Higher Education in UK: Guidance for Displaced Ukrainians

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Welcome to the most **important** choice of your life — the starting point of your successful career! We hope to help you make a choice for education that is accessible to all. We are going to look at all options you have for higher education in the UK. What are you looking for: Are you an undergraduate or postgraduate student? Here we will offer guidance for: Bachelor and Postgraduate Degrees along with the possibilities of **Apprenticeships**



The Main Differences Between Undergraduate and Postgraduate Study

Undergraduate: Typically, a first degree, level 6 qualification in the UK. **Postgraduate**: Advanced degree following an undergraduate, level 7 or 8 qualification.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE		
Level	Credits	Qualification
6	360	Undergraduate degree
6	120	Year Three
5	120	Year Two
4	120	Year One

Bachelor: Undergraduate courses are designed to provide foundational knowledge and skills in a specific field of study, such as:

Arts and Humanities: e.g., Literature, History, Philosophy, Languages, Law.

Sciences: e.g., Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Science.

Social Sciences: e.g., Psychology, Sociology, Political Science, Economics.

Engineering and Technology: e.g., Civil/Mechanical/Electrical

Engineering, Computer Science.

Business and Management: e.g., Business Administration, Marketing,

Finance, Human Resources.

Health and Medicine: e.g., Nursing, Physiotherapy, Public Health, Medicine (premed course)

Upon completion, you are awarded a Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Science (BSc), or other bachelor's degree titles, depending on your field of study.

Postgraduate education refers to the level of education that goes beyond a bachelor's degree. It includes master's degrees, postgraduate diplomas, and doctoral degrees like the PhD.

Master's Degrees: These typically take 1-2 years to complete and involve advanced study in a specific field. Examples include Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MSc), and Master of Business Administration (MBA).



MASTER'S DEGREE CREDITS		
Level	Credits	Qualification
7	180	Postgraduate Degree
7	180	Year One

Doctoral Degrees: These are the highest level of academic degrees and usually take 3-4 years to complete. They involve original research and contribute new knowledge to the field. The most common doctoral degree is the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), but there are also professional doctorates like Doctor of Education (EdD).

Postgraduate Diplomas and Certificates: These are shorter, specialized programmes that offer advanced knowledge in a particular area without leading to a full degree. They can often be completed in less time and might be a good option if you're looking to gain expertise or switch fields.

These degrees can help you gain specialized knowledge, advance in your career, or pursue academic or research interests.





 Postgraduate: Focused study on one topic in greater detail, developing advanced knowledge and research skills.

Research Skills

- **Undergraduate**: Independent research culminating in the final year.
- **Postgraduate**: Deeper, more extensive research required, often involving a substantial dissertation.

Course Length

- Undergraduate: Usually three years full-time (120 credits per year).
- Postgraduate (Masters): Typically one year full-time (180 credits total).
- Postgraduate (PhD): Typically 3-4 years full-time (not credit bearing).

Academic Year

- **Undergraduate**: typically three blocks per year, usually of 10-13 weeks with Christmas, Easter, and summer vacation periods
- Postgraduate: typically 12 months of study with Christmas and Easter vacation periods. Often includes study over the summer.

Contact Hours

- Undergraduate: More lectures and tutorials, with higher tutor interaction.
- Postgraduate: Less tutor interaction, more independent research; taught Master's may still have lectures.

Dissertation Length

- **Undergraduate**: Typically 6,000-12,000 words.
- Postgraduate: Typically 10,000-20,000 words; deeper investigation required.
- Postgraduate (PhD): Typically 80,000-100,000 words; deep investigation and original research required.

Course Fees

- **Undergraduate**: Government-capped fees, generally uniform across universities.
- **Postgraduate**: Fees vary widely, ranging from £6,000 to over £40,000, with no government cap.

Entry Requirements

Undergraduate: Typically requires A levels or equivalent level 3 qualifications. **Postgraduate**: Generally, requires an undergraduate degree; relevant work experience may also be needed.

