

Loreto Grammar School



UCAS APPLICATION STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

Please note you will need to have this booklet when you meet with your Tutor and Sixth Form Team.

Name:

Form:

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Useful Information relating to your UCAS Application

Key Dates for 2027 Entry (current Year 13)

9th July 2026	Conservatoires applications open for 2027 entry.
1st September 2026	Completed undergraduate applications can be submitted to UCAS.
19th September 2026	INTERNAL Deadline for Early applicants UCAS form to be filled in and sent to school. Confirm admissions tests.
15th October 2026	EXTERNAL DEADLINE: Applications for Oxford, Cambridge and most courses in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine/science should arrive at UCAS by 18:00 (UK time).
07th November 2026	INTERNAL School deadline for non-early entry students to send their applications into school so that we can process and send them off in good time.
13th January 2027	EXTERNAL DEADLINE: Applications for the majority of undergraduate courses should arrive at UCAS by 18:00 (UK time) on the equal consideration date. Closing date for most conservatoires dance/drama/musical theatre applications.
February 2027	Are We Ready Yet? Evening – Parents and Students
March 2027	Student Finance Opens
May/ June 2027	Deadline to reply to offers
August 2027	Results Day

UCAS Tariff Points: Quick Check Reference Sheet	Abbreviations
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Tariff points	A2	AS	EPQ	UCAS: University and College Admissions Service UMS: Uniform Mark Scale UCAT: UK Clinical Aptitude Test LNAT: Law National Aptitude Test CF: Conditional Firm offer CI: Conditional Insurance offer UF: Unconditional Firm offer
56	A*			
48	A			
40	B			
32	C			
28			A*	
24	D		A	
20		A	B	
16	E	B	C	
12		C	D	
10		D		
8			E	
6		E		

Making a Successful Application to University

Your UCAS Form *(tick as you complete each stage)*

1. Ensure you are registered on the UCAS Hub (you should have this from when we attended the UCAS Discovery Day). You are applying for the '2027' round of courses. You are also applying as an undergraduate. Use a **PERSONAL EMAIL** address and NOT your school email. **Note email here:**
2. Attach yourself to the school portal by using the **Buzzword:** _____
3. Complete your details. You will need to ensure that you complete all 7 sections (personal details, additional info, student finance arrangements, course choices, education (all GCSE's completed and any A Levels you are studying, leave the grade as pending/blank for now. You also need to include your **ULN which is your Unique Learner Number** which you will find on Edulink or your GCSE certificates), employment, personal statement).
4. **Check your courses are suitable:**

A Level Subjects	ALIS Target Grade	End of Year 12 Grade	UCAS Predicted Grade	Year 13 Jan Mock Grade
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

University	Course	Typical Entry Requirements	Do you meet the entry based on
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			UCAS predicted grades?
1.			Y / N
2.			Y / N
3.			Y / N
4.			Y / N
5.			Y / N

- Once you have done all the above, print out your application and pass it to your tutor to check and sign.
- Once they have done this you can press 'pay and send'. Note this sends it to the school not to UCAS yet. The cost for applications is £34:50.
- The school will add your reference and predicted grades before sending off to UCAS. This can take up to four working weeks.

1. What is UCAS?

UCAS is the Universities and College Admission Service. It provides a central application service for full-time undergraduate courses in the UK. UCAS works with 327 universities and colleges and over 50,000 courses.

This means that if you want to go on to higher education after A Levels, it is highly likely that you will be submitting a UCAS application at the start of your first term in Year 13. Most students who have been through this will tell you that it is a time-consuming process and can be very stressful. That is why you have a range of help and support provided for you and this booklet is just the beginning.

What the UCAS process involves

- 1) Choosing a course/courses
Reflect on your skills and consider which courses might be right for you. Think carefully about where your skills lie and what you would enjoy doing every day for 3 or 4 years.
- 2) Choosing 5 universities
Investigate institutions where these courses are available. Find out as much as you can about the course structure and style, each subject varies considerably from institution to institution. Consider your personal requirements, look closely at their entry requirements (also admissions policies if you can find them) and find your 5 best matches!
- 3) Putting together your application
You will have to gather information about past examination results and former schools, know your Local Education Authority etc. but writing your personal statement is the most important part of this form. You will work on this with your tutor and with subject teachers.

