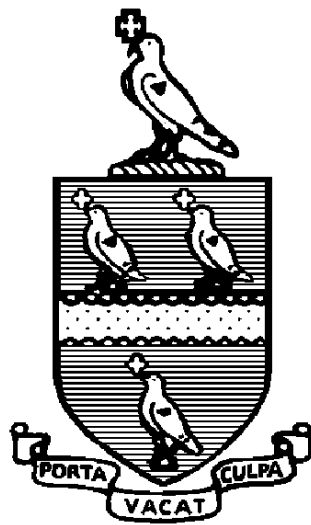


# Repton School



## Higher Education Guide

**2010 Entry**

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## Introduction

In going to university you will sample new social opportunities and develop new interests, greater independence and a broader outlook on life. You are also be taking the next steps towards a career and, although a good degree is no guarantee of a top salary in years to come, you can boost your earnings potential by gaining one, particularly if you choose the course and university wisely. Your choice of university course is therefore of great importance - it will certainly have a massive influence on the next five to ten years and might well affect the rest of your life.

There has been a huge expansion in the HE sector over the past thirty five years and about 44% of all 18 to 30 year olds in the UK now benefit from a university education. This means that many graduates now take jobs previously occupied by non-graduates and only the most sought after graduates find the most attractive career openings. Unless your parents fully fund your university education you will probably graduate with a sizeable debt to repay. With these factors in mind it is essential that you explore your higher education options carefully. You would be foolish to turn a blind eye to all the advice on offer and submit an ill-prepared university application next autumn.

Getting a place on the university course of your choice is not the end of it all, but it is another step on the road towards your career. When you enter the graduate job market in five years time employers will be looking for more than just a degree certificate. They will look for enthusiasm, as well as problem-solving, teamwork, communication and time & project management skills. At a recent lecture Dr Paul Redmond, Head of Careers & Employability Service at Liverpool University, suggested the following formula for employability as a graduate:

$$\text{Employability} = Q + WE + S \times C$$

where

- Q = qualifications
- WE = work experience
- S = skills
- C = contacts

You will have picked up some useful skills at Repton and at university you will need to continue to develop the personal qualities that will mark you out as a strong candidate in the graduate job market. Many of the employable skills that employers look for can be developed in extra-curricular activities so when you visit universities over the coming months look for the societies and clubs that you might join if you go there. One very useful way to gain work experience and make contacts is to look for an internship in your penultimate year at university; if you secure one of these you will significantly improve your prospects of finding a graduate level job when you complete your degree.

This booklet has been written to help you explore your HE options. You have already heard about the issues involved in a series of talks throughout the Lent term and you should already have undertaken some research to identify possible degree courses. After your AS-level exams the admissions procedure will be explained to you in detail. My colleagues and I will supply the appropriate advice but it is now up to YOU to research which option is the right one for you.

You may already know which course you want to study. If you wish to study medicine, veterinary medicine or physiotherapy you will need to record some work experience on

your UCAS form. If you do not already have this you should arrange it as a matter of great urgency. Appropriate work experience might be useful if you intend to study other vocational or training degrees (e.g. law, business studies).

Entry to the more competitive courses demands very good GCSE grades and very high UMS scores at AS-level, as well as high predicted A-level grades. You cannot now change your GCSE grades, but you should aim to score as highly as possible at AS-level this summer. As well as researching your higher education options carefully you also need to work hard to maximise your chances of securing your chosen university place. I am tempted to say ‘Good luck!’, but if you heed the above advice then there should be no need for this.

J C Driver.  
Director of University Entrance.  
March 2009.

### **ISCO Work Experience Courses**

For some degree courses (e.g. medicine, veterinary medicine, dentistry, physiotherapy) relevant work experience is essential, and for others (e.g. law) it may well prove beneficial. You might therefore consider applying for a place on some of the careers experience courses provided by ISCO (Independent Schools Careers Organisation).

ISCO has been organising careers experience courses for many years. Some of the courses they offer are particularly worthwhile, and almost all are exceptionally good value for money. They enable you to discover the opportunities existing for school-leavers and graduates in the employment market, and to hear about the qualities that potential employers are looking for. They might well reinforce your existing career ambitions but, equally important, they might lead you to revise your career plans.

You will find information about these ‘expanding horizons’ courses on the website [www.myfuturewise.org.uk](http://www.myfuturewise.org.uk). Many of the courses take place during the Easter holiday; if applying for courses that are held in term time, you must seek prior permission from your Housemaster/Housemistress. MJB will be happy to answer any queries you have about these courses.

## Programme of Higher Education Guidance at Repton School

L6 Lent term	Apply for ISCO work experience courses and university taster courses. Series of talks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Choice of course.</li><li>• Choice of university.</li><li>• Oxbridge.</li><li>• ‘Training Plus’, open days, personal statement, the UCAS reference, financial matters.</li><li>• Staff/pupil HE forum.</li></ul>
L6 Summer term	GAP Fair Careers forum HE Day: Workshop: ‘UCAS Apply’, the application process. Shortlist university courses and attend open days.
U6 Michaelmas term	Talk: Applying to university. Submission of the UCAS form. Practice Oxbridge interviews. Oxbridge interviews.
U6 Lent term	Talk: Interviews, offers, ‘UCAS Extra’, financial matters.
U6 Summer term	Talk: What to do on results day.

### **Please note:**

1. We will provide the relevant advice, but we cannot choose a course for you. You must take the initiative: be prepared to do the necessary research!
2. Please feel free to make an appointment with me if you require further advice.

## How to Choose Your HE Course

As you will be studying at university for three, four or five years it is important that you enjoy the course, and that your 'heart is in it' from the very start. You should therefore choose your course before you choose your university. Relatively few Reptonians will know exactly what they want to do at university, so most will need to explore their options during the Lower Sixth. There are many courses on offer, and the following exercises might help you narrow down the options.

1. Review the findings of the Morrisby report. This will summarise your interests and abilities.
2. Try one or two of the interests questionnaires that are available on the internet; for example, [www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk](http://www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk) or the Stamford test on [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)
3. List the subjects you most enjoy and the possible careers you have in mind.
4. Consult 'Degree Course Offers' by Brian Heap. You will find copies available in the House and in the library. The first chapter contains two very useful tables: in the first, A-level subjects are listed together with related degree courses; in the second, career titles are listed against relevant degree courses.
5. Consult the 'Centigrade Directory of Degree Course Titles'. This is in the 'HE Guidance' section of the 'Repton Folder' on the school's intranet. It gives a description of a wide range of HE courses.
6. The A-Z of degrees, and the A-Z of careers, in the HE section of the online edition of 'The Independent' ([www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk)) are other useful resources. On the home page select the 'student' tab, then 'getting into university' and 'career planning' respectively.
7. Course descriptions can also be found on [www.hotcourses.com](http://www.hotcourses.com) (in the 'Find' section on the 'home' page select 'undergraduate courses', then 'subject spotlight').
8. Look at the degree courses available on the UCAS website ([www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)) Having discovered the universities at which particular courses can be studied you can then log on to the institution website and read course particulars.
9. The UCAS website, or the 'UCAS Big Guide' (available in the Houses), can be consulted to discover the published entrance requirements for a particular course. Be aware that universities sometimes alter the entrance requirements at relatively short notice (e.g. between one and two years before the year of entry), so you should also use the university websites for updates and changes. Clearly, you will need to have realistic ambitions; moreover, you cannot assume that if your predicted grades match the published entrance requirements you will automatically receive an offer: in many cases you will not! See the section 'Will I get an offer?' on page 12.

## Further Advice on Choice of Course

Your Head of Department may be able to offer advice on the characteristics of an HE course in his/her subject area(s). A recommended reading list is also included in appendix 1. A number of 'subject advisers' are available to cover the degree courses that are not encountered as A-level courses (e.g. medicine, law, engineering). These subject advisers are:

Accountancy	MAS
Agricultural Sciences	JCD
American Studies	IWM
Anglo-Saxon, Norse & Celtic	IWM
Anthropology	DSN
Archaeology	DSN
Architecture	JHB, IWS
Art & Design	JHB
Business Management	JCD
Dentistry	JCD
Drama	JMGL
Engineering (Chemical)	PNB
Engineering (Electrical)	AJS
Engineering (Mechanical)	PJG
Environmental Science	JCD
European Studies	TBB
Food Science	JCD
Geology	JCD
Human Sciences	GL
Law	TCO
Media Studies	IWM
Medicine (& related courses)	JCD
Metallurgy & Materials Science	JCD
Philosophy	DTC
Politics	MKC
Psychology	GL
Sport, Leisure	SJC
Veterinary Medicine	JCD

## **Types of HE Course Available**

The HE degree courses available can be classified into four main groups:

### **1. Training degrees**

These are degrees that train students to do a particular type of work. Examples are medicine, dentistry and civil engineering. This type of degree is associated with high employment rates (and high graduate starting salaries). For example the Times Good University Guide (2009) states that, six months after graduating, 100% of dentistry students are employed in 'graduate' type jobs. The corresponding figures for medicine and civil engineering are 94% and 83% respectively. (Contrast Business Studies 54%).

### **2. Vocational degrees**

These may impart skills that are useful to a particular area of employment, but are not the only entry route to that type of work. Examples include business studies, law, accounting. Employment rates for graduates will vary considerably from one course to another, and from one university to another. If a work placement is included in the course (e.g. sandwich course) this will almost certainly improve employment prospects.

### **3. Science degrees**

The sciences are often viewed as 'difficult' options at A-level. Such a view is a little misleading because able scientists will usually do very well in them in the Sixth Form; however weaker scientists can find the subjects inaccessible at this level. There are several major advantages in studying for a science degree. Firstly, at the more prestigious universities, entrance requirements are generally lower for science courses than for many other courses. Secondly, science graduates are generally viewed as being highly employable and can respond to adverts seeking graduates with numerate degrees. Science graduates can also do non-scientific jobs (e.g. law, accountancy) whereas non-science graduates cannot do scientific jobs. However, science graduates who wish to pursue a scientific career may well need to do a post-graduate degree before finding employment.

### **4. Non-vocational academic degrees**

These have no obvious link to the employment market. Examples include English and History. In these disciplines the employment prospects will vary considerably from one university to another; in general, those who have been to a more prestigious university will have much better employment prospects than those who have been to one of the newer universities.

#### **Please note:**

1. Many job vacancies do not require a specific degree discipline.
2. Some careers will require the student to do post-graduate study to a greater or lesser extent (e.g. accountancy, law, many scientific careers).

