PARENT & SUPPORTER
HIGHER EDUCATION INFORMATION BOOKLET
2021
WELCOME
In addition to supporting prospective students in their journeys to higher education, we also provide support for parents, carers and supporters who are supporting a young person in their higher education journeys. This booklet will give you some more information and resources to help support your young person, including webinars, monthly newsletters and more.

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KEY DATES TIMELINE

May 2021
• UCAS registration opens

June 2021
• University of Reading Virtual Open Days

September 2021
• UCAS Apply submissions open

October 2021
• University of Reading Open Days

15 October 2021
• UCAS application deadline for students applying to Oxford or Cambridge and for students applying for most medicine, dentistry, and veterinary science courses.

26 January 2022
• UCAS application deadline for most courses

February 2022
• Student Finance applications open

February 2022
• UCAS Extra opens

Feb/March 2022
• University of Reading Visit Days

May 2022
• Student Finance application deadline

May 2022
• University decisions due for applications made by 26 January

June 2022
• Deadline for replying to university decisions

July 2022
• Clearing opens

August 2022
• A Level & BTEC results published and conditional offers confirmed

October 2022
• Clearing closes
OPEN DAYS

Why attend an Open Day?

Open Days are a brilliant opportunity to hear from current students about their experiences, they may shed light on an important part of the university experience your young person hadn’t even considered. There’s also no better way for your young person to understand what they’ll be learning than to hear it from the lecturers themselves. Not only will they find out about the syllabus but they’ll be able to ask questions and get a feel for their teaching style.

Although open days may be virtual at the moment, you can still speak to lots of current students and staff and take advantage of virtual tours to get a feel for the campus.

Join us at one of our Open Days to discover everything we have to offer.

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“The student representatives were so confident and approachable; this is what I want for my daughter. In fact, all speakers struck the right tone, knowledgeable, enthusiastic and rather fun!”

Virtual Open Day attendee, 2020

“Can’t fault the university. It was excellent. Students and lecturers so friendly and welcoming. The presentations were first class.”

Open Day attendee, 2019

“A very positive experience, you have set the bar high for future virtual open days we are attending. Thank you.”

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APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY

Applying to University

Apply through UCAS

For 2022 entry onwards, students create a UCAS Hub account to begin their application. The UCAS Hub gives them everything they need in one place. They can explore their options, compare courses and save their favourites as they go. Your young person can sign up to an account here.

The cost of the application is £22 for one choice and £26.50 for two or more.

Choosing a university and course

Choosing the right university and course is an important decision. These are five top tips to help students make the best choices:

• Choosing the right course is the most important part. Encourage your young person to take time to research what is out there and remember, the same subject can be taught very differently at different universities. Also, ensure they take a close look at the modules available, the topics they cover and the way the course is assessed.

• Encourage them to keep an open mind when researching courses. There are over 50,000 courses to choose from, many of which they may never have considered or studied before but may end up being the perfect match!

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• When choosing a university, they will need to consider factors such as whether the university is campus or city-based, the location, size, range of facilities and support services, and the types of accommodation on offer. Help your young person to draw up a list of priorities and try to find universities that tick as many as possible.

Clearing

Clearing is for students applying after 30 June, or students who receive no offers, decline their offers or do not meet the conditions of their firm or insurance choice. It is also the way universities fill any remaining spaces on their courses. Clearing opens in early July, however the majority of students will use it after they have been awarded their results.

When using Clearing, we recommend students speak to universities and colleges before adding them as a choice through UCAS Track. By speaking to them online or over the phone, students can get informal offers from a variety of institutions and then decide which to accept. They should also use this chance to ask about the course, the accommodation and any other questions they may have.
What are the costs of going to university?

There are two main costs when going to university. The tuition fee cost and living costs. The maximum UK universities can charge for home students for 2021/22 entry is £9,250 per year. Living costs includes things like accommodation, food, travel, books, social life, etc.

What student financial support can my young person get?