Undergraduate studies provide a broad education foundation, while postgraduate studies focus on specialized, in-depth knowledge. They differ in duration, depth of



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research, interaction levels, and cost. Entry requirements for postgraduate studies are higher, often requiring prior academic qualifications and sometimes work experience.

University Pathway vs Apprenticeship Pathway:

University Pathway (undergraduate):

Important: for undergraduate programmes, you do not apply directly to the university but apply via UCAS and tailor your personal statement towards a subject area that you choose, not a university.

- Step 1: Research and choose courses and universities (up to five).
- Step 2: Prepare and take necessary exams (e.g., IELTS).
- Step 3: Gather documents (transcripts, recommendations).
- Step 4. Prepare your personal statement.
- Step 5: Apply via UCAS (The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) with deadlines. https://www.ucas.com/applying/applying-university

Apprenticeship Pathway:

- Step 1: Research available apprenticeships.
- Step 2: Prepare CV and cover letter.
- Step 3: Apply directly to employers or through apprenticeship portals.
- Step 4: Attend interviews and assessment centres.
- Step 5: Complete necessary paperwork (contracts, visa applications)

An apprenticeship is a work-based training programme that combines on-the-job experience with classroom instruction, allowing individuals to earn while they learn. Typically, apprenticeships are offered in skilled trades and professions, such as engineering, healthcare, construction, and information technology. These programmes are designed to provide comprehensive training and practical experience, often leading to a nationally recognised qualification. The length of an apprenticeship can vary, usually lasting from one to four years, depending on the industry and the level of qualification being pursued.

The advantages of apprenticeships are numerous. Firstly, apprenticeships offer a direct pathway to employment, as apprentices gain valuable work experience and skills that are highly sought after by employers. This hands-on training often makes apprentices more job-ready compared to their peers who follow purely academic routes. Additionally, apprenticeships allow individuals to earn a salary while they learn, reducing the financial burden associated with traditional education. This combination of earning and learning helps apprentices develop a strong work ethic and gain financial independence. Furthermore, many apprenticeships lead to permanent job offers from the employer, providing a secure transition into the workforce. According to the UK government's National Apprenticeship Service, 90% of apprentices stay in employment after finishing their apprenticeship, with 71% remaining with the same employer.

Sources:

GOV.UK: Apprenticeships https://www.apprenticeship
National Apprenticeship Service https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk
https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/
https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/





1. Find out what you are good at and choose a specialization: The choice of the University

What is a Russell Group university?

A prestigious association of 24 public research universities in the UK known for high-quality research and academic excellence. The Russell Group was established in 1994, taking its name from the Russell Hotel on Russell Square in London where the first informal meeting was held. The group was created to provide a platform for the universities it represented to lobby government to ensure that they have the optimum environment for success. They combine to work with organizations such as the UK Research Councils, ensuring that their academic excellence is noticed, and this means that they secure significant research funding.

Who are the members of the Russell Group?

University of Birmingham	London School of Economics & Political Science
University of Bristol	University of Manchester
University of Cambridge	Newcastle University
Cardiff University	University of Nottingham
Durham University	University of Oxford
University of Edinburgh	Queen Mary University of London
University of Exeter	Queen's University Belfast
University of Glasgow	University of Sheffield
Imperial College London	University of Southampton
King's College London	University College London
University of Leeds	University of Warwick
University of Liverpool	University of York





Non-Russell Group: Includes other reputable universities offering excellent education.