## **Types of Degree Course**

### **Degrees, Foundation Degrees and Diplomas**

The vast majority of Reptonians will wish to study for an honours degree. Foundation degrees are training degrees of a less academic nature and relate to vocational areas. Diploma courses are at a lower level than degree courses; successful completion of the first year or two of such courses can lead to entry onto an honours degree course.

### **Exemption from Professional Examinations**

Some degree courses will exempt you from taking some of the professional exams (e.g. in law, accountancy) after graduation. Check in the university prospectus to find out whether particular courses offer such an exemption.

### **Joint Honours, Combined Honours**

These may appeal to students with a range of interests and abilities, but be aware that a joint honours (two subjects) or combined honours (two or more subjects) degree may put you under greater pressure than a single honours degree as you will be required to submit work in more than one subject. It is also worth checking whether or not the course will exempt you from taking professional examinations after graduating. Sometimes admission to combined courses is less competitive than admission to single honours courses (particularly at some of the more prestigious universities).

### **Modular Courses**

Some universities offer modular degrees, with the idea being that students can 'build up' their course by selecting modules of their choice. Modular degrees might appeal to students with a wide range of interests and abilities: by selecting modules appropriately your degree could span the arts, the sciences and social sciences.

Modular degrees are not 'soft options' as you will be under pressure to submit work in more than one subject. It may also be that the work covered in each module is the 'core' component of the single honours course in that particular subject, and this component is often the most difficult part of the course. Furthermore, the freedom to choose modules is sometimes rather limited, perhaps because of timetabling constraints or through 'capping' of numbers on popular modules. It is worth asking how much freedom students have in selecting modules and whether or not guidance on the selection of modules is available. It is also worth considering whether or not post-graduate study will be possible on completion of the modular degree and how potential employers will view it.

## **Sandwich Courses**

A sandwich course integrates periods of academic study with periods of paid work experience in commerce, industry or the public sector, at home or abroad. The work experience is in either a ‘thin sandwich’ of two separate six month placements or a ‘thick sandwich’ of one year.

Sandwich courses are offered in a wide range of subjects at the following universities: Aston, Bath, Bradford, Brunel, Cardiff, City, Loughborough, Salford and Surrey.

There are a number of advantages associated with sandwich courses:

- You apply academic studies to “real life” working situations.
- Experience of industry and commerce before graduation assists with career choice, and allows you to test the water before seeking employment.
- You make contact with potential employers and possibly secure the offer of a job on graduation.
- Your employment prospects may be enhanced since your work experience helps you stand out from the competition. You will also have sought-after skills (technical, communication, teamwork, maturity and confidence).
- The improved motivation may lead to improved marks in final examinations.
- Your period of work experience may count towards a professional qualification.
- You may have the chance to work abroad and consolidate/learn a foreign language.
- You will earn while you learn. This may well be even more desirable in the era of top-up fees. It is also possible that the company you work for will decide to sponsor you during your fourth year at university.

## **Factors to Consider When Choosing a University**

The following factors might be considered when choosing a university.

### **1. Geographical Location**

You may wish to consider:

- Whether or not you wish to be close to home. There is a belief that students who move away from home to study become more independent and confident, and so have better employment prospects.
- How easy, or how expensive, it will be to travel home at the end of term, or for the occasional weekend visit.
- Whether or not, if you have a car, it will be possible to park it easily close to your accommodation.
- Whether or not you want to be in a city.
- The availability of other attractions, such as the nightlife, cultural activities and the proximity of major sporting venues.
- The cost of living. A recent survey by the Royal Bank of Scotland indicated that Birmingham, Leicester, Sheffield and York are amongst the cheapest university cities in which to live; London is by far the most expensive.
- Safety and security. Of the universities most popular with Reptonians, Manchester and Nottingham have relatively high crime levels, whereas Bath, Southampton, Oxbridge, Newcastle and Sheffield have relatively low levels.

### **2. Type of University.**

Oxford (1150) and Cambridge (1284) are the oldest universities, followed by St Andrew's (1410), Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh. UCL, KCL and Durham were founded in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but most of the traditional ('redbrick') universities gained university status in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century or the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; such foundations include Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield. The sixties saw the foundation of many new universities, some of which now enjoy outstanding reputations; these include Aston, Bath, Loughborough, Warwick and York. In 1992 almost all of the former polytechnics were given university status; these universities include Nottingham Trent, Sheffield Hallam, Bristol UWE, Northumbria and Oxford Brookes.

Oxford, Cambridge and Durham are collegiate universities. In these institutions the college is at the centre of the student's university life; it provides accommodation and stages many social events. At Oxford and Cambridge the college also monitors academic progress, although in some subjects the vast majority of the teaching is in departments. In short the colleges offer a small and caring community in which to live. Such an environment is in stark contrast to that of a large urban university in which there may be a rather impersonal approach.

Some universities are fully integrated in the city in which they are situated, others occupy attractive but fairly isolated campuses, and many fall somewhere in between these two extremes. The table in appendix 2 provides information about the environment of some of the more prestigious universities, and some of the other universities that have proved popular with Reptonians in recent years.

### 3. Quality and Reputation

Various groups of universities have been set up to lobby for the interests of their members, and two of these (the Russell group and the 1994 group) include the majority of the universities that Reptonians apply for. A full list of member institutions of these two groups is provided in appendix 3. The Russell group, which includes Oxbridge and civic universities like Birmingham and Leeds, is the oldest and most influential group. It is a group of research-intensive universities, and is named after the London hotel in which it first met informally to protect and promote excellence of Higher Education in the UK. Russell Group members share the bulk of the UK's research funding and attract visits from the highest number of the UK's top 100 employers each year. The 1994 Group, which includes such universities as Bath, Durham and St Andrews, represents smaller institutions; the group members claim to provide a high quality of teaching as well as research prowess, and there is some evidence in the National Student Survey (see below) to support this claim.

The 'unistats' website ([www.unistats.com](http://www.unistats.com)) is a Government initiative to provide official and up to date information about the quality of HE courses in the UK. It is a free on-line service which includes the results of the National Student Survey (NSS), a survey of final year students at all UK universities. The NSS results indicate that, in general, students rate their experience more highly if they attend a small, single-campus and research-led university. Appendix 5 shows which universities scored most highly in the section in which students express their degree of satisfaction with their chosen course.

There are many league tables that can be used to judge the quality of universities. These include tables published by 'The Times', 'The Sunday Times' and 'The Guardian', as well as 'The Complete University Guide' which is produced in association with 'The Independent'. The 'The Times', 'The Complete University Guide' and 'The Guardian' also provide subject tables in which the universities are ranked by quality in a number of the more popular courses. These tables are constructed using a variety of different criteria, and there are therefore some significant discrepancies between them. In addition, the assessment of teaching quality data, which was out of date, has now been replaced by scores from the National Student Survey which are based on opinion rather than objective assessment. However, the tables do have some use, and universities which rate highly in more than one table should be good institutions. Your House has a copy of the 'Times Good University Guide'; you can easily find the 'The Complete University Guide' and the Guardian league tables on the internet by using Google. When viewing these tables take a look at the percentage figures for non-completion; if a lot of students are abandoning a particular course, consider why this is so. The average points score of students admitted is also worthy of consideration as it will provide an indication of the calibre of students on the course. One word of caution: the THES World Rankings are of limited value to you at this stage as these are based on research and post-graduate study.

Another useful source of information is the annual report of 'High Fliers Research', an independent market research company which specialises in student and graduate research. Since 2002 High Fliers has conducted an annual survey of the UK's top 100 employers, and the universities attracting a visit from the highest number of these employers are identified in its annual report. The only Russell Group university not to make the top 20 in 2009 is Liverpool; conversely, the only non-Russell Group

institutions to make the top 10 are Durham (in 7<sup>th</sup> place), Bath (9<sup>th</sup>), Loughborough (14<sup>th</sup>), York (19<sup>th</sup>) and St. Andrew's (20<sup>th</sup>). Traditional giants of the HE world such as Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield, which occupy *relatively low* places in the Times League Table, all fare very well with the top employers. See appendix 4 for a table showing which universities attract visits from the highest number of the UK's top 100 employers.

Government funding of higher education is allocated according to the number of students taught and the quality of research. Research funding is allocated on the results of the government's Research Assessment Exercises (RAEs). A list of the universities which did well in the latest RAE in 2008 is included in appendix 6. The final allocations for university funding in 2009-10 are due in March but it is likely that the universities that did well in the latest RAE will be rewarded accordingly; these universities are likely to have a strong financial footing over the next four or five years and look 'safe bets' for potential undergraduates in 2010. However, all of the universities listed in appendix 3 are very good universities, as is Aston which figures highly in most league tables and has an excellent employment record for its graduates.

#### **4. Method of Teaching, Method of Assessment**

You may already have decided which subject you wish to study, but you should now ask yourself whether the course on offer at a particular university is right for you. Points to consider include:

- Number of contact hours per week. In recent years several ORs have complained that they have received inadequate direction in the first year of their undergraduate course.
- Amount of self-directed learning.
- Amount of computer based or distance learning.
- Number, frequency and size of lectures.
- Number, frequency of practicals.
- Fieldwork assignments.
- Frequency and size of seminars and tutorials.
- Opportunity to study abroad.
- Mode of assessment: proportion of coursework/continuous assessment, terminal examinations.
- 3 term or 2 semester year?

#### **5. Will I Get An Offer?**

When choosing a university you should probably aim as high as you realistically can. The university will decide whether or not to make an offer on the strength of your GCSE results, your AS-level UMS scores, your personal statement, and the School's reference (which will include A-level predictions). Your teachers will reveal your predicted grades towards the end of the summer term, and they will be revised, if necessary, in the light of your AS-level results. The UCAS website, or the 'UCAS Big Guide' (available in the Houses), can be consulted to discover the likely entrance qualifications for a particular course, and you should match your predicted grades against the likely offer for the various courses you are considering. Do bear in mind that

at least one or two of your applications should be for courses for which you are very confident of satisfying the entrance requirements.

Even if your A-level predictions are on a par with, or higher than, the standard offer you are by no means certain of securing an offer. An indication of the popularity of the course (and therefore your chances of securing an offer) can be gleaned from a study of the 'applications to places' ratio published in Heap's 'Degree Course Offers'. However there are other (more useful) sources of information. Each year ISC, the Independent Schools Council, analyses applications from pupils in independent schools, and their annual report is made available to schools; older editions of this report, which was formerly the 'HMC/GSA USC report', can be found in the HE Guidance section of the 'Repton Folder'. More recently the results of the ISC survey have been made available on the 'Amazing Offers' website ([www.amazing-offers.co.uk](http://www.amazing-offers.co.uk)). This information is very useful for assessing your chances of receiving an offer from certain institutions (I can supply the log-in details on request). In the Repton Folder you will also find a file named 'UCAS merged', a database containing the result of recent UCAS applications from pupils at Repton and three similar schools; this may well provide a clear indication of whether or not you are likely to receive an offer from your favoured universities.

