UCAS 2027

A Parent's Guide to University Applications

Presented by Lorna Ellis • September 2026

What We'll Cover Tonight

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What's happening now

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After the application

Offers, interviews, results day & Clearing

💡 *Any question Lellis@carshaltonboys.org*

What Has Already Happened?

🎓 Talks & Presentations

Since Christmas — uni visits, online conferences, webinars and Google Classroom resources

✍️ Personal Statement Workshops

Work began last term — multiple drafts are normal and expected

🗓️ UCAS Sessions

PSCHE sessions on researching courses and starting UCAS applications

🐸 Unifrog Platform

Students are using Unifrog to explore courses, record experiences and research universities

🏫 Open Day Visits

Students have been attending open days both in person and online to find the right fit

💡 *Ask your child what courses and universities are on their shortlist — it shows interest and encourages them to think it through!*

This Term and Autumn Term

Current Activities

- One-to-ones with tutors on personal statements
- Detailed feedback being given — several drafts are normal
- Reviewing course and university choices
- Important to have a range of 5 courses (from aspirational to realistic)
- Last open days in September and October — now is the time!
- Checking qualifications meet entry requirements

🔄 Flexible Journey

This is not a one-size-fits-all process. Students change their minds about subjects and universities, and that's completely normal. Encourage your child to keep an open mind.

💡 Range of Choices

Encourage your child to apply to a range of universities — not just the most competitive. A mix of aspirational and realistic choices is key to having options on results day.

💡 *Check in gently — ask 'Have you looked at any open days you'd like to visit?' rather than 'Have you done your application?' Curiosity beats pressure.*

The New Personal Statement — 2026 Onwards Format

⚠️ **NEW for 2026: The personal statement changed. Instead of one open-ended essay, students answer THREE structured questions.**

Q1

Why do you want to study this course or subject?

👉 Passion, motivation, genuine interest — what sparked it?

Q2

How have your qualifications and studies helped you prepare for this course?

👉 Linking A-levels / BTECs to the subject — skills and knowledge gained

Q3

What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

👉 Work experience, volunteering, reading, clubs, hobbies, part-time work

💡 *Ask your child to talk you through their personal statement answers out loud — hearing it spoken often reveals where the ideas need developing.*

Key Dates & Deadlines

Sept/Oct — **Last Open Days**

Encourage in-person visits where possible — crucial for final decisions

Spring — **Student Finance Opens**

Apply early — parents may need to provide household income details

8 Oct — **Oxbridge & Medicine Deadline**

School internal deadline — firm and non-negotiable

May/Jun — **Respond to Offers**

Choose ONE firm and ONE insurance — in consultation with school

24 Nov — **School Deadline (All)**

All students must Pay/Send by this date — allows time for school to process

Aug 2027 — **Results Day — 12 Aug 2027**

Be available all day! Clearing opens immediately if needed

13 Jan — **UCAS Official Deadline**

Applications after this date are at each university's discretion

Add 24 November and 12 August 2027 to your calendar now. Being available on results day makes a huge difference — decisions can need to be made within hours.

Costs & Financial Support

UCAS Application Fee

£34.50

paid online at the time of submission

(Subject to change — check ucas.com)

FREE for eligible students

- ✅ **Bursary students**
  (paid directly from bursary fund)
- ✅ **Free School Meal (FSM) students**
  (fee waiver — must be confirmed first)

💰 Student Finance — What Parents Need to Know

Tuition fee loans cover the full cost of tuition (currently up to £10,050/year) — students do not pay upfront.
Maintenance loans help with living costs — parents will be asked to provide household income details.
Applications open in spring — apply early to ensure funding is in place for September.

💡 *Start gathering your P60 or payslips now — student finance applications open in spring and household income details are required to calculate the maintenance loan.*

After the Application — What Comes Next?

Wait for Offers

Universities respond at different speeds. Students can track all responses in their UCAS Hub.

Keep Working Hard!

Offers are conditional on grades. Universities can and do withdraw offers if results fall short. This matters!

Interviews

Some courses require interviews (medicine, law, Oxbridge, music). Students can request a mock interview — encourage them to!

Responding to Offers (May/Jun)

Students choose ONE firm and ONE insurance. This must be done in consultation with school — don't rush.

Applicant Days

Universities often invite applicants for visit days before or after offers — very useful for making final choices.

Results Day — 12 Aug 2027

Be available all day! If results meet conditions, a place is confirmed. If not, Clearing opens and school will support.

If your child is called for an interview, help them practise by asking 'Why do you want to study this?' — confident answers come from rehearsal, not just knowledge.

How Can You Help as a Parent?

Ask open questions

Try "What are you most excited about studying?" rather than "Have you done your personal statement?"

Prepare for student finance

You will likely need to provide household income details. Gather P60s and payslips in advance

Read the draft

Give feedback on whether it sounds like THEM — authentic voice matters more than impressive language

Be available on results day

12 August 2027 — don't book holidays for this date. Decisions may need to be made quickly if Clearing is needed

Support open day visits

Going in person makes a huge difference to decision-making — even one visit is valuable

Keep perspective

There is no single 'right' outcome. Clearing, gap years, and alternatives are all valid paths. Stay calm and supportive

Remember: your interest and calm support matters more than knowing every deadline. Students with engaged parents navigate this process with more confidence.

Useful Resources

The new personal statement for 2026

ucas.com

Falmouth University — How to Write a PS

falmouth.ac.uk

UCAS Parent, Guardian & Carer Guide

ucas.com/parents

Admissions tips for 2026 — YouTube

youtube.com

Durham University — PS Guide 2026

dur.ac.uk

Student Finance England

gov.uk/student-finance

University of Essex — PS Tips

essex.ac.uk

Unifrog — Course research & PS builder

unifrog.org

💡 *The UCAS parent guide (ucas.com/parents) is a great read — it covers everything from personal statements to student finance in plain English.*

Thank You

Questions & Discussion

💡 *Don't hesitate to email Lorna after tonight — the school team is here to support the whole family through this process.*

📧 Lorna Ellis — Lellis@carshaltonboys.com

Results Day — Thursday 12th August 2027 (TBC) — please be available!