All of this needs to be completed by the internal deadline of 7th November 2026 (September 19th 2026 for Oxbridge applicants, medics, dentists and vets). The first half-term months of Year 13 is extremely busy so you will need to have the first draft of your form done before you leave for the summer holidays at the end of Year 12.

What is UCAS Extra? Runs from the end of February to the end of June. Can be used by students who have:

- already made five choices;
- received decisions from all these choices; and
- either had no offers or declined all the offers you have received.

2. Researching Choices

Entry Profiles

These are found through the 'Course Search' section of the UCAS website. Type in the subject area you are interested in and you will be able to look at entry requirements and course details for all the programmes linked with that subject. This information is particularly useful as it is provided by UCAS, not by the institution, so it is unbiased, unlike prospectuses which are there to 'sell' the university at its best

Useful Websites

1. UCAS Hub www.ucas.com
2. Russell Group Informed Choices Website www.informedchoices.ac.uk
3. Gresham College video lectures covering a wide range of academic subject areas.
www.gresham.ac.uk
4. The Competitive University Guide: www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk
5. PodOxford offers downloadable lectures and tutorials: <https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/>
6. Guardian University Comparison: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/universityguide>

X: Not just for 'social' networking! If you have an X account, you should be following @ucas_online, Student Finance @SF_England the universities or departments you are interested in (some admissions offices have their own X feed to keep applicants up to date with the process).

You could also follow course-specific and current affairs accounts to keep up with the latest developments and debates. For example:

News, analysis, current affairs	@BBCBreaking @jonsnowC4 @BBCRadio4	Politics	@Number10gov @UKParliament
Business	@FinancialTimes @TheEconomist	Law	@cpsuk @ukSupremeCourt
Languages	@lemondefr @el_pais @SPIEGEL_Netz	Technology	@TechCrunch @wired
Poetry and Literature	@GuardianBooks @TheTelegraphBooks @TheRSC	Science	@newscientist @NatGeo @bbcscitech @ProfBrianCox

This is just a selection, there are many more!

Prospectuses:

These are still useful as they provide a picture of the university as a whole and go into some more depth than Entry Profiles. You can find some in the school library and get the latest editions early in March at the UCAS convention or electronic copies from university websites. This is a good opportunity to ask questions to representatives from universities face to face.

Family, friends, professionals:

It's always worth getting an insider's perspective on universities and courses so talk to older friends, siblings and other family members to find out what their experiences were like. What did they do before applying? With the benefit of hindsight, would they do anything differently if they had to go through it again? If you

already have an idea of what career path you would like to follow, make sure you talk to people in that profession and find if any courses are essential/desirable.

Soul search

It is essential that your chosen course appeals to you as you will spend most of the next three or four years working on it. Doing a degree as a means to an end does not always lead to a successful career. If you love the idea of being a lawyer but the law degree looks extremely dull, it is unlikely you will suddenly start enjoying legal work on graduation!

Open Days

Attending university and college Open Days is a great way to get a feel for the place. It's very difficult, if not impossible, for students to make their minds up about somewhere just from reading a prospectus or visiting a website.

Most Open Days take place during term time, so it is essential you choose visits carefully and seek permission from your Heads of Year before attending.

During your visit, you should also be shown around various parts of the university or college, such as the student union, library, accommodation areas and the department in which you might end up studying.

There might be opportunities to meet some of your potential tutors and chat with students currently on the courses in which you are interested.

Most students agree that Open Days have enabled them to make an instinctive decision – the place may or may not feel right. Making the effort to explore a university or college in this way should prevent you applying to go to somewhere just because it “looks nice” in a prospectus or on a website. If you don't explore beforehand, you risk feeling disappointed when turning up to start your course, only to find that it's not what you expected.