Eligible students can apply for a tuition fee loan and a maintenance loan from the government. Students who reside in England will apply through Student Finance England. Students who reside in one of the devolved nations, will apply to the respective student finance authority for that nation. Take a look at the links below as the facts and figures do differ slightly:

- Student Finance Wales
- Student Finance Northern Ireland
- Student Awards Agency Scotland

Tuition fee loans explained

A tuition fee loan will cover the full cost of your young person’s course per year, so if their course costs £9,250 per year they’ll be awarded £9,250 per year. This money is paid directly to the university when a student enrols, so there is no risk of accidentally spending it!

Maintenance loans explained

The maintenance loan will be paid directly in 3 instalments throughout the year, so students will need to learn to budget.

The amount of maintenance loan received will depend on:

- Household income
- Where they live and study whilst at university

Take a look at Table 1 to see how the maximum loan amounts can differ.

You can also use the Student Finance Calculator to see the amount your young person might be eligible for.

Table 1 Maximum maintenance loan figures for 2021/22 entry for UK full-time undergraduates applying to Student Finance England.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income (£)</th>
<th>Living at home</th>
<th>Living elsewhere</th>
<th>Living in London</th>
<th>Overseas (Study overseas as part of UK Course)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£25,000 or less</td>
<td>£7,987</td>
<td>£9,488</td>
<td>£12,382</td>
<td>£10,866</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do repayments work?

Repayments start from the April after graduating or leaving university, but only when your young person’s income is over £27,295 a year. Repayments are based on your young person’s income, not how much they borrow.

The tuition loan and maintenance loan are combined to create one loan balance.

Graduates repay 9% of their income over £27,295 and deductions are made from their pay through the HMRC tax system.

If their income falls to £27,295 or below, repayments will stop.

Any outstanding loan balance will be written off 30 years after entering repayment.

Take a look at Table 2 to see how much your young person might repay.

Table 2 Monthly repayments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Income (Gross)</th>
<th>Income from which 9% is deducted</th>
<th>Monthly repayment (approx.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£27,295</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£30,000</td>
<td>£2,705</td>
<td>£20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£35,000</td>
<td>£7,705</td>
<td>£58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£40,000</td>
<td>£12,705</td>
<td>£95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£45,000</td>
<td>£17,705</td>
<td>£133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interest is applied to your loan. Find out more at www.gov.uk/repaying-your-student-loan.

How does my young person apply?

Your young person will apply for student finance online. It’s easy to apply and only takes around 30 minutes. There are a few things students will need to have ready before they fill out their application:

- Valid UK passport details
- National Insurance number
- Bank account details
- University and course details - students should just use their preferred choice, there’s no need to wait for a confirmed place
Supporting a student finance application
You can find information on supporting a student finance application here. You can also sign up to our Parents and Supporters’ Newsletter to receive useful information and updates.

What financial support does the University of Reading offer?
The University of Reading offers a range of bursaries and scholarships for Home, EU and International students. Further details can be found online, or by contacting the appropriate department or school.

Reading Bursary
The Reading Bursary is means-tested, awarded to eligible students with a household income of less than £27,000* (as assessed by UK Student Finance Authorities). Students who meet the eligibility criteria will be awarded a bursary of up to £1,100* which can be taken as cash or as a fee waiver (tuition fee reduction). Eligible students will also receive the same amount in Years 2, 3 and (if applicable) 4. No application is required provided consent to share has been given by the student and parent(s) to Student Finance.

Financial support for care experienced or estranged students
This bursary provides up to £1,000 in each academic year of the course. For further information, including eligibility criteria and how to apply, please visit this webpage.

‘I was eligible to receive the care leavers bursary which had given me an extra boost/allowance throughout the year. This allowed me to have a slightly bigger budget for groceries and toiletries throughout the year. It also helped get stationary for my course which has helped a lot during the year. I also received a point of contact from applying for the bursary (Sue Wallace) who was there for me when I needed someone to talk to or needed help for anything.’

Michael, BSc Psychology & Philosophy

*please note these figures may change for 2022/23 entry

Accommodation guarantee
Prospective students are guaranteed a place in halls if they are:
- A new full-time undergraduate who holds Reading as a Firm UCAS choice and applies for accommodation by 1 August and satisfies any conditions of their academic offer by 31 August of their year of entry.

Please see our 2021-22 Accommodation policy and Accommodation Application Terms and Conditions for full information and restrictions.

Return to halls
Students can apply individually or as part of a group of up to four people. Find out more about returning to halls here.

