



HELLENIC-AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION
Athens College-Psychico College

UCAS APPLICATIONS PROCEDURES FOR THE 2008-2009 ADMISSIONS CYCLE

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The UK/European Applications Office

The UK/European Applications Office provides information, advice and guidance to students who are seeking to apply to Universities in the UK and continental Europe. Its function is to *assist and facilitate* you in *your* efforts and endeavours to seek acceptance from those Universities which match your personality, aptitudes and academic performance.

- All applications to Universities/Colleges in the UK are processed by a central authority, namely UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). The UCAS site (www.ucas.com) is the most comprehensive and updated source of information regarding courses, application procedures, admission requirements, tuition fees, etc.
- All applications to tertiary institutions in the UK must be submitted on-line to UCAS between mid-September and no later than **mid-December** of your final year. Applications containing **Oxford** or **Cambridge** entries or courses in **Medicine**, **Dentistry**, **Veterinary Medicine** or **Veterinary Science** must be submitted by **15 October** of your final year.
- Primarily because of the intense competition for limited places on certain undergraduate courses, applications should be submitted **as early as possible** in the application period. Universities and Colleges guarantee to consider an application that is submitted by the appropriate deadline.

- This application, in addition to your personal details, University/course choices, academic credentials, school reference, predicted grades etc., also includes a **Personal Statement**. The Personal Statement should provide those responsible for Admissions with a clear as possible picture of you in terms of academic achievement, character, personality, ambitions, likeliness to succeed and suitability for your chosen course. (please see pages 5-6 for further details)
- You are entitled to only **one** UCAS application in each year's application cycle and a **maximum of 5 course choices**. A **maximum of 4 choices** is allowed for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine/Science for each application cycle.
- After the completed application is submitted to UCAS, each University and College will only receive the details of the course or courses that you have applied for at that University or College.
- The University or College entered on the application will decide whether, or not, to make you an offer. For example, for a competitive Economics course the offer might be an overall IB grade of 38, including a 6 in Economics and Mathematics; for a selective Law course, an offer may stipulate a total of 38 IB points, including a 6 in English, for an Engineering course the typical offer might be Geniko Lykeio Apolytirio of 18.5 or above and an IELTS (www.ielts.org) score of 6.5 or 7.0 (out of 9.0) etc.
- The decision by a University to make you an offer is not solely based upon you being predicted to obtain the published grades for that particular course. Grades published in various sources (including the UCAS site) serve as an **indicative** grade boundary for admission and should be treated as nothing more than the **typical grade** requirement. A University decision is obviously based on other considerations, some being solely internal to the Institution (funding, facilities, quotas, age policy, etc).
- It is possible that a University or College makes you an offer beyond the stated grade requirements or not one at all, despite the fact that your academic achievements are well within (or often exceed!) the "typical offer" statistics. This is due to the ever-increasing competition for University places due to constantly rising standards globally of secondary education, the enlargement of the applicant pool because of EU expansion, the popularity of certain courses etc.
- When all Universities/courses to which you have applied have replied with an offer or a rejection, you must decide which offers, if any, you wish to hold. You can nominate and affirm only **up to two offers** (Firm, CF; Insurance, CI) at this stage.

- The increasing competition for the same number of University places makes the selection procedures resemble those of a “free market”: offers are made to the students who meet not only the grade criteria, but also are seen as a better “match” for the type of University or College or Faculty. This is where your personal profile (communication skills, independence of thought, power of expression, ability for compassion, awareness, motivation, drive, inquisitiveness, etc) comes seriously into play.
- Often opting for the emerging “brand name” of the University Department and not the “brand name” University is the more conducive path to a successful and rewarding academic career. You may wish to pay regard to the published evaluation reports of Universities and individual University Departments which give pertinent insights into specific institutions’ strengths in specific fields.
- The burgeoning applicant pool has compelled universities to introduce further admission criteria, in addition to academic and extracurricular accomplishments.
- The **interview** is increasing in popularity as a means of selecting students among Universities or Colleges. So, beyond the long-established procedures of Oxford, Cambridge, Medical and Architecture faculties, an increasing number of Universities are resorting to interviewing their prospective students.
- Additional selection criteria may also include:
 - The **Bio-Medical Admissions Test (BMAT)** (www.bmat.org.uk) for certain Medical, Veterinary Science, Physiological Sciences (at Oxford) etc.
 - The **UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT)** (www.ukcat.ac.uk) for admission to certain medical, dentistry etc. courses.
 - The **National Admissions Test for Law (LNAT)** (www.lnat.ac.uk) for certain Law courses.
 - The **English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT)** (www.elat.org.uk) for English Literature (and combined honours) at the University of Oxford.
 - **Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA Oxford)** (formerly known as the PPE Admissions Test or PPEAT) for entry to the Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE), and the Economics and Management (E&M) courses at the University of Oxford. (www.tsa.cambridgeassessment.org.uk)