Each year, UCAS publish a *University and College Open Days* booklet, which also has details of taster courses and education conventions.

Open Day Policy

To request permission to attend an Open Day, collect an Open Day form from Student Services. You will need to seek permission from each teacher you would have on the day of your absence as well as your Form Tutor, Year Co-ordinator and Parent/Carer. Permission is not guaranteed. When the form is complete, hand it in the Attendance Officer who will keep a record of your visits. You may only request two Open Day visits over the course of the Sixth Form.

We encourage you to attend universities you are seriously considering but it is obviously important to take as few days off as possible in Year 13. Please consider your Open Day choices carefully and remember that most universities now have Open Day events on Saturdays.

NB. Later in the year when students receive offers, it is increasingly common for these to come with an invitation to visit which is not an interview. In some cases, it is worth the student taking up this invitation, but it should be remembered that universities are keen for visitors, so they get as many 'firm' acceptances as possible. If an offer has been made it is not retractable, and the student is not obliged to go and take valuable time off school.

Your Long List – this must be finalised by the end of Year 12

When you start researching, you may have 2 or 3 different courses you are interested in. If they are wildly different (e.g. Medicine, Fine Art and Human Resource Management) you need to have a serious re-think. However, it is fairly common for students to be deciding between English and History, Economics and Law or Biochemistry and Life Sciences. Remember that combination courses, for example English with French, have fewer applicants than, for example, straight English, and that means higher acceptance rates. If you are really struggling with the decision, find out what modules are studied in the first year of each course at your chosen universities (it will vary from institution to institution) and ask yourself what you would rather spend all day doing.

Your Short List – This can be finalised when you return to school after the Summer.

This is the tricky bit so discuss it thoroughly with your Tutor or Year Co-ordinator. You have five choices which are entered on the form in alphabetical order, so you do not have to show any preference at this stage. However, you should have a clear idea of how your chances of success vary at each institution. After considering entry requirements, your predicted grades (see page 12) and other factors to take into account (e.g. Does this university prioritise certain applicants, local students for example? Is my chosen course oversubscribed here? Will an interview be required here and will that improve/damage my chances?) you should feel that you have:

- TWO fairly secure choices and
- no more than TWO choices where you could be taking a risk.

This next piece of advice sounds obvious but *more people than you think end up at their 'back-up' university* so **DON'T WASTE CHOICES ON PLACES YOU DON'T WANT TO GO TO.**

Every one of the five should be a course and an institution where you would be happy to spend the next three or more years.

NB Students applying for Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Sciences may only choose FOUR such courses. Your fifth choice must be an alternative e.g. Biomedical Sciences.

3. The Personal Statement

This should take several drafts and each one should be discussed with your tutor and/or subject teacher for the course you are applying for **one at a time**. This is your chance to show the University Admissions officer your strengths, personality and interests. This statement is increasingly important as pressure for places mounts.

A good personal statement...	A bad personal statement...
✓ shows that the applicant has researched the course well and has good subject knowledge ✓ is written in the applicant's own voice ✓ has a clear structure	▪ features plagiarised ideas or is AI generated ▪ is <i>too</i> original or odd or cliched ▪ makes false claims about work experience or books read ▪ contains negative comments

✓ ties in a range of activities by focusing on specific skills learned ✓ uses varied vocabulary ✓ is unique to you- be specific!	▪ uses a boring formula or lists experiences without comment ▪ employs hyperbole ▪ has several spelling mistakes
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Content

The personal statement format changed recently but the content is the same. It has been split into 3 sections each with a question to help students structure their personal statements. Do not repeat information instead decide which of the three section it best fits into. You need a minimum of 350 characters in each section and the whole thing should not exceed 4000 characters. Write it in Word first then copy and paste it into the UCAS form.

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

This is your chance to convince the university that you're a suitable candidate by showcasing your knowledge, enthusiasm, and how this course aligns with your future goals.