## **6. Open Days & Visits, Taster Days: What Is It Like To Live & Study There?**

Over the years each university has developed its own unique personality. To decide whether or not you will feel right in your chosen university you should visit it, and talk to current students 'in situ', before submitting an application. If possible you should visit during the school holidays; you must obtain the permission of your Housemaster/Housemistress to make such visits during term time, and in order to ensure that your academic work retains the highest priority the maximum number of visits is 3 per year (with a maximum of 2 in any one term). You should therefore plan open day visits in the first two weeks of the Easter and summer holidays.

To extract maximum benefit from your visit you will need to do some research before you go. Appendix 7 contains a check list to use when planning and making your visit. In order to convince your Housemaster/Housemistress that you will benefit from attending an open day you should present him/her with some evidence of your research. Your Housemaster/Housemistress is more likely to view your request favourably if you are going either with your parents or by yourself rather than with groups of your friends. Nowadays about half of all students go to open days with their parents, and you are strongly encouraged to do so. They will probably pick up on some of the points you miss, not least because, being older and wiser, they will ask the embarrassing questions you may not think of. Don't worry about your parents 'cramping your style': many universities hold separate activities for parents so they can ask their own questions and to give students 'breathing space'. Open days allow you and your parents to ask searching questions and discover how impressive, or otherwise, the lecturers really are. You will be able to gauge the culture of the institution, check out all the facilities, assess academic standards, and get the measure of current students. By comparing notes with your parents afterwards you will get a better understanding of what it is really like to study there than you would by visiting by yourself or with a friend.

You should also consider applying for a place on a 'Taster Course'; as with open days, you should seek the permission of your Housemaster/Housemistress before making

arrangements for such visits during term time. Taster courses are often free, and sometimes allow you to stay overnight on the university campus. You therefore gain an impression of both your intended course and a particular university. You can find details by entering ‘university taster courses’ in ‘Google’; alternatively you will find details of taster courses in the ‘ISCO Sixthformers Guide’ (available in the Houses).

## **7. Other Useful Sources of Information**

Appendices 8 and 9 show the courses and universities that have been popular with Reptonians over the past five years, and you might benefit from contacting and hearing the views of ORs who are currently at university.

Before making a final decision about your choice of university you should also check the alternative prospectuses produced by students themselves, as these can often be revealing. ‘The Guardian’ website contains a wealth of useful information, together with links to other worthy sources. You might also look at the reviews posted on the website [www.whatuni.com](http://www.whatuni.com); these are written by current and past undergraduates and you can search for reports on courses of your choice. You might also consult the ‘Virgin Alternative Guide to Higher Education’ (which contains some excellent contributions from current undergraduates) and ‘The Push Guide to Which University’ (written for students by students; pithy, humorous and accurate); copies of these publications are available in the Library. A list of other useful websites is included in appendix 10.

### **Applying to study Art and Design**

Art & Design courses taught by colleges and universities in the UK are amongst the most well-established and highly thought of courses in the world. The principles of education, and good practice, adopted have not only produced artists of international reputation, but also provide an excellent foundation for future job prospects in the specialist’s applied art fields. More than seventy disciplines are taught within the compass of Art & Design and can broadly be classified under these main headings:

- Fine Art( Sculpture, Painting, Printmaking and Ceramics)
- Fashion and Textiles
- Photograph, Film, Animation and Media Studies
- Graphic Design and Illustration
- Three-Dimensional Design (Interior and Furniture Design)
- Environmental Design
- Computer Aided design
- History of Art and Design
- Restoration and Conservation

Although a foundation course at Art College is highly recommended as a prerequisite for application to a degree course, not all universities and colleges will state this in their prospectus and some will not insist on it as an entrance qualification. Some HE courses in England, and courses in Scottish Art Schools, are of four years duration, the first of which is diagnostic and will take the place of a foundation course. Although the information on academic achievement and personal interest in art provided on the UCAS form, or any other application form, is of importance, the student’s successful

entry onto a course will be more heavily dependent on the quality of the portfolio of work submitted at interview. Thus the importance of the portfolio cannot be underestimated: it is the only evidence a course tutor has of creative ability and potential for development, and should always include pieces of work made by the applicant in addition to their A-level coursework.

### **Applying to study Architecture**

In recent years Reptonians have gained places at some of the best and most prestigious schools of architecture in the country. Courses in Architecture provide a broad education and lead to a variety of vocational careers. They can differ dramatically and it is important to conduct the necessary research to discover which university best suits your interests and abilities profile. The courses tend to be project-based and will include an education in technological subjects covering structures, construction, materials and environmental studies. Having completed five years of study the student you can, if you wish, extend your time at university to the full six year course, with 12 months being taken in a professional practice after completing your first degree.

At interview you will be required to submit a portfolio of recent free hand work. Recent experience indicates that the universities will wish to see a variety of approaches to drawing including work in which you display special awareness, work from the life model and three dimensional pieces. Although you will not be expected to be acquainted with the principles of architectural model making you should be able to talk with understanding about architecture and should have undertaken work experience in an architectural practice. In order to be able to write a strong personal statement and in preparation for interview, you should start reading architectural and design magazines (e.g. Blueprint and Architectural Review) and should visit interesting architectural sites and building projects.

The Art Department has a network of professional architects, and current and past architectural students, who are always available to discuss their experience with pupils who propose to apply for undergraduate courses in architecture.

### **Applying to study Medicine**

You are allowed to enter only four medical schools on the UCAS form, but you are also allowed to enter a non-medical 'insurance' course if you wish to. The official line is that such 'insurance' applications will not prejudice your application, but discuss tactics with me before completing your UCAS form. All applications to medical schools must be submitted before 15<sup>th</sup> October.

Most medical schools demand A-level Chemistry as an entrance requirement, and the vast majority also require Biology; all potential medics are therefore advised to study both Biology and Chemistry in the Sixth Form. Good GCSE results are needed: many medical schools automatically reject candidates with fewer than six grades at A or A\* (some require at least eight passes at this level); good AS UMS totals and high A-level predictions are also necessary.

Successful applicants will need to demonstrate their interest in, and commitment to, medicine; some appropriate work experience is therefore essential (preferably one period shadowing/observing a medic at work, and one at the less glamorous end of the 'caring professions' spectrum, perhaps performing mundane tasks in a Cheshire Home, a hospice or an Old People's Home). It is compulsory for all medical students to have been vaccinated against hepatitis B before being admitted to the course.

The clinical aptitude test (UKCAT) has recently been introduced by a consortium of 24 medical schools including Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham and Sheffield, and has to be taken by anyone applying to these schools. The 90-minute exam, to be taken at a Pearson Vue (Driving Test Theory) Centre before the candidate submits a UCAS form, tests the candidate's mental abilities and assesses how he/she might respond to patients. Scientific knowledge is not tested. Further information, together with a few sample questions, is available on the UKCAT website ([www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk)). Please note that candidates must book the test online (not through the school) by the specified deadline. You will need to explore suitable test dates before the end of the summer term.

Candidates for Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial or UCL will need to sit the BMAT test at the beginning of November. You should speak to the examinations officer (Mrs Nield) to register for this test. The BMAT test, which tests - amongst other things - scientific knowledge, is very demanding; see me for guidance on how to prepare for it.

Because most medical schools require UKCAT and a few do not, and because most interview candidates and a few do not, and because some courses include PBL and others do not, applicants need to consider tactics very carefully before submitting an application. I am very happy to offer advice on request.

### **Applying to study Veterinary Medicine**

You are allowed to enter only four veterinary schools on the UCAS form, but you are also allowed to enter a non-veterinary 'insurance' course if you wish to. The official line is that such an 'insurance' course will not prejudice your application, but discuss tactics with me before completing your UCAS form. All applications to veterinary schools must be submitted before 15<sup>th</sup> October.

Entry to veterinary school is very competitive. You will need high A-level predictions in Chemistry and Biology, plus one other academic subject, together with very good GCSE and AS-level results. You will also need to sit the BMAT test if you are applying to Bristol, Cambridge or the Royal Veterinary College; see me for guidance on how to prepare for it.

Successful applicants will need to demonstrate their interest in, and commitment to, veterinary medicine; appropriate work experience is therefore vital. It is also essential that you are at ease with animals; for example, in the interview at the recently opened Nottingham Veterinary School, a practical test forms part of the assessment.

## **Applying to study Law**

Please note that you do not need to study a first degree in law to become a solicitor or barrister. It is possible to study an alternative (but well-respected) discipline at undergraduate level, and then to do a conversion course in law.

Entry to undergraduate law courses is very competitive, particularly at the more prestigious institutions. You will need high predicted A-level grades, together with very good GCSE and AS-level results. Successful applicants will also need to demonstrate their interest in, and knowledge of, the courses applied for. Appropriate work experience might be an asset, and critical thinking skills are essential. You should certainly read a quality newspaper on a regular basis and become familiar with analysing what you read. At interview you will be expected to talk about current legal issues in the news, and to comment on what makes them interesting.

Nine law departments (Birmingham, Bristol, Durham, Exeter, Glasgow, KCL, Nottingham, Oxford, UCL) will require you to sit the LNAT test in November of the U6 year. You should view the LNAT website to register for this test, and consult TCO for guidance on how best to prepare for it.

## **Oxbridge Applications**

The School has a good record of preparing pupils for Oxbridge entrance, and is very happy to support able pupils who apply to these universities. However, the competition at this level is intense, as shown by the fact that in most years Cambridge alone rejects more than 5,000 candidates who go on to gain straight A grades at A-level. To be a realistic candidate you will need to have very good GCSE grades; if you have more than one 'B' grade you are most unlikely to be successful, and in practice most successful applicants will have eight or more A\* grades to their name. You will also need very good AS-level scores (usually an average UMS score of over 270 in your three A-level subjects), and very good A-level predictions (at least AAA).