University of Bath	University of Hertfordshire
University of St Andrews	University of the West of England (UWE)
Loughborough University	Middlesex University
University of Surrey	University of Greenwich
University of East Anglia (UEA)	De Montfort University
Heriot-Watt University	Sheffield Hallam University
University of Leicester	University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)
Lancaster University	University of Salford
Loughborough University	University of Chester
University of Reading	Swansea University
University of Strathclyde	University of South Wales
University of Kent	Brunel University London
University of Essex	Aberystwyth University
University of Aberdeen	Bangor University
University of Sussex	Edge Hill University
University of Plymouth	Aston University
University of Portsmouth	Birkbeck, University of London
University of Hull	Goldsmiths, University of London
Oxford Brookes University	University of Roehampton
Bournemouth University	Royal Holloway, University of London
University of Lincoln	SOAS, University of London
University of Brighton	St George's, University of London
University of Westminster	University of Bedfordshire
Manchester Metropolitan University	University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Northumbria University	Liverpool John Moores University
Nottingham Trent University	Coventry University

Rankings: University rankings, such as those by The Guardian,

(<u>https://www.theguardian.com/education/universityguide</u>) consider various factors including academic performance and student satisfaction. Rankings also vary by department and course, not just by the institution overall.

Here is a list of notable non-Russell Group universities in the UK. These institutions also offer high-quality education and research opportunities.

This list is not exhaustive but includes a variety of universities known for their strong academic programmes and research contributions. Each of these institutions provides unique opportunities and specialisations, contributing to the diversity and richness of higher education in the UK.



Understanding University Groups and Rankings

To find the rankings of universities in the UK, you can refer to several reputable sources. These sources provide detailed rankings based on various factors, including academic performance, research quality, student satisfaction, and employability. Here are some key resources:

1. The Guardian University Guide

https://www.theguardian.com/education/universityguide

The Guardian rankings are known for focusing on student satisfaction, teaching quality, and employability. They provide detailed breakdowns for different subjects and overall university performance.

2. The Times Higher Education https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/best-universities-uk

This guide offers comprehensive rankings based on a variety of metrics including research quality, student satisfaction, entry standards, and graduate prospects.

- 3. Complete University Guide https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/
 This guide provides overall rankings as well as rankings by subject. It includes metrics such as student satisfaction, research quality, and graduate prospects.
- 4. QS World University Rankings https://www.topuniversities.com/qs-world-university-rankings

QS provides global rankings but also offers regional and subject-specific rankings. It considers academic reputation, employer reputation, and research impact.

5. National Student Survey (NSS) https://www.thestudentsurvey.com The NSS collects feedback from students about their academic experience. Universities use this data to gauge student satisfaction.



2. Explore courses and institutions. Attend Webinars: Participate in virtual open days and information sessions.

Attend Open days and events, experience what the university has to offer! Usually universities hold a couple of them per year, and it is important to attend them. Order a prospectus.

Sign up for emails, get all the latest news and helpful advice.

Apply online - follow university guidance on how to apply (for undergraduate courses, see above for details of the centralized admissions service, UCAS).

Checking Specific Universities

Search for the university on the above-mentioned websites.

Look for specific metrics such as student satisfaction scores (if they are below 50%, it's a red flag).

Review subject-specific rankings to get an idea of how different departments within the university perform. There are also rankings between different departments and courses, look for a balance between academic profile and student profiles

Example Search Process:

- Visit The Guardian University Guide and use the search function to find the university.
- Check The Times Higher Education for more detailed academic and research performance data.
- Visit the Complete University Guide to compare the overall rankings and specific subject areas.
- Refer to the National Student Survey for direct feedback from current students regarding their satisfaction.
- Look at the Graduate Market data
- As an example: 'In 2021, the University of Birmingham has been recognised as the most targeted university for graduates by leading employers, demonstrating our commitment to you and your future. At Birmingham we have a dedicated Careers service, with a range of resources to help you stand out from the crowd.'

(https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/birmingham-top-for-graduate-employment#:~:text=In%202021%2C%20the%20University%20of,stand%20out%20from%20the%20crowd)



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Application Strategies Practical Tips:

UCAS Applications: Apply to up to five universities through UCAS, balancing prestigious institutions with more realistic choices. Have always an insurance choice as a backup.