- Why is this particular course a good fit for you? What unique features or opportunities does it offer?
- Explain what motivates you to pursue this subject and what you hope to achieve through studying it.
- Discuss how this course will help you achieve your career aspirations or future goals.
- **Be Specific:** Avoid generic statements. Use specific examples and details to show your understanding and passion.
- **Focus on the Course:** While you can briefly mention your skills and qualifications, the main focus should be on the course and why you want to study it.
- **Be Honest and Authentic:** Let your genuine enthusiasm shine through.

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

This section focuses on demonstrating your suitability for the chosen course by highlighting relevant skills and knowledge gained through your academic journey. It's not about listing grades, but rather explaining how your experiences have equipped you for university-level study.

- **Focus on relevant skills:**
Mention any skills or knowledge gained from your studies, such as analytical, problem-solving, communication, or research skills, and how they relate to the course requirements.
- **Provide specific examples:**
Illustrate your skills with concrete examples from your coursework, projects, or other relevant experiences. Don't just list subjects, explain how they helped you develop specific skills.
- **Highlight transferable skills:**

Mention any transferable skills gained outside of your formal studies, such as work experience, volunteer work, or extracurricular activities, and how they relate to the course.

- **Connect to future goals:**

Explain how your studies have helped you understand your aspirations and how this course will help you achieve them.

- **Demonstrate passion and enthusiasm:**

Show your genuine interest in the subject and how your experiences have fuelled your desire to pursue it further.

- EPQ or MOOCs, wider reading could be relevant here.

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

This question allows students to showcase their personal experiences, extracurricular activities, and work experience to demonstrate their suitability for the course, especially if it goes beyond the standard educational qualifications. This section is especially important for courses such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, nursing, teaching, midwifery etc.

- **Showcase preparedness:**

This question is about more than just listing activities; it's about demonstrating how these activities have prepared you for the course you're applying for.

- **Relevance matters:**

Explain how your extracurricular activities, work experience, or other personal experiences have helped you develop the skills, knowledge, and understanding that are valuable for your chosen field of study.

- **Examples:**

This could include relevant jobs, placements, volunteering, hobbies, or online courses that have provided valuable insights or skills.

- **Connecting experiences to the course:**

Clearly articulate how your chosen experiences have shaped your understanding of the course and your suitability for it.

- Consider the skills you have acquired and try to give specific examples of them e.g.
 - communication
 - working independently
 - team-work
 - working to deadlines
 - problem solving

- Initiative
- Additional interest and activities in and outside school would also fit into this section but make sure they are recent examples.

Avoid listing activities; try to make them relevant to your application. Again, consider what skills have been developed through school activities such as

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| ➤ Sport | ➤ Drama | ➤ Musical instrument lessons/orchestra |
| ➤ Prefect duties | ➤ Public speaking | ➤ School trips |
| ➤ Clubs & societies | ➤ Organising events | ➤ Voluntary/charity work |

Concluding Sentence ideas

- **Connect the beginning and end:**
Refer back to your opening statement or a key theme you introduced, showing coherence and demonstrating that you've been listening to your own story.
- **Discuss your future plans:**
Explain how the course will help you achieve your goals, whether it's career aspirations, personal development, or other future ambitions.
- **Showcase your enthusiasm:**
Express excitement for the opportunities the course and the universities offer, demonstrating your genuine interest.
- **Reiterate your strengths and skills:**
Highlight the qualities and experiences that make you a strong candidate, emphasizing how they align with the course requirements and university culture.
- **Go beyond just stating skills:**
Show how you've applied these skills and demonstrate your ability to learn and adapt, which will be essential for success at university.
- **End with a positive and forward-looking statement:**
This leaves a lasting impression and shows that you are eager to start your journey.

For further support the following links are useful

For an overview of how to write the personal statement

[How To Write Your Undergraduate Personal Statement | UCAS](#)

For lots of subject specific guidance on how to answer the different questions with guidance

[2026 personal statement guides | UCAS](#)

For additional experiences that you could include to supplement your in person experiences

Is using AI to help with my personal statement 'cheating'?