For a successful Oxbridge application mere competence at A-level is not enough; you need to aspire to excellence! Candidates will be expected to demonstrate, at interview and in their personal statement, that they have extended their studies beyond the AS and A2 specification in their chosen (or nearest) discipline. In order to demonstrate genuine interest, and a broader and deeper knowledge, applicants in Arts and Social Science subjects will need to reveal evidence of extensive additional reading in the subject. A great deal of private study will therefore need to be undertaken before the end of the summer holiday, as past experience suggests that, if it is not done by then, it will not be done in time for the December interview season. Applicants in Science subjects must really know the AS and A2 specification material (the interview is, for all intents and purposes, a technical examination), but they should also expect to be stretched beyond this level by answering questions on less familiar material.

Most of the departments at Repton offer extra 'Oxbridge' classes, and interview practice is provided in the weeks leading up to the real interview, which is likely to be between mid-November and the week before Christmas. Oxbridge candidates might also view the website [www.oxbridge-admissions.info](http://www.oxbridge-admissions.info), which includes a number of profiles of Oxbridge applicants from the past; the sections on the interview might be of particular interest.

The deadline for the submission of applications is 15<sup>th</sup> October, although the internal school deadline is 23<sup>rd</sup> September. JP and I will be very happy to advise pupils on all matters relating to Oxbridge entrance. DSN will also give very sound advice to candidates in Classics.

### **Applying to Durham University**

Applications to Durham are first considered by the academic department. The department then nominates the strongest candidates to their chosen college according to the number of places available. The final decision about whether or not to accept the applicant is taken by the admissions tutor of the college, who will take other factors (such as the gender mix, the ratio of state school:independent school pupils etc.) into account. This means that a candidate might end up being rejected by a college because of the admissions tutor's need to establish the right social balance within it. Sometimes a candidate rejected in this way will be allocated a place at another college, but in the more popular subjects (e.g. English, History, Law) a rejection is possible, particularly in borderline cases. For this reason it is quite possible that even if the standard offer is, say, AAB the only applicants to secure a place will have an AAA prediction and excellent GCSE grades. Applications to Durham are not, therefore, straightforward.

Pupils applying to Durham should understand that they may receive a rejection even though their predictions match, or even exceed, the published standard offer. As with Oxbridge applications, choice of college might affect your chances of receiving an offer. In general the colleges on the peninsula are more difficult to get into than those on the hill: see me for further guidance on choice of college.

Applicants to Durham should be aware that some departments (including Business) are based on the Stockton campus.

### **Applications for Other Competitive Courses (e.g. some courses at Bristol, Durham, Edinburgh, LSE and Nottingham)**

Entry to some courses (e.g. English and History at Bristol, Durham and Edinburgh, Economics at LSE and UCL) is intensely competitive. In addition to this, Edinburgh University has a wider access policy which takes account of various factors including locality; applicants from schools in the local area, or the wider locality, might therefore be given priority over pupils from schools south of the border. Pupils should note that, although the standard offer for almost all courses at Edinburgh is BBB, academic excellence well beyond this is required for the vast majority of subjects.

Pupils who are considering applying to one of these universities are advised to research the outcome of similar applications from Reptonians in the past (see 'UCAS merged' in the HE Guidance section of the 'Repton Folder'). The data displayed on the 'Amazing Offers' website should also be viewed: this shows the success rate for applicants from independent schools in a range of subject areas at these universities.

## Applying to American Universities

Although the “safer” option for many is to recognise the excellence of the leading British universities, for a few a more adventurous and fulfilling route might be to study in America. The USA is home to some of the world’s top universities, with reputations equalling those of Oxford, Cambridge and other leading UK universities. Along with this world-wide reputation comes the breadth of the liberal arts degree, a breadth almost unheard of in the UK. It can therefore be argued that the four years at an American college bring a fuller educational experience than undergraduate study in the UK; on the other hand, for those who already have a clear idea of the specialism they wish to pursue, the American HE system could be viewed as a serious waste of time!

A USA university education does not come cheap: at one of the prestigious institutions on the east coast the cost is comparable with the cost of another four years at Repton. Private universities make up 75% of American HE institutions, and the remaining 25% are funded by state governments to provide a lower cost education for students of their state. However students from outside the state pay much higher fees at state institutions, and little financial aid is available to international students. The private universities are funded by fees, grants, endowments and gifts from alumni (former students); they are much smaller and harder to get into than their state-funded counterparts, but more likely to offer financial assistance to international students.

Although the US colleges are expensive, you can expect to be worked hard in return for your financial investment! Continuous assessment is the favoured assessment model: unannounced tests, frequent exams, essays, written assignments and practicals all influence the final degree grade, and you should expect a high workload of lectures, seminars and ‘reading’ throughout the course.

If you are to apply to an American university you should decide to do so by the end of the Lower Sixth year at the very latest. You will need to sit, and score highly in, the SAT Reasoning Test (Scholastic Aptitude Tests) which ‘measure the extent to which your reasoning ability and skills with words and mathematical concepts have been developed’. You may also need to sit SAT subject tests in at least three subjects. The SAT Reasoning Test and the SAT subject tests cannot be taken at the same time. There are six SAT Test sessions per year, and you will need to register well in advance as the test centres often fill up very early. It is best to get these tests out of the way early in the U6 year. Details of the SAT test scheme can be accessed on [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

If applying to a US university you must meet the deadline for application: this is normally between November and early February, and varies between universities. The application procedure is far too complex to set out here, but it is set out in my guide ‘University in the USA’ which is published separately. You can also consult “Uni in the USA”, published by ‘The Good Schools Guide’, for further information. A copy is available in the library, and you should buy your own copy ([www.uniintheusa.com](http://www.uniintheusa.com)) if you are seriously considering such an application. You might also care to visit the website ([www.Fulbright.co.uk](http://www.Fulbright.co.uk)) for the Fulbright Commission, which is the official source of information in the UK on US universities. The Fulbright Commission will provide, on request, an information pack which explains the application procedure. Another useful website is [www.utexas.edu/world/univ](http://www.utexas.edu/world/univ), which contains a database of every US college.

## The Cost of a University Education in the UK; Fees, Bursaries & Scholarships

There are two main costs to meet in funding a university education: living costs and a contribution to course fees.

### a) Course fees.

International students from outside the EU normally pay the full course fee. For all UK and EU students, the government contributes towards the cost of tuition but the student is required to pay a 'top up' fee at all †English and Welsh universities. This fee (£3225 for the 2009 entry) will rise annually in line with inflation until 2010, but might rise by more thereafter. Students (or their parents) can opt to pay the fee 'up front' if they wish, but do not have to do so; instead a loan is available which is paid back once the student graduates and starts to earn more than £15,000 per year. Student Finance England will provide further financial assistance to students from low income households.

† Scottish universities will charge English students £1775 per year (£2825 for medicine) from autumn 2008. These fees are likely to rise annually.

### b) Living costs.

These vary from place to place, but are highest in London. You will be able to take out a low-interest loan from the Student Finance England to assist with living costs; this loan will be combined with the course fee loan and will be paid back after graduation in a scheme linked to your ability to pay. Students from low income households will receive a grant from the local authority and a university bursary, but such assistance is completely phased out by the time household residual income reaches £50,020.

Advice on SFE awards is available on the website [www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance). All Upper Sixth pupils and their parents should visit this website for further details of how to apply for assistance with course fees, and for information about student grants and student loans. Failure to apply for such support with by the end of April (non-means tested support) or the end of June (means tested support) in the Upper Sixth year may mean that the top up fee will not be paid, and the student loan will not be available, at the start of the university term. **Please note that in these important matters we cannot do anything on behalf of our pupils.**

Bursaries and scholarships are available for some HE courses; details can be found on the website [www.hotcourses.com/studentmoney](http://www.hotcourses.com/studentmoney), and on the website of each university.

Some students look for employment before taking up their university place, and others look for holiday jobs to limit the size of their debt. Some take up part-time jobs during term time to help with their living costs.

Another way of limiting the debt you will have on graduation is to opt for a sandwich course, as part of which you will be required to undertake a period of paid employment. Universities which offer sandwich courses (e.g. Bath, Aston) often boast a high percentage of graduates who find 'graduate level' employment very soon after completing their course. Sandwich courses also offer a number of other advantages (see section 'Factors to Consider When Choosing a Course').

## Sponsorship

Some courses, particularly engineering and other training or vocational courses, attract sponsors, and you could investigate whether there are any funds available for your chosen course. Competition for the few places on offer is very fierce, and early investigation is strongly recommended. Success generally requires considerable persistence and many applications. Many companies are choosing to sponsor students later in their degree course rather than full the full undergraduate course; 'whole course' sponsorships are increasingly hard to find.

In return for work carried out during the vacations or as an integral part of the course, you are offered an income and the sort of meaningful work experience that will stand you in good stead when you enter the employment market after graduating; there is also a possibility, but not a guarantee, of future employment with the sponsoring company. Sponsored students receive bursaries averaging about £1250, but some receive considerably more. In addition, payment for vacation work averages £875 per month. This does not affect the value of any Local Authority award unless you receive over £4000 per annum in total. However, do be aware that your holiday time throughout the course will not always be your own time, and you may be opting for a career at the age of eighteen that might not be your choice at twenty one. You might also be asked to work in locations that are not very appealing.

Usually the commitment is a gentleman's agreement; if the sponsorship goes well, you may be offered a permanent job; if not, you are under no obligation to stay. However, if you do reject an offer of a permanent job, you may be required to refund some or all of any money you have been paid. Do check before accepting any offer of sponsorship; the best advice is not to accept an offer from an organisation you would not like to work for, however tempting it may be.

The preferred subjects are accountancy, banking, business studies, computing, most branches of engineering, law and pure science, but some employers are open to undergraduates in any discipline. Generally you choose the course and the sponsoring company stipulates a limited range of institutions.

Generally sponsorship will involve a thick or a thin sandwich course. The more usual patterns are either:

- one year working, 3 years study and one year postgraduate research, or
- periods of 6 months study alternating with 6 months work over a 4 year course.