Language Preparation: Ensure your English proficiency meets university requirements.

Financial Planning: Budget for living costs, including food, transport, and accommodation. Research and Backup Plans: Thoroughly research universities and courses. Be ambitious but realistic in your choices.

Use Clearing: Be proactive in using the clearing process if initial applications are unsuccessful.

Clearing is a process that allows students who were not admitted to their preferred universities to find available spots in other institutions. It serves as a safety net for students who may not have received the grades required for their initial choices. The University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) publishes a comprehensive list of courses and universities with available spaces during the clearing period, which typically occurs in the summer after students have received their exam results. This list is a valuable resource for students to explore alternative options and secure a place in higher education. Students can contact universities directly to inquire about available spaces and apply for courses that still have vacancies.

Grades play a crucial role in university admissions, and most universities set minimum grade requirements for entry. Some programmes accept only A-levels and equivalents, while other accept BTEC and other qualifications as well. If you are not sure, always contact university for the clarification. However, universities might consider lower grades based on specific circumstances or other merits of the applicant. Clearing offers a second chance for students with lower grades to find a suitable course and institution. However, it's essential for students to act quickly during the clearing process, as spaces fill up rapidly. Being proactive and prepared, understanding the clearing system, and having a realistic list of alternative universities and courses can significantly increase the chances of securing a place. You can also use clearing to secure a place at a more prestigious university if your grades are better than you expected.





3. Define your Visa status - are you considered to be an international student, if from Ukraine? Have you graduated in Ukraine or in the UK? Have you got your Bachelor's degree in Ukraine, the EU or the UK?

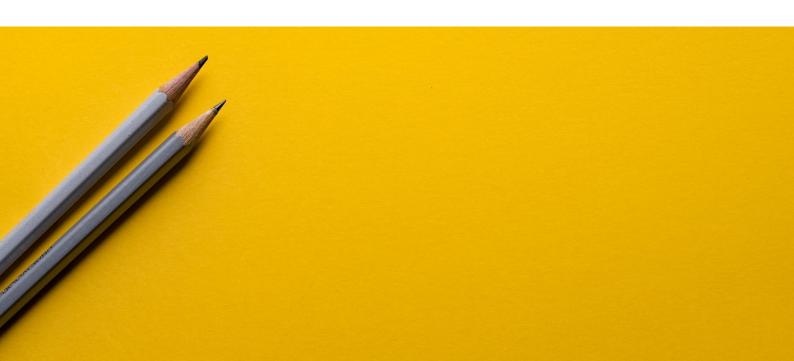
Valeria's Journey to Studying at RADA:

My name is Valeria, I am a Ukrainian actress who graduated with an MA degree at RADA UK after completing my Bachelor's degree in Ukraine. My journey wasn't easy, but I wouldn't change a thing. Once I decided I wanted to study at RADA, I sought out the administration's email to ask for support, but found there was none specifically for Ukrainians. However, under the Ukrainian Sponsorship Scheme, I could apply for a student loan (which I did eventually, and it helped significantly).

I auditioned for the course, was accepted in September 2022, and then faced the challenge of funding. The student loan didn't cover the entire fee, so I researched funding opportunities and contacted people and companies. Unfortunately, by mid-November, I had missed many deadlines.

I explained my situation to the academy, detailing my budget and expenses, including travel, food, and rent. After meeting in person, they offered to reduce my study fee, which was fortunate. My advice: Don't be afraid to ask if you have little solutions in terms of money.

Language was a challenge but manageable: balancing studies and learning a new language was difficult, especially with writing. Financially, I had to work three days a week while attending the academy four days a week. It was tough but very much worth it.





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For accommodation, I secured it before enrolling to the academy. Although I recommend getting to know people and finding accommodation with them rather than randomly online.

My MFA course met my expectations. I met people from around the world, learned a lot, and studied at one of the best academies globally. Good luck with your studies!