Generating (and then copying, pasting and submitting) all or a large part of your personal statement from an AI tool such as ChatGPT, and presenting it as your own words, could be considered cheating by universities and colleges and could affect your chances of an offer.

When you complete your application, you now have to declare that your personal statement hasn't been copied or provided from another source, including artificial intelligence software.

The UCAS Verification Team run checks to detect fraudulent applications and patterns of similarity in personal statements. If UCAS software detects elements of a personal statement that are similar to others, the universities or colleges it is intended for may be notified.

It is okay to use AI to check the readability of what you have written but not to write your personal statement in the first place.

4. Completing and Submitting your UCAS Hub Form

After your End of Year 12 examinations in June, time will be set aside for a full programme focusing on preparing for your future. As part of this, you will receive a tutorial on the different parts of the UCAS form and the information you need to complete it.

The deadline for your final completion of the form is **7th November 2026 (September 19th 2026 for Oxbridge applicants, medics, dentists and vets)**. When you have completed all sections and are happy with your choices and Personal Statement, you need to:

- Print out your form in full
- Write the particular entry requirements next to each of your five choices on the form (use the requirements specified in the Entry Profile) and summarise these all on page 2 of this booklet.
- Hand your form to your Tutor for discussion and approval.
- If your tutor approves the application, you can now log on and click on 'pay and send'. You can pay UCAS directly online, or pay through school with via the school online system. Bursary students do not need to pay this fee.
- At this stage, your application is sent to the school's administration for more checks and completion of your reference. Before we send it on to UCAS, it is possible for us to send it back to you if you have made a mistake, just see Mr Newman, Dr Schofield, Mr Feely or Mrs Sumner.

5. Your Reference and UCAS Predicted Grades

When you have completed your sections of the form and clicked 'send', you should allow about a week for the reference and final checks to be completed. This may vary, depending on the number of students in your tutor group submitting in a particular week so **be organised and co-ordinate and communicate with your tutor**.

The UCAS reference is split into three sections:

Section 1: All students will have the same paragraph included that puts our school into context.

Section 2: Is for us to indicate whether a student has any extenuating circumstances. This could be health issues, bereavement, SEND, young carers, other incidents that have significantly disrupted the student's education, other pastoral information.

Section 3: Will most often be left blank, but may be used to indicate if a student has done something exceptional that is not already covered on the rest of the UCAS form.

Your UCAS predicted grades will be your ALIS targets or your end of year examination grade plus one, whichever is higher. The exception to this is if you gain a grade A in your end of year examinations departments, in this case you will be given a grade a prediction unless the department think there is enough additional evidence to award you an A*. Departments may decide there is a case not to follow the above rule where there is a large discrepancy between ALIS and actual outcome. **UCAS predicted grades are for UCAS purposes only** and may be different to your expected grades (on your reports), although in practice they are usually similar. University admissions tutors use them alongside the rest of the application to decide whether or not to make an offer to a student.

You are advised to choose courses with grade requirements that match your predicted grades. You can also use your Expected Grades in your 3 main subjects for extra guidance and **you are advised not to choose courses for which typical offers are more than a grade above your Expected Grades in more than one subject. Considering the difficulty of Year 13 work, accepting a place which requires such a significant improvement is a high risk.**

It is sensible to have one aspirational choice that is slightly higher and one back up choice that is lower. If you choose courses that have grade requirements that are well beyond your predicted grades, it is unlikely that you will receive an offer.

Your form is then checked by the Sixth Form Team so please keep an eye on UCAS Hub in case it is returned to you for corrections. If there are no amendments to be made the form is sent to UCAS.

UCAS fees must be paid **before** your form is sent, please pay directly to UCAS not through the school unless you are in receipt of the school bursary.

Once your form has been submitted to UCAS, it cannot be returned for any amendment so please do not submit it if you think you will still need to make changes.

Dr Schofield will be available for advice on personal statements and filling in the UCAS form during afternoon registrations in her office (next to room 24).