You might also find the following websites, and the links provided therein, useful:

'A year in industry'  
British Association for the  
Advancement of science

[www.yini.org.uk](http://www.yini.org.uk)  
[www.everythingyouwantedtoknow.com](http://www.everythingyouwantedtoknow.com)

## The Application Process

To apply to UK universities you will be required to complete a UCAS (Universities & Colleges Admissions Service) form. This form is submitted electronically on 'UCAS Apply', and after you have finished your AS-level examinations you will be shown how to do this. Appendix 11 contains the important dates and deadlines for the UCAS process. However you should aim to submit your UCAS form as early as possible: remember that, at busy times, it may take the school two weeks or more to process your application, and even after UCAS receive it several weeks may pass by before the appropriate admissions tutor reads it. The application procedure is described in detail on the UCAS website ([www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)). A brief outline of the process is included below:

1. Towards the end of the summer term each of your subject teachers writes a report on your progress throughout the Lower Sixth and your potential for A-level and beyond. After the publication of AS-level results the report is edited by the Head of Department and then sent to your tutor.
2. Your tutor collates and edits the reports Heads of Department to produce the 'academic' section of the UCAS reference.
3. Your tutor liaises with your Housemaster/Housemistress, and together they produce the full UCAS reference. This is then sent to me.
4. In the first half of the Upper Sixth Michaelmas term you complete the electronic UCAS form and send it to me by the deadline specified in appendix 8.
5. I edit the UCAS reference and paste it onto your UCAS form, and then send the form to UCAS.
6. UCAS acknowledges receipt of your form and sends you a UCAS application number.
7. UCAS sends details of your application to each of your selected universities.
8. Each university considers your application and informs UCAS of their decision. The university might also inform you directly of its decision.
9. UCAS then informs you of each university's decision.
10. On receipt of a decision from the last of your selected institutions you have a certain time in which to decide which offers to accept and which to decline.
11. Once you have replied to your offers, UCAS will send you a final statement of your replies and of the decisions made.

### Please note:

- a. You will normally accept two offers: one as a firm acceptance (CF) and one as an insurance (CI); it is sensible to select an offer with slightly lower grades as your insurance offer. You are advised to consult your tutor or me before making your decision. If you do not inform UCAS of your acceptance of a firm offer and, if appropriate, an insurance offer, they will be declined by UCAS on your behalf.
- b. UCAS operates a 'blind' application system. This means that no university knows to which other universities a candidate has applied; each university has to assess the application on its own merits.
- c. **UCAS Extra** is available from February onwards for candidates who do not hold any offers at that stage. Candidates are able to apply for further courses (one at a time), even if they originally made the maximum five applications. In effect, this is an early form of 'Clearing'. Further information is given to the pupils concerned in the Lent term of the U6.

- d. **Clearing**, which operates from A-level results day (mid-August) to the end of September, matches applicants without an offer with suitable vacancies. Vacancy information is available on the internet and in *The Independent* and *The Independent on Sunday* newspapers. Details of these services, and other sources of vacancy information, are sent by UCAS to all applicants if they become eligible for Clearing. Information about what to do on 'Results Day' is given to all U6 pupils at the end of the summer term. **However, at this stage it is worth emphasising that you and your parents should be around on results day**, so that you are in a position to make decisions and to contact institutions.

**Before submitting the UCAS form check that:**

- you have entered the correct fee code. UK and EU students normally enter '02', and quote their home LA (or, in the case of EU students, 'EU Team at the DfES') in the 'student support' box. Non-EU international students usually need to enter 'private finance' in the fee code box. See me if in doubt about what to enter.
- if you live in the UK or the EU, you have entered your home address as your correspondence address. If you live outside the EU you should probably enter your school address as your correspondence address, but you **MUST** remember to inform UCAS of your change of address at the end of the U6 (this can be done very easily 'online'). Consult me if you are not sure which address to enter.
- you have passes at Grade C or higher in the GCSE subjects required for the course at the institutions to which you are applying: failure to have the right GCSE subjects, or the right number of grade C passes, will result in a rejection.
- you are taking (or have taken) the required A-level subjects stipulated for the course at the institution to which you are applying.
- the A-levels you are taking will be accepted for the course for which you are applying.

**Personal Statement**

This section of the application form can be extremely important, and may well have a major influence on whether or not you receive an offer. As very few universities interview applicants, this may be your only chance to sell yourself to the admissions tutor. However, your personal statement also presents obvious lines of enquiry to be pursued if you are interviewed. It is therefore of particular importance in the case of Oxbridge candidates, and candidates for other courses (notably medicine) in which selection interviews are likely.

We recommend that you begin to **draft the personal statement early in the Lower Sixth year**; it may well focus your attention on what you still need to do before submitting your UCAS application. Appendix 12 contains advice for writing the personal statement. Further advice is available in the booklet 'Guidance on Completing the UCAS Form: The Persuasive Personal Statement', the '2009 Entry' edition of which can be viewed in the 'Repton Folder'; the revised version for '2010 Entry' will be published and distributed in the second half of the summer term.

## Interviews

You can expect to be interviewed if you have applied to Oxford or Cambridge, or any medical or veterinary school. Some other universities also interview candidates in certain subjects. Overseas candidates are often called for interview at a range of universities. It has also become quite common for universities to invite candidates who are likely to be made an offer to an 'open day' or 'interview' as a means of weeding out those who lack commitment, so if you are keen to receive an offer you should accept the invitation. Do not assume that you need only 'turn up' on such occasions, since past experience suggests that sometimes an academic interview is involved. If necessary, ask your tutor to arrange a practice interview before attending.

1. Before you go:
  - a. Make sure that you are familiar with the course content, and the assessment model. Identify your strengths and match them to the requirements of the course. Be able to explain why this is the right course for you.
  - b. Review carefully the content of your personal statement, and identify any points which might be picked up by the interviewer. Be ready to develop your ideas at interview.
  - c. You might contact the college/university and ask who will be interviewing you; you could then 'surf the net' to discover his/her specialism.
2. Get there in good time. You need to be composed if you are to give of your best.
3. Dress smartly; this is not the time to make a fashion statement. We recommend that boys wear a jacket, collar and tie, and that girls choose equivalent attire. Avoid wearing jeans.
4. Try to remain calm during the interview. The interviewer is trying to establish how you can use what you do know rather than what you do not know!
5. Expect to be asked testing, thought-provoking questions. Often the answers will not be immediately obvious, and the questions being asked are designed to enable you to demonstrate your ability to 'think on your feet'. Expect to be challenged and don't be put off if the interviewer gives nothing away facially.
6. If you do not understand the question ask the interviewer to repeat it. Do not pretend that you know what you are talking about when you do not have a clue. If the worst comes to the worst you may have to admit that you are struggling, but try to think of a related topic and start by saying something along the lines of "I have not met this particular situation before but it appears similar to .....". Be prepared to pause and think, but try to avoid very long periods of silence by talking through what you are thinking.
7. Be prepared to defend your views if you believe that you are right (however, you will not necessarily be penalised for changing your mind if this shows that you are thinking clearly).
8. At the end of the interview you may be asked if you have any questions. You might aim to have one or two questions in mind, but not ones which can easily be answered by reading the prospectus. You might, for example, ask about:
  - Teaching methods. e.g. how interactive are lectures, tutorials?, how much computer-based (independent) learning is there?
  - Clarification of the assessment. e.g. how many fail the first year exams, are re-sits possible?
  - What type of employment have recent graduates taken up?

## GAP Years

Some pupils opt for a GAP year before entering HE. If you decide to take a GAP year you can either apply in autumn 2009 and ask for entry to be deferred until autumn 2011, or you can apply in autumn 2010 after you have obtained your A-level results. If considering a GAP year there are a number of points to consider:

- The prospect of an extended holiday may be very appealing; if this is what motivates you, **forget it:** you would merely be wasting a year.
- You will delay the start of employment by a year.
- Would a sandwich course be more beneficial than a GAP year?
- Who would finance you for another 12 months? Would you work for the first half of the year and travel in the second half? Are there any scholarships (e.g. the George Philip Scholarship) available?
- Which course are you planning to follow in Higher Education? For long courses like Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, it is often argued that you should start the HE course as soon as possible.
- Will a GAP year put you off study? There may be the risk that you may be put off the idea of studying once your GAP year is over. Some tutors in Maths and Physics also fear a loss of impetus after a break. On the other hand it may enable you to mature as a person and you may return to your studies with a more sensible approach to study.
- A GAP year could offer an opportunity to travel; for example, you might round up sheep in Australia, or do community work overseas.
- A GAP year could allow you to gain valuable work experience or to learn a new skill, such as another language or a directly vocational skill. It might also lead to the award of sponsorship: it can be difficult for students to supplement their grants with part-time vacation work, and sponsorship can guarantee vacation work which is generally well paid.
- The School hosts a GAP Fair in the summer term of the Lower Sixth. MJB will be happy to offer advice to any pupil considering a GAP year.

## Deferred Entry

Reaction to deferred entry will vary from course to course. For example, mathematics departments generally prefer candidates to progress straight from school to university, whereas many engineering departments encourage a GAP year. Deferred entry is often viewed favourably by Arts subjects, although Edinburgh is likely to reject such applications out of hand. In the case of Oxbridge reaction can even vary from college to college; for example, most colleges are opposed to deferred entry in mathematics, although Newnham is happy with it. Generally speaking it is more difficult to obtain a place by deferred entry, and this is particularly true in the case of Oxbridge. As a rule Oxbridge candidates are advised against applying for deferred entry. **If you are applying to any other university and are considering a GAP year you should consult me before submitting your UCAS application;** I will advise on the best tactics to adopt.

The alternative to applying for deferred entry is to apply post A-level. To do this you will need to be in a position to submit a UCAS form in the autumn, and if a selection interview is likely you will also need to be in a position to attend.

## Appendix 1: Recommended Titles for Prospective HE Students

### Art

A World History of Art	Honour & Fleming	Macmillan
The Story of Art	E Gombrich	Phaidon
Modern Art	D Britt	Thames & Hudson
Italian Renaissance Art	F Hartt	Thomas and Hudson

### Architecture

An Outline of European Architecture	N Pevsner	Penguin
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### Biology

#### Papers and Magazines:

The Guardian, New Scientist, Biological Sciences Review, Scientific American

#### Websites:

<http://biology.about.com/>  
<http://www.sciam.com/>  
<http://www.newscientist.com/>  
<http://www.biologymad.com/>  
<http://www.thinkbiology.com/>

#### Textbooks:

AQA Biology AS – Student book	Toole & Toole	ISBN: 9780748782758
AQA Biology A2 – Student book	Toole & Toole	ISBN: 9780748782758

#### General texts:

• The Selfish Gene	Dawkins, Richard	ISBN: <b>0192860925</b>
• Genome The Autobiography of a Species in 23 Chapters	Ridley, Matt	Harper Collins ISBN: 185702835X
• Evolution (2 <sup>nd</sup> edition)	Ridley, Matt	
• Ecological Principles and Environmental Issues (2 <sup>nd</sup> edition)	Beeby & Brennan	
• Climbing Mount Improbable	Dawkins, Richard	ISBN: 0393316823
• The Origins of Virtue	Ridley, Matt	Penguin Books
• Bully for Brontosaurus - Reflections in Natural History	Gould, S J	W W Norton & Co. ISBN: 0393029611
• The Symbiotic Planet: A New Look at Evolution	Margulis, Lynn	Orion Publishing ISBN: 0753807858
• The Origin of Humankind: Unearthing Our Family Tree	Leakey, Richard	Orion Publishing ISBN: 1857993349