Advice:

Be Brave, Be Patient, Be Flexible and Always check funding deadlines. Valeria, RADA's MA Theatre Lab

4. Define your Language Proficiency — proof of your knowledge of English. Register for Tests: IELTS, TOEFL, or other required exams. Study and Take Tests: Ensure scores are ready for applications.

English Language Requirements

Universities in the UK have the right to reject applications that do not meet their English language proficiency requirements. Commonly accepted certificates include IELTS, with specific grade requirements varying by institution. Always check the Universities' websites.

5. Prepare the application form to the University

For undergraduate applications, you will need to apply via UCAS. Postgraduate applications are submitted directly to the university.

To prepare a university application form, first gather all necessary documents such as transcripts, letters of recommendation, and standardised test scores. Then, write a compelling personal statement that outlines your academic background, reasons for choosing the programme, and future goals. Finally, complete the application form meticulously, proofread for errors, and submit it before the deadline, ensuring all components are accurate and consistent.

If you are applying via your school/college, do check their deadline and follow this to get your application in on time.



What if I don't have my school diploma with me, can I still apply? - Yes, you can still apply to universities in the UK even if you don't have your school diploma with you. Here are the steps and options available to you:

Contact the admissions office of the university you're interested in and explain that you do not have your school diploma with you. They may allow you to provide **alternative documentation** or proof of your qualifications.

Obtain Replacement Documents. Contact your previous school or the relevant educational authorities in your home country to request replacement copies of your diploma and transcripts.

Foundation Year: If you do not meet the direct entry requirements for an undergraduate programme, consider enrolling in a foundation year. This preparatory year can help you meet the necessary qualifications.

Use Other Evidence: If you recently completed your schooling, you might be able to use predicted grades provided by your teachers. Provide any other relevant qualifications or certificates you may have.

Consider Alternative Entry Routes: Some universities offer access courses designed for students who do not have traditional qualifications. Relevant work experience may be considered as part of your application.

Typical Entry Times

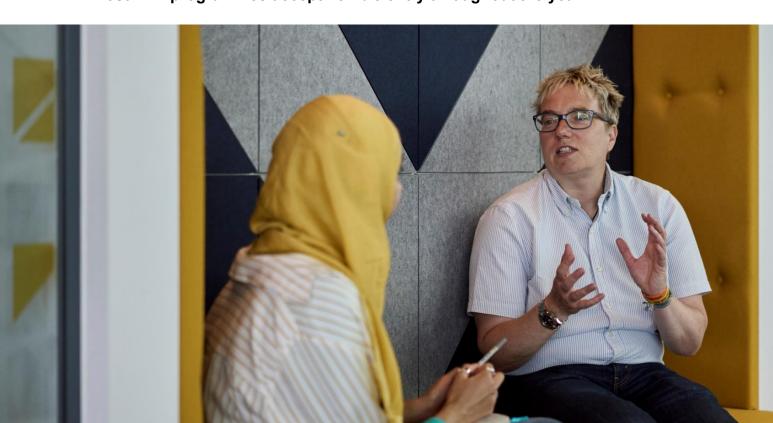
Undergraduate Programmes:

September/October: The main intake for most undergraduate programmes in the UK. This aligns with the start of the academic year.

Postgraduate Programmes:

September/October: The primary intake for most postgraduate programmes. **January/February:** Many universities also offer a secondary intake for postgraduate courses.

Most PhD programmes accept flexible entry throughout the year.





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Factors to Consider

Academic Readiness:

Ensure you have completed the necessary prerequisites and qualifications before applying. For international students, make sure you meet English language requirements.

Personal Circumstances:

Consider any personal commitments or life events that may affect your ability to start university. Ensure you have sufficient funds and accommodation arrangements in place.

Career Goals:

Some courses or career paths might have specific entry points or optimal times to start. Consider internships or work experience opportunities that may be available before or during your studies.