- The **History Aptitude Test (HAT)** for History (and combined honours) at Oxford (www.history.ox.ac.uk)
- The **Aptitude Test in Physics** for Physics at Oxford (www.physics.ox.ac.uk)
- The **Aptitude Test for Mathematics** for Mathematics at Oxford (www.maths.ox.ac.uk)
- The **Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA Cambridge)** for entry to computer science, natural sciences, engineering and economics at the University of Cambridge. (www.tsa.cambridgeassessment.org.uk)
- The **Modern and Medieval Languages Test (MML)** for entry to Modern and Medieval Languages at the University of Cambridge (www.mml.cam.ac.uk/apply/guideapplyafter.html#test)
- **Sixth Term Examination Papers (STEP)** for entry to Mathematics at the University of Cambridge: (www.cam.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/tests/step.html) and University of Warwick. Please note that the University of Bristol, the University of Oxford and Imperial College also encourage applicants to take STEP. Find out more at www.stepmathematics.org.uk and institution's websites and prospectuses.

For more information about these tests (deadlines, registration procedures, which specific course codes require them, sample papers, where and when are they held etc.), please visit the websites above as well as <http://www.ucas.com/students/beforeyouapply/admissions/>

Furthermore, a summary of written sample work and test requirements for **Oxford** and **Cambridge** can be found at:

Oxford:

http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate_courses/how_to_apply/requirements_for_each_course/

Cambridge:

<http://www.cam.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/apply/dates.html>

- Exposure to the “real world” through volunteerism, sample work, written tests at interview, additional essay(s) about the specific choice of

course(s), an Art Portfolio, extra-curricular activities etc. may also be taken into account in making you an offer.

- If pursuing the IB programme, through the compulsory components of Creativity, Action, Service (CAS), Theory of Knowledge (ToK) and the Extended Essay (EE), you definitely gain in knowledge, independence, maturity, self-discipline, awareness. No matter the programme, and however worthy these learning experiences may be, solid background knowledge pertaining to the specific academic domain (medical, legal, ethical, economic etc.) and pursued through **general personal reading** is indispensable.

Personal Statement for UCAS Applicants

In completing your PERSONAL STATEMENT you must remember that it is *personal*. There is no set format, no ideal formula, no recommended structure to be followed. This may be your only opportunity to convince Admissions Officers that you are the right person for the "job".

You are not obliged to fill the space available (**4000 characters, including spaces, 12-points, Times New Roman**), but neither should you consider adding extra sheets and appended information. You should use the space to your full advantage, exploiting the opportunity to the maximum.

In completing this section, you should consider what an Admissions' Tutor *might* ask you if you were to be invited for interview. You should be precise rather than vague. (*Which sports? Which books? Which music?*). You should state *what* you have *learned*, *how* you have been *influenced* or *what* the *impact* has been from each experience you have decided to mention in your personal statement, rather than just provide a list of extracurricular accomplishments without any reference to the way these have altered you as a person and/or affected your world-view. Admissions Tutors want to know what you have gained from your experiences, what you have achieved and hope to achieve. They will be looking to put ticks against your name, so do not waste your time providing them with reasons to put crosses.

Amongst ideas to be included, you may consider the following guidelines, providing information you feel to be relevant but which is not shown elsewhere. You need not repeat exam grades and courses taken, unless adding something more specific.