## **Business Studies**

Good textbooks that are not kept in the department:

Business Studies	M. Barratt	
Business Studies	Hall, Jones, Raffo	Causeway
An Integrated Approach to Business Studies	Jewell	Longmans

General readers:

Offensive Marketing	Hugh Davidson	Penguin
Thinking Strategically: The Competitive Edge in Business, Politics, and Everyday Life (1991)	Avinash Dixit and Barry Nalebuff	W.W. Norton and company. ISBN 0393310353

## **Chemistry**

Scientific American, Chemistry Review: contain many relevant and interesting articles on recent developments in chemistry. It is also worth viewing the Pre-University Chemistry Course on the Virtual Chemistry Laboratory, which is accessed from the Chemistry Department page on the Oxford website ([www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk)). Books by John Emsley are often well worth reading: a number are available in the main school library. Other recommended texts (some out of print available in the Department) are:

The Chemistry of Explosives	Akhavan, Jacqueline	RSC Paperbacks ISBN: 0854046402
The Consumer's Good Chemical Guide	Emsley, John	Freeman Spektrum ISBN: 0716745054
Atoms, Electrons & Change	Atkins, PW	Scientific American SBN: 0761750287
Molecules	Atkins, PW	Scientific American SBN: 0761750198
Ionic Organic Mechanisms	Went, Charles	MacMillan Education ISBN 0333391608
Food & Drugs	Tooley, Peter	John Murray ISBN 0719520320

## **Classics**

Oxford History of the Classical World	Boardman & Murray	OUP
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## **Design & Technology**

Industrial Design	John Heskett	Thames & Hudson 0500201811
Dictionary of Design Since 1900	Guy Julier	Thames & Hudson 0500203792
Design Museum: Book of the 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Design	Catherine McDermott	Carlton Books 1858687101
Pioneers of Modern Design: William Morris To Walter Gropius	Nikolaus Pevsenr	Penguin 0140137149

## **Drama**

The Guide to Drama Training in the UK Avant Garde Theatre 1892-1992	Duncan, Sarah Christopher Innes,	Routledge, 1993
The Director and the Stage, From Naturalism to Grotowski The Theatre, A Concise History The Year of the King	Edward Braun, Phyllis Hartnoll Antony Sher	Methuen, 1982

## **Economics**

Papers and Magazines: Economist, Economics Today, The Economic Review, The Financial Times

### Recommended 'Easy Reads'

The Economic Naturalist	Robert H Frank.	Virgin Books
The Armchair Economist	Stephen Landsberg.	
The Undercover Economist	Tim Harford	
Freakonomics	Levitt and Dubner	
The writing on the wall	Will Hutton	

### General Textbooks

Economics	Begg, Fischer and Dornbusch	
Economics	Parkin. Powell and Matthews	
Principles of Economics	Lipsey and Chrystal	

### Other Books

The First Industrial Nation	Mathias	
Free Lunch	David Smith	
The Worldly Philosophers	Heilbroner	
History of Economic Thought	Barber	
Modern Political Thinkers and Ideas	Jones	

### Economics & Management (Management component)

New and Improved: The Story of Mass Marketing in America (1996 edition)	Richard Tedlow.	McGraw Hill ISBN 0875846726
Creating Modern Capitalism: How Entrepreneurs, Companies, and Countries Triumphed in Three Industrial Revolutions (1998)	Thomas K. McCraw (editor)	Harvard Business School Press ISBN 0674175565
The Human Equation: Building Profits Putting People First (1998)		Harvard Business by School Press ISBN 0875848419

## **Engineering**

Try the following websites: [www.engc.org.uk](http://www.engc.org.uk), [www.yini.org.uk](http://www.yini.org.uk)

## English

Short Oxford History of Eng Literature  
Cambridge Companion to Literature

### Medieval (C7-C15)

Anglo-Saxon:	<i>Caedmon's Hymn</i> <i>The Wanderer</i> <i>The Dream of the Rood</i> <i>Beowulf</i>
Middle English:	<i>Middle English Lyrics</i> <i>Gawain and the Green Knight</i> <i>The Canterbury Tales</i>

### Renaissance (C15-C17)

Poetry:	<i>Donne, Marvell, Herbert and Vaughan</i>
Shakespeare:	A tragedy, a comedy, a history and <i>The Tempest</i>
Jonson:	<i>The Alchemist</i>
Webster:	<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>
Marlowe:	<i>Doctor Faustus</i>

### Restoration to Romantic (C17-C18)

Milton:	<i>Paradise Lost</i>
Pope:	<i>The Rape of the Lock</i>
Behn:	<i>The Rover</i>
Wycherley:	<i>The Country Wife</i>
Congreve:	<i>The Way of the World</i>
Farquhar:	<i>The Beaux Stratagem</i>
Defoe:	<i>Moll Flanders</i>
Swift:	<i>Gulliver's Travels</i>
Fielding:	<i>Tom Jones</i>
Walpole:	<i>The Castle of Otranto</i>

### Romantic (C18-C19)

The Revolutionaries:	<i>Blake, Wordsworth and Coleridge</i>
The Younger Romantics:	<i>Keats, Shelley and Byron</i>
Austen:	<i>Emma and Pride and Prejudice</i>

### Victorian (C19)

Poetry:	<i>Arnold, Kipling, Tennyson, Browning and Hopkins</i>
Dickens:	<i>Oliver Twist</i>
Bronte, E.:	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>
Bronte, C.:	<i>Jane Eyre</i>
Eliot:	<i>Silas Marner</i>
Wilde:	<i>The Importance of Being Ernest</i>

## The Twentieth Century

Poetry:	<i>Hardy, Yeats, Owen, Eliot, Auden, Thomas, D., Larkin, Heaney, Plath, Hughes, Dunn</i>
Lawrence:	<i>The Rainbow</i>
Woolf :	<i>Orlando</i>
Joyce:	<i>Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man</i>
Forster:	<i>Howard's End</i>
Huxley:	<i>Brave New World</i>
Orwell:	<i>1984</i>
Greene:	<i>The Power and the Glory</i>
Waugh:	<i>Brideshead Revisited</i>
Conrad:	<i>Heart of Darkness</i>
Fowles:	<i>The French Lieutenant's Woman</i>
Murdoch:	<i>The Bell</i>
Spark:	<i>The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie</i>
Golding:	<i>Rites of Passage</i>
Ishiguro:	<i>The Remains of the Day</i>
Shaw:	<i>Mrs Warren's Profession</i>
Coward:	<i>Blithe Spirit</i>
O'Neill:	<i>Long Day's Journey into Night</i>
Miller:	<i>All My Sons</i>
Williams:	<i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i>
Beckett:	<i>Waiting for Godot</i>
Stoppard:	<i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead</i>
Pinter	<i>The Dumb Waiter</i>
Shaffer:	<i>Equus</i>
Churchill:	<i>Top Girls</i>
Orton:	<i>What the Butler Saw</i>

## Geography

### Books

Frogs, Flies & Dandelions: The Making of Species (good for linking Biology & Geography)	M.Schilthuizen
The Map that Changed the World (good for linking together Geology, Geography & Social History)	S.Winchester
Krakatoa: The Day the World Exploded, 27 August 1883 A Crack in the Edge of the World: The Great American Earthquake of 1906	S.Winchester
At risk: Natural Hazards, Peoples' Vulnerability and Disasters	P.Blaikie
Himalaya (and others by the same author)	M.Palin

### Magazines

Geography Review	(Quarterly)	Philip Allan
Geographical Magazine	(Monthly)	RGS publication
National Geographic	(Monthly)	National Geographic

## Other resources

[www.geographyinthenews.rgs.org](http://www.geographyinthenews.rgs.org)

RGS

[www.earthweek.com](http://www.earthweek.com) (*good for hazards*)

News websites such as [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) and [www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk)

[www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk) and Charity websites such as [www.oxfam.org.uk](http://www.oxfam.org.uk)

(*good for development issues*)

The Truth about Climate Change (DVD)

D. Attenborough

An Inconvenient Truth (DVD)

A. Gore

Earth: The Power of the Planet (DVD)

I. Stewart

## **History**

### Historiography

What is History?

E.H. Carr

In Defence of History (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)

R. J. Evans

What is History Now?

D. Cannadine (ed.)

### British History (general)

Oxford Illustrated History of Britain

K. Morgan (ed)

The Isles

N. Davies

A History of Britain:

S. Schama

- I.: At the Edge of the World? 3000BC-AD1603
- II: The British Wars: 1603-1776
- III: The Fate of Empire 1776-2001

### British Imperial History

Orientalism: Western conceptions  
of the Orient

D.N. Cannadine

Empire: How Britain Made the World

N. Ferguson

### Modern American History

The Penguin History of the  
United States of America

H. Brogan,

Colossus: the Rise and Fall  
of the American Empire

N. Ferguson,

### Modern Russian History

A People's Tragedy: Russian  
Revolution 1891-1924

O. Figes

### Military History

A History of Warfare

J. Keegan

The Face of Battle

J. Keegan

### Memoirs

Speak You Also. A Survivor's  
Reckoning

P. Steinberg

Inside the Third Reich

A. Speer

Quartered Safe Out Here

G. Macdonald Fraser

Historical Fiction: The Raj Quartet

P. Scott

## Law

An Introduction to Law	P Harris
Learning Legal Rules	Holland and Webes
Learning the Law	G Williams
Understanding law	Adams, J & Brownsword, R
Law and modern society	Atiyah, P S
The law machine	Berlins, M & Dyer, C
How to study law	Bradney, A et al

## Materials Science

New science of strong materials: or why you don't fall through the floor	Gordon, J E
Structures: or why things don't fall down	Gordon, J E

## Mathematics

1089 and All That (2002)	Acheson, D	0198516231
Fermat's Last Theorem (1998)	Singh, S.	1857026691
A Mathematician's Apology (1940)	Hardy, G.H.	0521427061
The Music of the Primes (2003)	Du Sautoy, M	1841155799

## Medicine

A Career in Medicine: Do you have what it takes?	Ed. Harvey White	RSM Press 2000
Learning Medicine	Ed. Peter Richards & Simon Stockhill	BMJ Books 2000
Insider's Guide to Medical Schools	Ed. Ian Urmiston et al	BMJ Books 2000
Getting into Medical School	Ruston, J & Burnett, J	
Doctors to be	Spindler, S	
Blood and Guts:	Roy Porter	ISBN: 0141010649
A short History of Medicine		

## Modern Languages

Courses in (or including) modern languages come in a wide variety of forms, and differ considerably in their precise content. Useful background to any of them can, however, be gained by reading general cultural and social introductions such as the following:

France in the new century	John Ardagh	Penguin
Contemporary Germany: a handbook	Derek Lewis	Hodder Arnold
Contemporary Spain: a handbook	Christopher Ross	Hodder Arnold

The best way to keep abreast of current affairs is to regularly read a good newspaper in your chosen language(s). Many major local and national newspapers are available to

read in online versions, and one of the best portals providing links to these publications is at the following website: [www.onlinenewspapers.com](http://www.onlinenewspapers.com)

If the course you are intending to follow contains literature, you may wish to do some prior reading in this area also. If so, consult the Head of Modern Languages (TBB) about the best books to read for your particular degree syllabus.