Application Deadlines (please check for every particular year on the UCAS website):

UCAS Deadlines for Undergraduate Courses:

October: For courses at Oxford and Cambridge, and for most medicine, dentistry, and veterinary courses.

January: Main deadline for most undergraduate courses.

end of June: Late application deadline (applications after this date enter Clearing). **Postgraduate Applications:** Deadlines vary by programme and university, so check specific requirements. Postgraduate applications are submitted directly to the university.

Direct from High School:

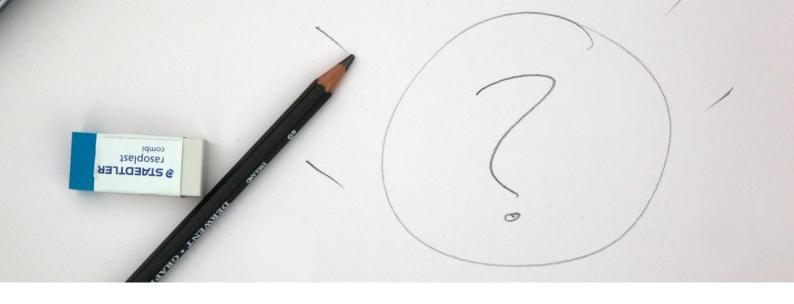
Starting university right after high school is common and allows you to continue your education without interruption.

Gap Year:

Taking a gap year can provide valuable life experience, work opportunities, or time to travel. It can also help you gain additional qualifications or work experience relevant to your chosen field of study. If you need time to decide on your career path, gain work experience, or travel, a gap year can be beneficial. Just ensure you stay focused on your goal of entering university.

Returning to Education:

If you are a mature student returning to education, the best time is when you feel ready to balance studies with other commitments. The best time to enter university is when you feel academically prepared, personally ready, and have all necessary documentation and funding in place.



6. What is a foundation year and who should get it?

There are many reasons why you might choose to study a foundation year. Maybe you don't meet the entry requirements to enter directly on a degree course, or perhaps you want to study something new and would like to better understand the field. It is a great opportunity to get used to the UK educational system.

Who needs a Foundational Year?

It is an extra year of study at the start of your University course for those who don't meet direct entry requirements or want to study a new subject. Students who have studied in a country with fewer than 13 years of school, and have not taken A-Levels may need to complete a foundation course before they enroll for a UK university degree

I have finished my Bachelors in Ukraine, can I apply to the UK Masters programme? - Yes, you can apply to a Master's programme in the UK with a Bachelor's degree from Ukraine. Look for Master's programmes that interest you and fit your career goals.

Check the entry requirements on university websites to ensure your Ukrainian degree is recognised. Prepare your application.

Transcripts: Obtain official transcripts from your Ukrainian university. Make sure it has an official translation into English.

Personal Statement: Write a compelling personal statement outlining your academic background, reasons for applying, and career aspirations.

References: Secure academic or professional references.

CV/Resume: Highlight your academic achievements and any relevant work experience.

English Proficiency: If English is not your first language, you may need to take an English proficiency.



We	advance
We	activate

Anastasia's experience of Foundation Course at Rose Bruford College:

A foundation course offers an intensive learning experience, providing essential knowledge for a chosen profession. You have to study hard, as a lot of information is included in a short programme. It can be quite exhausting, especially if English is not your native language, but this is the best place for development and personal growth, there are a lot of great people who surround you and inspire you. I was fortunate to receive free tuition and accommodation in a student dormitory from Rose Bruford College. Admission requirements included creating a video business card, participating in a creative competition, and having a video meeting with the future group leader. The college also held several conferences for prospective students to address queries about the programme and living arrangements. Additionally, securing a visa was a lengthy process, requiring early preparation and assistance from a sponsor.