6. Admissions Tests: These are used by some institutions for the most competitive courses. The most common are the UCAT (UK Clinical Aptitude Test) for Medicine or Dentistry; the LNAT for some Law courses and the STEP paper in Mathematics. The most recently introduced are the ELAT for Literature and TSA for PPE at Oxford. Please see the Admissions test section for the **application deadlines**.

Applications for University Admissions Tests are processed through school and therefore students need to fill in a form (obtained from Mrs Caulkin) that requests all the information needed to make the online application. Registrations usually start on 1st September.

You must:

1. Research these courses yourself using online guides and books available in the library. There are some books in the school library offering advice and featuring examples of Admissions Tests as well as in the sixth form area. Individual subjects may also offer further advice and there is plenty of free material and practise tests to be found online. Please start practising these tests as soon as possible.

2. Book these courses yourself if they are done outside of school and inform the school examination officer as soon as possible if you are sitting any admissions tests done in school as this requires the correct forms to be filled in well in advance. **The deadline for many of the tests is the first week or two of September and it would be wise to submit your form well in advance of the deadline.**

The next table shows some of the most commonly required admissions tests. The deadlines for application can vary year to year as can the fees. Most of the Admissions tests sat in school have a registration deadline in **September**. It is important to stick to school deadlines for these as it takes time to process your forms. Mrs Caulkin, our examinations officer handles all in school admissions test registrations so please contact her directly if you would like to register, do this as soon as you return to school in Year 13 (the first week back). Her email is CCaulkin @loretogrammar.co.uk

Test	Courses	Institution(s)	Registration dates
UCAT	Medicine, Dentistry	27 institutions (see website)	Several dates at external centres. Book this yourself.
LNAT	Law	Birmingham, Bristol, Durham, Glasgow, Kings, Nottingham, UCL	External to school- book this yourself.
HAT	History	Oxford	Internal admissions test- contact Mrs Caulkin
STEP	Maths	Cambridge, Warwick	Internal admissions test- contact Mrs Caulkin
ELAT (and other Oxford admissions tests)	English	Oxford	Internal admissions test- contact Mrs Caulkin
TSA and other Cambridge admissions tests	Computer Science, Natural Sciences, Engineering, Economics, PPE, European Social & Political Studies	Cambridge, Oxford, UCL	Internal admissions test- contact Mrs Caulkin
TMUA			Internal admissions test- contact Mrs Caulkin

Other details that **you need to know**:

- the deadline dates for registration and completion of the tests
- the venue and procedure – at school or at a central test centre? Written or typed? Time limit?
- the cost and availability of bursaries if required
- the availability of practice papers (often online)
- What you need to take with you e.g. passport ID etc

There are several companies offering training, preparation and practice of admissions tests, often at a considerable cost. Remember that the tests are designed by experts to test aptitude, not knowledge. You can't 'revise' for them, and universities' data shows that there is little correlation between candidates who receive coaching and those who don't.

It is important, however, to familiarise yourself with the format and timing of the papers by practising past questions. You should be able to find samples online.

7. Interviews

If you are applying to Oxford or Cambridge, you will probably be invited for interview early, in December. Interviews are likely to be requested for Medicine, Law, Dentistry, Veterinary Sciences and other vocational courses. **When you are given a date, see Mr Newman, Mr Feely, or Miss Craddock to arrange a mock interview. Dr Schofield arranges a multi mini style interview for medics and dentists, veterinary science as well as nursing, midwifery or related courses.**

Sometimes these come with an invitation to visit which is not an interview. If the offer is from one of your preferred institutions and you feel it is quite a high offer for you, it may well be worth visiting and getting to know the tutors. This could go in your favour on Results Day if you don't quite get the grades. However, offers with invitations to visit are increasingly popular as universities are also trying to get as many 'firm' acceptances (more on this later) as possible. If you feel like the offer is easily achievable, have already visited the institution or have even changed you mind about going there, do not feel obliged to go and visit. The offer is not retractable once it has been sent to you and you should always think carefully about taking time off valuable lessons during Year 13. See Mr Newman if you are unsure.