## Music

### Academic Reading:

- Nicholas Cook 'Music: A Very Short Introduction' (Oxford): a highly readable, refreshingly political rethinking of the reasons why and how the study of music, in its broadest sense, should be conducted.
- Philip Bohlman 'World Music: A Very Short Introduction' (Oxford): a survey of the benefits and problems of ethnomusicology, focusing in sections on particular artists.
- Charles Rosen 'The Classical Style' (Faber): a landmark work on the three great Classical-period composers, including a fascinating introductory analysis of the harmonic foundations of the 'Classical style'.
- Constant Lambert 'Music Ho! A Study of Music in Decline' (London): a 1934 reaction to the then recent trends in European modernism. Opinionated, if reactionary, but with insights throughout.
- Grout and Palisca 'A History of Western Music' (Norton): the standard, if rather dry, one-volume account of music history. Richard Taruskin's six-volume Oxford History of Western Music is much to be preferred as a work of original analysis and thought. For a taster of Taruskin's style, try the following article by him: <http://www.tnr.com/story.html?id=f3839c75-3724-4154-adc4-e0638e30448a>
- More suggestions for articles, analytical theories, histories etc. are available from the Music Department [and on the courseforum reading list pages]. All reading must be founded on a widest and deep range of listening to music and score-reading.

### Music Business:

- Rhinegold Guide to Music Education 2007/8 - Provides contact information, course details, scholarship policy and entry requirements for all independent schools, conservatoires, colleges and universities nationwide. World music; exam syllabuses; music publishers; mail order suppliers; information technology; book publishers; youth orchestra and choirs; local authorities; teacher resources; summer schools and MORE. PLUS An extensive series of articles, written by a team of experts, providing informed advice on a whole variety of topics including working in the music business, buying an instrument, music tours and gap-year opportunities.
- Norman Lebrecht 'Who Killed Classical Music: Maestros, Masterpieces and Madness: The Secret Life and Shameful Death of the Classical Record Industry' (Penguin): cutting critiques from the original shock-jock of classical music. His columns can be read here: <http://www.scena.org/columns/lebrechtweekly.asp>

## Physics

The Feynman Lectures Vol. I, II, III	Feynman, Leighton, Sands
Ohanian Physics	Hans C. Ohanian
University Physics	Harris Benson
Physics for the Inquiring Mind	Eric Rogers

## Psychology

Psychology	Gleitman
Psychology in Action	Huffman, Vernoy & Vernoy
Introduction to Psychology	Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith & Bern
Foundations of Psychology: An Introductory Text	Nick Hayes

## Theology & Religious Studies

Philosophy of Religion (2nd Edition)	John Hick	Prentice Hall
Selected Writings	Thomas Aquinas	Penguin
The existence of God	Richard Swinburn	Oxford
Think	Simon Blackburn	Oxford.
Invitation to Theology	D Brown	
The Puzzle of God	P Vardy	
The Puzzle of Ethics	P Vardy	

## Sport & Exercise Science

Journal of Sports Sciences: This journal is produced monthly on behalf of the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences and covers all disciplines related to sport and exercise sciences. Most issues contain at least one article on exercise physiology or training. One edition per year is dedicated to the proceedings of the BASES Annual Conference.

### Exercise Physiology

Physiology of Sport and Exercise	Wilmore & Costill	Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics.
Foundations of Exercise Science.	Kamen, G	Baltimore: Lippincott, Williams & Watkins.
Principles of Anatomy and Physiology	Tortora & Anagnostakos	NY. Harper & Row.

### Biomechanics

Biomechanic of Human Movement	Adrian & Cooper	Dubuque: W C Brown
Biomechanical Basis of Human Movement	Hammil & Knutzen	Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins
Biomechanics of Sports Techniques	Hay JG	Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall
Introduction to Sports Biomechanics	Bartlett	E & F. N. Spon.
Basic Biomechanics	Hall S	St. Louis: Mosby.

### Sport In Society

Sport in Society  
Making sense of Sport  
Organisation of Sport in Britain

McIntosh, P  
Cashmore  
CCPR (1990)

West London Press  
Routledge  
CCPR.

### Sport Psychology

Motor Learning: Concepts  
and Applications  
Advances in Sport Psychology

Magill, R.A.

Dubuque ; W C Brown

Horn T.S.

Champaign, IL:  
Human Kinetics.

### Research Methods

Research Methods in PE and Sport:  
Exploring Alternative Visions

Sparkes, AC

Falmer Press.

## Appendix 2: Nature of Campus at Selected UK Universities

Aberdeen	CU	Liverpool John Moores	U
Aston	CU	LSE	CU
Bath	CO	Loughborough	CT
Birmingham	CO	Manchester	U
Bristol	U	Manchester Met	U
Bristol UWE	U	Newcastle	CU
Brunel	CT	Northumbria	U,CO
Cambridge	I	Nottingham	CO
Cardiff	U	Nottingham Trent	CU,CO
Dundee	U	Oxford	I
Durham	I	Oxford Brookes	CT
East Anglia	CO	Queen Mary	CU
Edinburgh	U	Reading	CB
Essex	CT	Royal Holloway	CT
Exeter	CB	Sheffield	U
Glasgow	U	Sheffield Hallam	CU
Hull	CO	Southampton	CO
Imperial College	CU	St. Andrews	I
Keele	CT	Stirling	CO
Kent	CT	Surrey	CB
KCL	U	Sussex	CT
Lancaster	CO	Swansea	CO
Leeds	CU	UCL	U
Leeds Met	U,CO	Warwick	CT
Leicester	CU	York	CB
Liverpool	CU		

### KEY

Integrated	I
Urban	U
Urban campus	CU
Campus near city border	CB
Campus outside city	CO
Isolated; needing transport to LARGE town or city	CT

### Appendix 3: Members of the Russell Group and the 1994 Group

#### Russell Group

“The elite group of universities which aims to protect and promote excellence in the UK world of Higher Education.”

Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Imperial, KCL, Leeds, Liverpool, LSE, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Sheffield, Southampton, UCL, Warwick.

#### 1994 Group

“Commitment to research excellence, high quality teaching & an outstanding student experience”.

Bath, Birkbeck, Durham, UEA, Essex, Exeter, Goldsmiths College, Lancaster, Leicester, LSE, Loughborough, QMUL, Reading, RHUL, St Andrews, SOAS, Surrey, Sussex, Warwick and York.

### Appendix 4: Visits by the highest number of the UK’s top 100 employers

	2008	2007	2006	2005	University	2008	2007	2006	2005
Manchester	1	1	1	1	Birmingham	11	9	11	7
London	2	3	5	5	Edinburgh	12	8	8	12
Warwick	3	3	4	2	Sheffield	13	13	13	13
Cambridge	4	2	2	3	Loughborough	14	17	17	14
Oxford	5	4	6	6	Southampton	15	18	16	16
Bristol	6	7	7	8	Cardiff	16	16	14	17
Durham	7	10	9	9	Glasgow	17	-	18	19
Nottingham	8	6	3	4	Newcastle	18	14	15	15
Bath	9	12	10	11	York	19	20	-	-
Leeds	10	11	12	10	St. Andrew’s	20	-	-	-

## Appendix 5: Results of the National Students Survey

The results of the National Student Survey are available to inform prospective students about what and where to study. Carried out each year in January and February, the NSS is a survey of all final year undergraduate students in every university in the UK. As part of the survey the students are asked whether or not they are satisfied with the quality of their course. Students answer on a scale of 1 (lowest satisfaction) to 5 (highest satisfaction) - this table shows the percentage of positive responses (4 and 5) in each course, averaged out over all subjects to produce the final score. The table shows the top 30 mainstream UK universities.

<b>Institution</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
University of St Andrews	93.3	93.7	92.2	
University of Cambridge	92.5			
University of Oxford	92.2	91.8		
University of Exeter	91.5	90.8	84.8	85.7
University of Leicester	91.5	90.5	89.0	88.6
University of Aberdeen	91.3	88.4		
Loughborough University	91.0	89.3	87.7	88.0
Aberystwyth University	90.0	90.1	89.9	87.2
University of East Anglia	89.5	89.4	89.1	88.1
University of Sheffield	89.4	87.0	83.9	86.3
Aston University	89.3	86.9	83.7	82.6
Lancaster University	89.0	89.3	85.9	89.4
University of Durham	88.8	87.3	88.9	86.8
University of Hull	88.8	89.2	87.8	87.8
University of Kent	88.6	88.4	85.5	86.1
University of Reading	88.6	88.1	86.8	85.7
University of Portsmouth	88.1	86.2	79.2	75.8
Keele University	88.0	85.0	84.9	84.5
University College London	87.9	86.9		85.5
University of Warwick	87.7	85.3		
Swansea University	87.4	88.4	86.1	87.9
Cardiff University	87.3	86.7	85.1	86.5
University of Southampton	86.9	88.1	86.2	85.0
University of Bath	86.6	84.6	82.8	85.3
University of Glasgow	86.5	87.1	84.5	
Queen's University Belfast	86.0	82.7	83.8	85.2
University of York	86.0	83.7	83.8	86.3
Bangor University	85.9	84.2	85.6	84.9
University of Sussex	85.9	78.1	76.1	80.0
University of Newcastle	85.8	81.7	81.3	83.0

## Appendix 6: Results of 2008 RAE

In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) every university in the UK submitted a dossier of their research in 67 subject areas. The universities were graded and ranked on the quality of this research, the assessment in each subject being carried out a panel the top academics in the country. The results of this exercise dictate each university's research funding for the next five years. The table shows the average score across all subjects in which research was submitted, the percentage of 4\* grades awarded (grade 4\* is considered 'world-leading'), and the number of subjects in which research was submitted.