Life at the university was engaging and fulfilling, but the language was quite a big obstacle for me. With an English proficiency level of B1 and limited communication experience, understanding tasks and socialising with classmates was difficult during the first two months. Despite this, teachers were always supportive and attentive and ensured it did not impact my academic performance.

Another thing to think about is the cost of food, public transport and other purchases. It is necessary to immediately make savings or discount cards, as well as student travel. It really makes a pretty big difference.

Anastasia, Rose Bruford College, Foundation Course, Acting

Finance and Funding

Living Costs and Accommodation

Understanding the living costs in the city where you plan to study is crucial. Compare rent and other living expenses to budget effectively. Universities often guarantee accommodation for first-year students, typically in university-owned shared accommodation. After the first year, students generally rent privately, often with friends.

Student Finance in the UK:

Student Finance England — it is a student loan, provided by Government, for tuition fees and living costs to support you while you are studying. Keep in mind, that the amount for living costs is calculated depends on parents' income and place of study and normally does not cover all expenses for accommodation and subsistence.

Can I work while I am studying? — Yes!

Full-time students (18+): Check the regulations of your university. Often you are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week during term time.



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You can find information about student finance and apply for it through the official GOV.UK Student Finance page https://www.gov.uk/student-finance This page provides detailed guidance on the types of funding available, eligibility criteria, and the application process for tuition fee loans, maintenance loans, and maintenance grants.

For a comprehensive toolkit to help you prepare your application, including tips on required documents and estimating your loan amount, visit the Student Finance Toolkit. https://studentfinance.campaign.gov.uk/student-toolkit/. This resource is especially useful for making your application as quick and efficient as possible.

How to apply for Student Loan?

Eligibility for Student Loans:

- British passport holders
- EU passport holders with Settled/Pre-settled status
- ILR (Indefinite Leave to Remain) holders
- Refugees
- Ukraine Scheme visa holders

(If you are 16 or 17 and want to come and study in the UK, you need parental approval; and sufficient funds to cover your stay in the UK)

! Practical Tips: Discover how much the living cost is going to be in the city where you are going to study, compare the rent and living costs. Check the student accommodation for the first year, whether the University guarantees a room for the first-year students.

After completing the first year you can rent with your friends.

Check University Profiles:

Always review the profiles of universities you are considering. Their websites usually have dedicated sections for financial aid, detailing the types of scholarships, bursaries, and loans available. There are numerous options available to fund your study programme, ranging from alumni bursaries to school and department scholarships, as well as government loans. It's essential to thoroughly explore the funding opportunities provided by the university you are interested in. Here are some steps and tips to help you:

Alumni Bursaries and Scholarships:

Many universities offer financial support in the form of bursaries and scholarships funded by alumni. These can significantly reduce the cost of your education.

School and Department Scholarships:

Specific schools or departments within a university often have their own scholarships. These are typically awarded based on academic achievement, talent, or financial need.



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Government Loans:

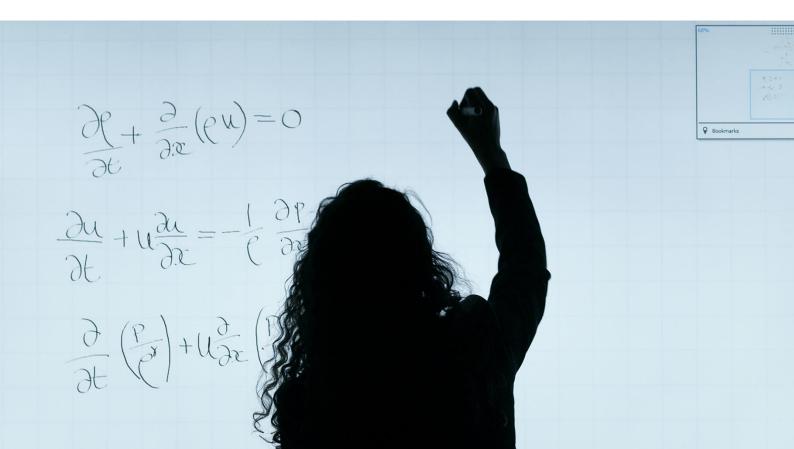
Government student loans are available to cover tuition fees and living costs. In the UK, for example, Student Finance England provides loans for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