8. UCAS Extra

If you have applied through UCAS and are not holding any offers, you may be able to apply through Extra for another course. Extra allows you to apply for courses with vacancies between the end of February and the end of June. In Extra, you apply for one course at a time using the Track service on the UCAS website.

To use Extra you need to have:

- already made five choices;
- received decisions from all these choices; and
- either had no offers or declined all the offers you have received.
-

If you decline your offers and add an Extra choice, you will not be able to accept any of your original choices later.

9. Making your choices

At the end of March/ start of April, you will be asked to select a FIRM offer and an INSURANCE offer.

FIRM choice – your favourite course from the offers you have received.

INSURANCE – a course you would be happy to study, ideally, though not necessarily, with a lower, more easily achievable offer.

This seems simple but a number of difficult situations could arise...

Frequently Asked Questions

What if my firm choice has a lower offer than my insurance?

Your firm choice should always be your first choice, as that is where you will be automatically placed if you achieve the grades of the offer.

If you just miss the grades and your 'firm' institution does not accept you, it is unlikely that another institution who gave you a *higher* offer will accept you now unless they were hugely undersubscribed and now need to fill places (unlikely but not impossible).

My first and second choices have made me the same offer. Is it worth putting one as an insurance?

Yes. If you miss the grades for your firm choice, your insurance could still accept you if you have only missed by a few marks and they need to fill places.

My favourite places have both given me very high offers. I have one low offer for a place I don't really want to go to, should I keep that as an insurance?

No. When you officially name an insurance place, if you miss the grades for your firm place and the institution does not accept you, you will be automatically placed on your insurance course. **DO NOT CHOOSE A COURSE YOU DO NOT WANT TO DO!**

I only have one offer, does this matter?

No. Often, if you are applying for a competitive course like Medicine or English, you should only expect one offer. This highlights the importance of **ONLY CHOOSING COURSES AND UNIVERSITIES YOU DEFINITELY LIKE.**

I don't have any offers. What should I do?

Don't panic, you still have options. Read the above section on UCAS Extra.

I've changed my mind since last November and I want to do a different course I haven't applied for. What should I do?

Decline all your offers and use UCAS Extra to apply for your new chosen course.

I have five reasonable offers but there's only one course I definitely want to do. Do I have to select an insurance?

You clearly did not read most of this booklet during the application process but no, you do not 'need' an insurance. **ONLY SELECT THE COURSE(S) YOU WOULD DEFINITELY WANT TO DO.**

It's Results Day, I've got in to my first choice, but I would now prefer to go to my second choice. What should I do?

Once you have selected a course as your firm choice, you are committing yourself to studying there if you meet the grades offered. It is difficult to get out of this commitment, but not impossible. See Mr Newman or Dr Schofield on Results Day.

10. Results Day

From 8am on Results Day, you should be able to log on to your UCAS tracker to see the final results of your application. You could have been accepted already or the university's decision could be pending. If this is the case, you need to come into school prepared to get on the phone (have names of admissions/course tutors and their phone numbers ready). Often, if you have missed your grades, you can still be accepted, it all depends on how many applications the course received that year. It helps to be in school when you are making these phone calls as you have more information about your results and can argue more convincingly. (School staff will be around to help but a teacher calling on a student's behalf to explain why they really want to go to university is much less convincing than a personal call from a potential student!) If you have not achieved the grades offered by your firm or insurance choices, you still have options. You go into 'Clearing'.

What is Clearing?

Clearing is used by applicants who have not secured a place at university or college for the current year. It matches applicants to suitable courses with vacancies. This begins in August and more than 30,000 people gain a place during Clearing every year.

If you are flexible and you have reasonable examination results, there is still a good chance you will find another course. Consider carefully before making a commitment though, don't panic and choose a course for the sake of it. Make sure you think it through and talk it over with family and teachers.