<b>University</b>	<b>Average ranking</b>	<b>% 4*</b>	<b>No. of subjects</b>
The University of Cambridge	2.98	32.00	48
The University of Oxford	2.96	31.80	48
London School of Economics	2.96	34.90	14
Imperial College	2.94	25.80	21
University College London	2.84	26.60	47
The University of Manchester	2.82	23.10	53
The University of Warwick	2.80	21.30	28
The University of York	2.78	22.60	25
The University of Essex	2.77	22.10	14
The University of Edinburgh	2.75	22.50	39
Queen Mary and Westfield	2.73	18.70	29
The University of St Andrews	2.72	19.20	26
The University of Bristol	2.72	18.30	46
University of Durham	2.72	20.00	30
The University of Southampton	2.72	17.90	32
The University of Leeds	2.72	17.50	46
The University of Sheffield	2.72	18.70	46
The University of Bath	2.71	18.70	18
The University of Lancaster	2.71	18.80	22
King's College London	2.69	19.00	35
Cardiff University	2.69	19.10	34
The University of Nottingham	2.67	18.10	47
Royal Holloway and Bedford	2.67	18.80	21
The University of Birmingham	2.64	15.80	49
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	2.63	13.80	38
Loughborough University	2.62	17.50	20
The University of Exeter	2.62	16.90	30
The University of Sussex	2.61	15.90	26
The University of Kent	2.60	18.20	26
SOAS	2.60	19.60	12

## Appendix 7: Checklist for use on Open Day Visits

Before the visit (if possible):

- Visit the UCAS website and record the standard offer for the course you are considering. Compare this with the grades you think you will get at A-level (your subject teachers will be able to help in this respect if you are uncertain about your prospects).
- Make a note of your travel arrangements (e.g. train times, fares, departure times).
- Check the alternative prospectus produced by students themselves - this may well be very revealing. You might well be able to access it via the university website, or via a link on [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk). Also see appendix 7.
- Read the university's pages in the 'Virgin Alternative Guide to Higher Education' (which contains some excellent contributions from current undergraduates) and 'The Push Guide to Which University' (written for students by students; pithy, humorous and accurate); copies of these publications are available in the Library.
- Look at the student reviews on [www.whatuni.com](http://www.whatuni.com)
- Make a list of questions that arise from this research; in particular, try to identify what you are looking for in the course you have chosen and in your choice of university.

During the visit:

- Over the years all of the universities have developed their own unique personality. Try to assess whether or not you will feel right in this university.
- If you haven't already found it, acquire a copy of the alternative prospectus.
- Look carefully at the staff-student ratio: do you really want to be herded into overcrowded rooms like cattle and be taught by people who will not have learnt your name by the end of your degree because of the sheer weight of numbers?
- Ask what proportion of the student population is housed in university accommodation, and about the availability of other accommodation.
- Find out the cost of student residences, and whether you will have to pay for weeks during the holidays. (Yes, is usually the answer to that last question, but it is worth reflecting on.)
- Discover the geography of the university site, and assess how much time and money will you have to spend travelling.
- If you have a car find out if you can park it near your accommodation.
- Assess how safe the campus is. Is it well-lit? Would you feel safe going back to your accommodation late at night?
- Assess whether or not the location right for you? Do you want to live in a big city or a small town, or would you prefer a self-contained campus?
- Find out whether or not the sports and leisure facilities are easily accessible.
- Talk to current students; ask them 'What is it like to live and study here?' Find out what the social life is like, and ask them about student support (welfare, health, tutorial support).
- Try to gauge the cost of living.

### Appendix 8: Choice of Degree Course: Sixth Form Leavers, 2007-2008

<b>Degree Course</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Business & Administrative Studies	42	18.90
Social Studies	24	10.80
Biological Sciences	21	9.50
Linguistics, Classics & Related Subjects	17	7.70
European Languages, Literature & Related Subjects	16	7.20
Historical & Philosophical Studies	14	6.30
Medicine & Dentistry	12	5.40
Creative Arts & Design (Including Foundation Courses)	18	8.10
Architecture, Building & Planning	11	5.00
Subjects Allied To Medicine	9	4.10
Engineering	8	3.60
Physical Sciences	7	3.20
Mathematical & Computer Sciences	6	2.70
Law	5	2.30
Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture & Related Subjects	4	1.80
Mass Communications & Documentation	4	1.80
Eastern, Asiatic, African, American and Australasian Languages & Literature	2	0.90
Education	1	0.50
Technologies	1	0.50

## Appendix 9: Known UK Higher Education Destinations, Reptonians 2006-2008

The most popular destinations for Reptonians entering HE between 2006 and 2008 were:

University	Number	%
Durham	20	6.5
Manchester	18	5.8
Oxford	18	5.8
Leeds Metropolitan University	15	4.9
Nottingham	15	4.9
Bristol	14	4.5
Leeds	14	4.5
Loughborough	13	4.2
Edinburgh	12	3.9
Newcastle	11	3.6
Bath	10	3.2
Birmingham	10	3.2
Liverpool	9	2.9
Cambridge	8	2.6
KCL	7	2.3
LSE	7	2.3
St Andrews	7	2.3
Imperial	6	1.9
Oxford Brookes	6	1.9
Reading	6	1.9
Sheffield	6	1.9
Warwick	6	1.9
York	6	1.9
Aston	5	1.6
UCL	5	1.6

## Appendix 10: Useful Website Addresses

### Choosing a University, College or Course

- [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) Comprehensive list of courses, tariffs and application procedures from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service.
- [www.unistats.com](http://www.unistats.com) Government initiative to provide official and up to date information about the quality of all HE courses in the UK; includes the results of the National Student Survey, a survey of final year students in UK universities.
- [www.push.co.uk](http://www.push.co.uk) Publishers of Push Guide to University. Pithy and humorous comments, but remarkably accurate.
- [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk) National newspaper with a comprehensive coverage of Higher Education.
- [www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk) National newspaper with several good sections, including 'A-Z of HE Courses' and 'A-Z of Careers'.
- [www.unofficial-guides.com](http://www.unofficial-guides.com) Student reports on Universities.
- [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) Information about what sort of jobs graduates do.
- [www.isco.org.uk](http://www.isco.org.uk) Interests questionnaire.
- [www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk](http://www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk) Interests questionnaire.
- [www.scit.wlv.ac.uk/ukinfo/uk\\_map.html](http://www.scit.wlv.ac.uk/ukinfo/uk_map.html) Map of UK HE institutions.
- [www.whatuni.com](http://www.whatuni.com) Essential university and course information, plus independent reviews from current and past undergraduates.

### The Application Process

- [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk) How and where to apply to UCAS.
- [www.studential.com](http://www.studential.com) Help with Personal Statements.
- [www.oxbridge-admissions.info](http://www.oxbridge-admissions.info) Advice for Oxbridge applicants.

### General Information

- [www.isco.org.uk](http://www.isco.org.uk) Independent Schools Careers Organisation.
- [www.studyinScotland.org](http://www.studyinScotland.org) Studying in Scotland.
- [www.hew.ac.uk](http://www.hew.ac.uk) Studying in Wales.
- [www.unilinx.uk.com](http://www.unilinx.uk.com) Conferences designed to give you a taste of University life.
- [www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com) University Open Days.

### Financial Issues

- [www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport) Comprehensive guide to financial aspects of studying in Higher Education.
- [www.studentmoney.org.uk](http://www.studentmoney.org.uk) Scholarship search.

### Gap year breaks

- [www.findagap.com](http://www.findagap.com) Comprehensive ideas for gap years.
- [www.gap.org.uk](http://www.gap.org.uk) Overseas adventures.
- [www.csv.org.uk](http://www.csv.org.uk) Community Service Volunteers.

## Appendix 11: Important UCAS Dates

(Dates are for 2009 entry, and may change slightly for 2010 entry)

1 September	Application processing begins.
23 September	<b>Internal deadline for applications to Oxford or Cambridge, and courses in medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine/science.</b>
15 October	UCAS Closing date for applications to Oxford, Cambridge and courses in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science/medicine.
11 November	<b>Internal closing date for applications.</b>
15 January	UCAS Closing date for applications.
26 February	UCAS Extra starts.
31 March	Universities should have made decisions on applications received by 15 January.
30 June	Last date for receipt of applications for immediate consideration. Those received after this date held for Clearing.
20 August	Publication of GCE A-level results. Clearing starts.
21 September	Last date for receipt of applications for 2008 entry.

## Appendix 12: Advice on writing the personal statement

Admissions officers want to know why you are interested in the course you have applied for. A good personal statement could persuade an admissions officer to offer you a place. In many cases, applicants are not interviewed, so this may be your only chance to make a case for your admission. However, if you are interviewed, the personal statement may well provide the basis for your interview.

Your statement must be clear. Use a word processor, with type of size 12 point or larger. You do not have to use all the space available, but you are limited to the available space. Using Times New Roman font of size 12 point (margins left and right 1.7 cm), the limit is 47 lines.

Be truthful and accurate in what you write. Beware of exaggerating what you done or achieved, as the personal statement could be used as the basis for an interview. This is particularly important in the case for Oxbridge interviews. Remember, too, that **all** of the universities that you have applied to will see your personal statement.

Before writing your personal statement you must read the course outline in the appropriate prospectus. Identify the key features of the course, and aim to explain why the course is right for you. Perform a skills audit to identify your strengths, and relate these to the skills required on the course. You should state:

- Why you have chosen the course, and what interests you about it.
- What career plans, if any, you have for when you complete your course.
- Any job, work experience, placement or voluntary work you have done that is relevant to your subject. State what you have gained from these activities.
- Any involvement in summer schools, Villiers Park reading parties, or other relevant 'out of school' courses. State what you learnt from these.
- Details of academic honours (e.g. scholarships, prizes etc.).
- Details of non-accredited skills and achievement which you have gained through activities such as Duke of Edinburgh Award and Young Enterprise.
- Any subjects you are studying that do not have a formal assessment.
- Positions of responsibility.
- Your social, sports or leisure interests. Why are these important to you? What have you learnt about the need to organise your time efficiently?
- If you are planning to take a year out, explain why.

While you need not include details of grades in uncertificated AS-level units in section 7, you may include this information in the personal statement. However it is probably best left to your tutor to enter such information on the school's reference: please speak to your tutor if you believe that you have gained external exam marks worthy of particular mention.

Finally you **MUST** check your spelling, punctuation and grammar. If you cannot be bothered to show pride in your personal statement why should an admissions tutor view you as a worthy candidate. It is your future at stake!