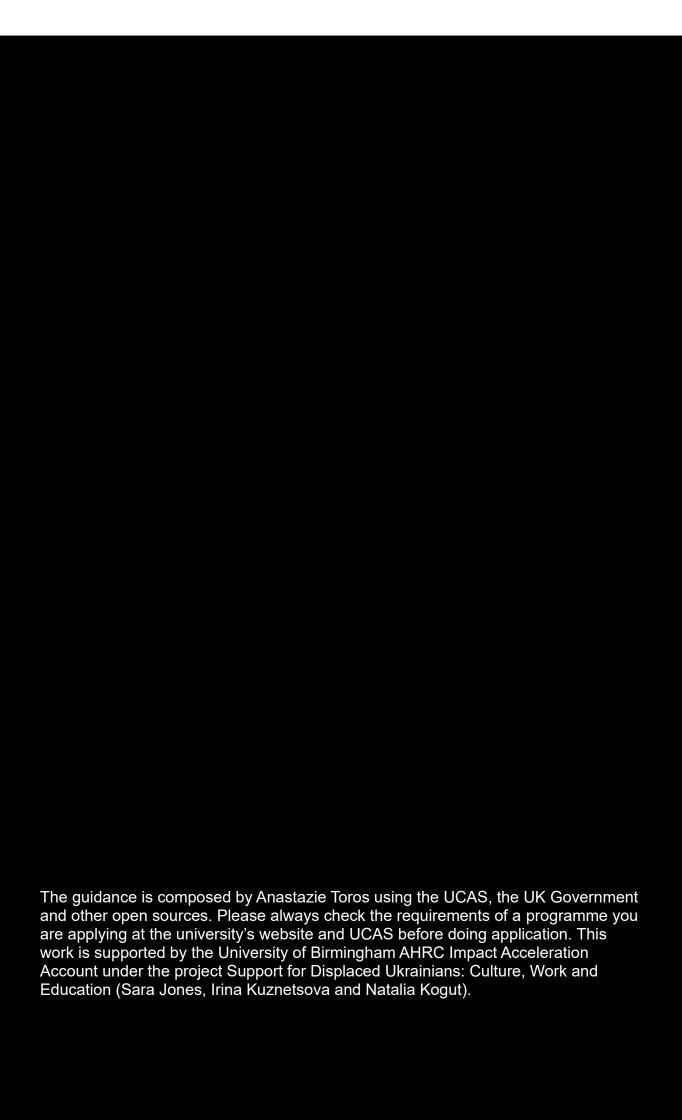
Universities often offer a range of internal funding options for research students, including studentships, scholarships, and bursaries. Additionally, there are external funding options such as loans, scholarships, and grants. International students may also find funding opportunities from grant-awarding bodies in their home countries.

For the postgraduate tuition fees - Tuition fees are listed on each taught degree and research degree page. Fees are charged based on the number of credits you are studying for, so will be lower for a postgraduate certificate or diploma.

How and when should I repay a Student Loan?

Repaying a student loan generally starts after you complete your studies and your income exceeds a certain threshold. In the UK, for instance, repayment begins the April following your course completion if your income surpasses £27,295 per year for Plan 2 loans and £21,000 for Plan 1 loans (2024/25 academic year). Monthly repayments are currently 6-9% of your income above this threshold (depending on the level of study) and are deducted through payroll by your employer, or through self-assessment if self-employed or living abroad. Interest is applied from the first payment and depends on inflation. Repayments pause if your income falls below the threshold, and any remaining balance is written off after 30 years. For updated details, refer to the Student Loans Company (SLC) website or the GOV.UK student finance page.







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