Private accommodation
There is plenty of private accommodation available to rent near the University. The Students’ Union provides housing information to students who wish to rent private houses or student flats in Reading.
STUDENT SUPPORT

We take the wellbeing of our students very seriously and have a range of support systems in place to help them make the most of their time at university.

Read more about our wide variety of support on offer at Reading here.

Students with disabilities and long-term conditions

The University of Reading has a dedicated Disability Advisory Service. The service offers advice and guidance to students with any disability, mental health condition, or specific learning difficulty (SpLD). They can provide students with a range of study-related support, including providing information on funding for study support and liaising with the Exams Office regarding special exams arrangements.

What our students say

‘The first point of contact that really helped was in my first week where I had a meeting with my personal tutor. I think letting them know everything that you want them to know, and in my case it was my dyslexia and what support I would need. They were great at saying which facilities there were and the different teams available to help me.’

Chloe, BSc International Business & Management

You can listen to the full episode and Chloe’s experience over on our podcast show ‘Things I wish I’d known...’

Student Welfare Team

The Student Welfare Team is made up of professional welfare staff who provide guidance on personal welfare issues that may be affecting their day-to-day life and studies. They are able to give students advice and information as well as signpost to specialist support services.

Study Advice Team

The Study Advice Team are there to help students make the most of the learning facilities on offer, as well as give advice on how students can manage their workload and study effectively to achieve the best results they can. They can suggest strategies to help with specific difficulties such as dyslexia and help students understand how to respond to feedback on their work.

International Student Advisory Team

The International Student Advisory Team provide advice and support to international students. They can offer advice on a wide range of topics, from visas and immigration to opening a bank account in the UK. They also run regular social events where students can meet and learn more about the many cultures represented in our University community.

Virtual Events

Our Virtual Events Page is the place to go to find more information on the webinars and virtual events we have taking place. Your young person may also wish to sign up to our Resources Hub to access our full catalogue of past webinars and videos including subject-specific taster lectures, student finance advice and student-led webinars on life at the University of Reading.

Parents and Supporters’ Newsletter

The best way to keep informed on what’s happening is by signing up to our Parents and Supporters’ Newsletter. By signing up you will receive a monthly newsletter from us highlighting what is happening that month with regards to the UCAS application process, and what you need to do to support your young person through it. We will also let you know of any upcoming webinars we have taking place that you may wish to attend.

FURTHER RESOURCES

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## Useful links

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Website</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Finance Information</td>
<td><a href="https://www.gov.uk/studentfinance">www.gov.uk/studentfinance</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Student Room</td>
<td><a href="https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/student-finance">www.thestudentroom.co.uk/student-finance</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCAS</td>
<td><a href="https://www.ucas.com">www.ucas.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Uni Guide</td>
<td><a href="https://www.theuniguide.co.uk">www.theuniguide.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View our courses</td>
<td><a href="https://www.reading.ac.uk">www.reading.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Explore our upcoming virtual events</td>
<td><a href="https://www.reading.ac.uk/ready-to-study/visiting-and-open-days/virtual-events.aspx">www.reading.ac.uk/ready-to-study/visiting-and-open-days/virtual-events.aspx</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow our ‘Things I wish I’d known’ podcast on Spotify</td>
<td><a href="https://tinyurl.com/things-i-wish-id-known-spotify">tinyurl.com/things-i-wish-id-known-spotify</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage your young person to get money-ready for university</td>
<td><a href="https://www.moneyreadyforuni.com">www.moneyreadyforuni.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit our Money Matters Page</td>
<td><a href="https://www.reading.ac.uk/money">www.reading.ac.uk/money</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach Youtube Channel</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwtdl2AYZiCXvDv2_YKpGfQ">www.youtube.com/channel/UCwtdl2AYZiCXvDv2_YKpGfQ</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your young person can chat to our current students</td>
<td><a href="https://reading.ac.uk/about/chat-to-our-students.aspx">reading.ac.uk/about/chat-to-our-students.aspx</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Get in touch

- Contact us at: [reading.ac.uk/question](https://reading.ac.uk/question)
- You can email our Student Financial Support Team at: [studentfunding@reading.ac.uk](mailto:studentfunding@reading.ac.uk)