make sure you tell the university as soon as you contact them that you want to defer your place, although don't be disappointed if they say no. However, if you're taking [gap year](https://www.studential.com/gap-year-ideas) it might be better to reapply through UCAS in September. This way, you'll have the choice of all universities and courses rather than just the limited selection available through Clearing. You'll also have the advantage of knowing your grades when reapplying, so you can make more informed choices.

**How long is Clearing open?**

Clearing officially closes on 19th October 2021. However, most people won't take that long to find a suitable place. It depends how quickly you can make your mind up where you want to go. If you're absolutely sure you’ve found the [right university](https://www.studential.com/university/applying/guide/choosing-a-university) and [course](https://www.studential.com/university/applying/guide/choosing-a-degree) for you, it can be done within a few days. However, if you are undecided, it’s best you take a bit longer. Many people wish to visit several universities, and they may have special [open days](https://www.studential.com/university/applying/UCAS-application-guide/university-open-days) set up to help with your choice. Of course, if you entered Clearing by getting released from your firm or insurance choice then you might not actually be eligible for up to 2 weeks after Clearing has opened. In this case, the Clearing process will take longer for you.

**What if I’m off on holiday on results day or just after?**

In a nutshell: do not do this. Clearing doesn't finish until 19th October, so it’s best that you make yourself available until then. It’s only a few weeks, and you will have the rest of the summer to make other plans and take a break. Consider the fact that if you are on holiday, it will be hard to discuss things with the universities you're interested in applying to, plus your phone bill will be pretty expensive!

**I’m applying through Clearing – what do I do now?**

Check out the UCAS website and search for [available courses/locations](https://digital.ucas.com/search): Once you’ve found a place(s) that you think are suitable, the first thing you should do is phone the university(s) and discuss it with them – remember, you shouldn’t apply for a place unless a university actually asks you to. The first step in the Clearing process is contacting the university(s) by phone or email – not applying. It’s important not to rush into a decision - take time to talk things through with your family, friends, and teachers.

**What do I say to the university when I phone them?**

Before calling up the university, make sure you have some decent notes written down on why you want to study this particular course and why you want to attend this university.

* Have a copy of your personal statement with you, and make any notes on your achievements, etc. that will help sell yourself.
* Include anything you’ve done more recently that isn’t in your personal statement. Highlight any particularly good results you got, e.g. you may have passed an exam with almost full marks.
* Tell them if there are specific areas of the course that you are interested in and why.

It will take several or more things to get yourself accepted on to a course, so be well prepared to sell yourself to the university. If you sound enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the course and university, they will be more likely to ask you to apply.

**Should I contact the university as soon as possible?**

Do not rush to dial the university – take some time to prepare yourself. As the old saying goes, you never get a second chance to make a first impression!

You will want to make a good first impression on the university, so once you’ve made some notes on exactly what you want to say and you feel ready, phone them up.

**What’s the best way to contact them?**

You should always try to phone the university – this means YOU and not your parents. Make sure you have your notes, a pen, spare paper and your UCAS number with you when you call. You will also need your UCAS Clearing number at some point, but don’t panic if you haven’t received this yet.  
  
The university will be busy fielding calls, so expect to wait before you can speak to someone. Phone is the most direct way of contacting the university, and if you try another way such as email, you may have to wait a while for them to get back to you. If you don’t get through to an admissions tutor straight away, don’t worry – sometimes you will have to speak to an advisor first to see if your grades and experience match what they are looking for. If this is the case, you will be told that an admissions tutor will call you back later, or you may be asked to call them.  
  
When you speak to an admissions tutor, you will normally have an informal discussion with them, but remember that you need to sell yourself and portray yourself in the best possible light to stand a chance of being asked to apply.

**Should I visit the universities I’m considering attending?**

It’s a good idea to go to an [Open Day](https://www.studential.com/university/applying/UCAS-application-guide/university-open-days)  if you are invited – that way you can meet the tutors who will be teaching on the course, as well as fellow applicants and students already studying at the university. If you decide you aren’t very keen on it, then it’s best to know before committing yourself to a 3 year course there. You shouldn’t let distance, cost of travelling there or anything else prevent you from attending an Open Day – this is your future, so you should prioritise securing the best place possible for your degree.

**What about getting accommodation?**

You will find that some universities guarantee [accommodation](https://www.studential.com/applying/before-you-go-to-university/accommodation) to those entering through Clearing, which is good if the university you have want offers this. This you will be able to find out on their website, or certainly at their [Open Day](http://opendays.studential.com/)  at least (there will be plenty of people to ask). If the university you are applying to cannot guarantee you accommodation, they will help you find somewhere to stay. They will give you lists of approved landlords and/or details of suitable private accommodation.

**Further Information and advice**

**Student Services.** Student Services can offer careers advice. They can help you decide if university is the right step for you and discuss other options; face to face, over the phone or via a Teams meeting. Please contact us as follows to arrange:

Bedfordshire (Bedford College and Shuttleworth College)

            Email: [studentservices@bedford.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@bedford.ac.uk)

            Telephone: **01234 291770**

Bedford Sixth Form

Email: [studentservices@bedford.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@bedford.ac.uk)

        Telephone: 01234 291770

Northamptonshire (Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough)

Email [studentservices@tresham.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@tresham.ac.uk)

Telephone: 01536 413232

**UCAS.** You can talk to [UCAS](https://www.ucas.com/) by phoning 03451238001. This is just for queries about your application or for general Clearing enquiries - they won't offer you any advice on which university or course you should apply to, etc. If you're really stuck, you could try the Buzz Quiz which is available on the [UCAS website](https://www.ucas.com/careers/buzz-quiz). This can show you the areas of study you may be interested in, although if you have already applied then you've probably either completed this test or have found the information elsewhere.

**People you know**. The most important place to look for advice is from the people around you. Discuss things with your parents, your teachers, and even your friends (if they are not too busy sorting out their own university place).