Course vacancies for Clearing are published on the UCAS website from mid-August.

Remember - the majority of our students do get in to either their first or second choice universities. Those who don't are often just as happy at the course they found through Clearing if they have searched wisely. There will be information handed out to you on results day should you wish to reapply. Please inform the school of this as soon as possible by contacting us via the sixth form email: sixthform@loretogrammar.co.uk

You will have worked hard to get your university place so enjoy every minute when you get there!

GOOD LUCK! The Sixth Form Team

Appendix 1: UCAS Early Application Information

Which courses does this apply to?

Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, all courses at Oxford and Cambridge.

What is the Early Applicant Deadline?

Early Applicants must have their UCAS forms completed and submitted to school by the school deadlines so that forms can be processed and sent off well before the UCAS deadline. See below for the dates.

Timeline of events and in school support for early applicants

Dates	Action
January/ February Year 12	A question and answer session with early applicants in Year 13 will be arranged so that they can pass on advice to prospective early applicants in Year 12
Spring term (February) Year 12	UCAS Information Evening for Year 12 students and parents. Students who are considering early application can register their interest during the evening.
February to June Year 12	UCAS application support for all students from form tutors during form times and afternoon registrations. Students can also independently:

	• Research universities and courses • Carry out work experience • Wider reading • Attend relevant talks and Open Days
June/ July Year 12	Individual preparation meetings for early applicants with Dr Schofield for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science and Mr Feely for Oxbridge. Meetings will take place during afternoon registrations or lunchtimes so that these students can make a start on their personal statements and Ucas form.
June/ July Year 12	Working Onwards Week (WOW): • All students will be off timetable during these two days to receive support from the Sixth Form team on their Ucas applications. • Early applicants can continue working on personal statements so that a good draft can be handed into their reference writer (Mr Newman, Mr Feely or Dr Schofield) before the summer.
Summer Year 12 to 13	Continue with work experience and wider reading and finalise your short list of universities and courses
Early September Year 13	• Finalise your personal statement and complete the UCAS form. • Meet with your reference writer (Dr Schofield, Mr Feely or Mr Newman) to discuss where you are up to with your application. • Register for and sit admissions tests where applicable (eg. UCAT). Students should inform the examination officer (Mrs Caulkin) of the admission test dates and fill in the relevant forms as soon as possible in September.
September 19 th Year 13	School deadline for early applicants UCAS form. The form needs to be checked and processed by several people in school before we send it to UCAS which can take several days to a week. If we discover any errors on the form (and we often do!) it will be returned to students increasing the time needed for processing.
October 15 th Year 13	UCAS early entry deadline. If this deadline is not met then applications for medicine, dentistry, veterinary science and Oxbridge will not be considered by the universities. It is essential therefore that students meet the school deadline to allow for processing.
7 th November Year 13	School deadline for other applicants.
October to March Year 13	Students hear back from universities.
October/ November/December Year 13	Interview preparation Oxford Interview Workshop (OXB) Mock interviews at AGSB (OXB) Multi-mini interviews for medicine applicants arranged in conjunction with St Ambrose. Mock interviews with professionals for Dentistry and veterinary applicants.

November Year 13	Admissions tests in school (make sure you registered with our exams officer in September).
December Year 13	Oxford and Cambridge interviews.
January Year 13	Oxford and Cambridge final decisions to applicants.
29 th January Year 13	UCAS deadline for all applications.
End of March/ April Year 13	All universities should have responded to applications NB. Med/Den/Vet applicants are often waiting until late March, owing to the universities' ongoing interview processes
Start of May/June Year 13	Make your firm and insurance choices.
August Year 13	If you are unsure about whether or not you will meet the conditions of your offer then look at the UCAS website and be prepared to enter clearing on Results Day by looking for suitable courses and getting the telephone numbers of the universities.
Mid August Year 13	A Level Results Day • If you meet the conditions for your firm offer or your insurance offer you will automatically be given a place at that university. • If you did not meet the conditions, you will become eligible for Clearing.