You might comment upon:

- your reason(s) for choosing their course(s)
- your favourite/strongest subject(s) in School
- the breadth of your academic background

- your particular strengths in subjects relevant to their course(s)
- other fields which interest you and which may be relevant to their course(s)
- any non-examined/elective courses followed, whether apparently relevant to their course(s) or not
- any extra courses followed in another foreign language and your reasons for studying other languages
- your reading preferences
- your musical preferences/instruments played
- your participation in Sporting Activities (College/School/Club/Team games/Athletics/Dance/Martial Arts etc.)
- any participation in Extra-Curricular Activities, whether in College/School/ Externally, Theatre, Dance, Scouting, Youth Club, Chess, Debating, Forensics, Yearbook, “*Paniyiri*” etc.
- any positions of responsibility held at any level: Class President, Treasurer, Student Representative, Editor, Class Committees etc.
- your commitment to and any special functions within College/School life
- any prizes or scholarships awarded in any field
- any work experience you have accumulated and any exposure you have had to “the real world”
- any Summer Camps/Summer School Courses attended, their content, their level and their aims
- your travel experiences (inside and) outside of Greece
- your career aspirations, professional ambitions, academic expectations (etc.)

THINGS TO DO:

Oxbridge aspirants: Read widely and beyond the stated confines of the syllabus material, in preparation for a possible interview. In addition to your content knowledge, your reading experiences and extracurricular activities will be what you will be able to draw from during an interview.

Medical/Dentistry aspirants: In addition to your other extracurricular interest, become involved in a long-term voluntary activity of a **medical, humanitarian** and/or **philanthropic** nature. First hand experience of the “real world” of the medical profession, ability to show empathy and compassion and communicative dexterity are vital qualities for a convincing application to the most heavily subscribed and competitive of Faculties.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR ALL UCAS APPLICANTS (2009 ENTRY):

- **20 September 2008** - Deadline for registering for the **BMAT, ELAT and TSA** (for PPE and Economics & Management at Oxford University) at the UK/European Applications Office (Rm 4, Benakeio Building)

These tests will be administered on **Wednesday 5 November 2008** at the school.

- **26 September 2008** – **Medical and Dentistry Applicants:** Deadline for registering for the UKCAT. Check www.ukcat.ac.uk for registration procedures and other details. The **UKCAT** testing deadline is **10th October 2008**.
- **10 October** – **Oxford/Cambridge & Medical Applicants:** Advisory deadline for submitting UCAS applications to Oxford, Cambridge and Medical Schools (Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science)
- **15 October** - **Oxford/Cambridge & Medical Applicants:** Last day for Oxford/Cambridge and Medical applications to be received by UCAS.
- **LNAT for Law applicants:**
 - Registration opens: **1 August 2008**.
 - LNAT test sittings begin: **1 September 2008**.
 - Deadline for LNAT registration for Oxford and Cambridge: **15 October 2008**.
 - Oxford/Cambridge Law applicants must sit the LNAT by **1 November 2008**.
 - Last registration for on time applications for all other Law Faculties: **15 January 2009** and sit the LNAT by **20 January 2009**.

Check the LNAT site (www.lnat.ac.uk) for more information.

- **5 November** – **The University of Oxford Pre-Interview Tests take place at the school.** These include: The Biomedical Admissions Test (BMAT); The History Aptitude Test (HAT); The Physics Aptitude Test; The English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT); The Aptitude Test for Mathematics and Computer Science; and The Thinking Skills Assessment Test (TSA) for Philosophy, Politics and Economics and for Economics and Management.

Registration for all the above tests is **automatic** with the completion of the UCAS application, with the exception of the BMAT, the ELAT and the TSA (for Oxford University).

The **registration deadline for the BMAT, the ELAT and the TSA** is **20 September 2008** at the UK/European Applications Office (Rm.4, Benakeio Building).

- **Early November - Cambridge Applicants:** Deadline for submitting sample work to Cambridge, if requested.
- **10 November – Oxford Applicants:** Deadline for submitting sample work to Oxford, if required.
- **Mid-December – All applicants:** Deadline for submitting UCAS applications and Art & Design Foundation applications.

NB: Please note that all above dates are subject to change at any time.

Confirm these deadlines prior to the start of the application cycle by visiting the relevant websites given above.