

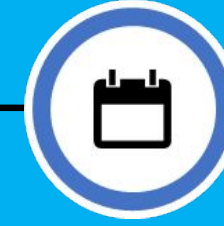
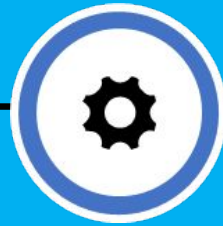
The UK Student Journey: From Application to Career Success

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Today's agenda



Explore → Apply → Prepare → Arrive → Belong → Succeed →
Graduate

Understanding the UK experience

- Key differences
- Academic Structure
- Support structures

The first few weeks and beyond

- Creating a sense of belonging
- Student life

More than just a degree

- Career, Personal and Professional Development
- Employability focus



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What you'll take away from this session

- Explain how UK universities support international students from application and enrolment through to graduation and career development.
- Identify key academic, wellbeing and inclusion services that contribute to student success and belonging.
- Describe how employability is embedded within the UK student experience through careers services, employer engagement, placements, internships and extracurricular opportunities.
- Locate and interpret key sources of graduate outcomes and employability data when advising students and families.
- Demonstrate the long-term value and return on investment of a UK education using practical examples and evidence-based talking points.



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But first, a poll!

How would you rate your knowledge of the UK Higher Education system?



🤔 I know nothing



🧐 Beginner



💡 I get by



🎓 Expert



PART ONE - WHY THE UK



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Why would a student from the Americas consider the UK?



3 years

Most Bachelor's degrees

Study a subject in depth

Specialise from the start

5 choices

UCAS gives students a structured application process

World class, public education

Total cost of attendance between \$30,000 - \$50,000 per year

Global experience

Study alongside students from around the world

Career-focused

Placements, internships, employer engagement & careers support

Social and academic independence

An international experience that can add a distinctive dimension to a student's CV



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International “Admissions” Reps



Meet your new best friends!

Regional/international recruitment teams can help with:

- Course & entry requirement questions
- Application guidance
- Country-specific advice
- Student/family conversations
- Pre-arrival support
- Accommodation & arrival questions
- Connecting you with the right university team

Recruitment and admissions teams are often separate — your regional contact can help you navigate the process and connect you with the right admissions team.



Don't know who to
ask? Ask us.



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PART TWO - GETTING THERE



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Where to start for high school counselors?

Your UK university toolkit

1. UCAS

Application system, deadlines, guidance

2. University website

Courses, entry requirements, fees, scholarships

3. International team

Country-specific advice & support

4. Current students / Unibuddy

Real student experience

5. Careers/employability data

Graduate Outcomes & university-level information



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Applying to study in the UK

UCAS (University and Colleges Admissions Service)

Research



Choose up to 5 courses



Build application



Submit via UCAS* (some universities are on Common App)



Offers



Choose firm/insurance



Visa + accommodation



Arrive



Components

- Academic records
- High school diploma
- Standardised tests
- AP/IB/Advanced Classes
- Predicted Grades
- Personal Statement

*Deadlines!

- 13 January 2027 – equal consideration deadline for most courses
- 30 June 2027 – final date for applications to be sent to universities before Clearing

Exceptions

- Oxford or Cambridge
- 4 choices for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science
- Earlier deadline - October 15 2026

 **Key difference:**
Students apply to a
specific course, not to a
general program.



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Support during the admissions process

- Admissions criteria are published by each university and course. Students are assessed against the academic requirements and selection criteria relevant to their chosen course.
- Focus is on whether the student is academically prepared for the chosen course, evaluated through **grades, testing, and context**.
- Additional requirements (e.g., interviews, portfolios) apply for competitive programs (e.g., Oxford, medicine)—**guidance is often provided for applicants to prepare**.
- **Contextual information may also be considered by some universities.**

 **Transparency is key:** Entry requirements and selection criteria are publicly available and consistently applied.



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Embedding inclusion from the start

- The **UCAS reference** section allows counselors to explain **extenuating circumstances**—e.g., bereavement, illness, or **gender transition** affecting academic performance 🏳️
- Students can indicate if they have a **disability, learning difference, or mental health condition**—this **does not disadvantage** them; it **triggers early support planning**.
- Many universities have **dedicated support teams** who reach out pre-arrival to discuss accommodations, pastoral care, and funding.
- **CommonApp** does not currently allow for disability disclosures—important for advisors to know when advising on which application route to use - however, universities will reach out once a student has an offer to ask about any disabilities/additional support needs.



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PART THREE - THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE



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Creating a sense of belonging

From Day 1: Emphasis placed on making sure students feel at home

- **Pre-arrival support** - pre-departure webinars, WhatsApp groups, social media networks to connect with housemates
- **Welcome programs** tailored for international students
- **Arrival teams and practical support** with travelling to campus from the airport
- Dedicated teams to support international students with immigration and visa support services
- **Settling in the UK and cultural orientation:** UK life, academic expectations, healthcare, setting up bank accounts and day-to-day living
- Peer mentoring and buddy schemes

📌 Orientation is about more than logistics — it builds belonging from the start.



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Wellbeing and academic success

- **Pastoral care** through personal tutors, wellbeing officers, and residence staff
- **Mental health services:** drop-in counselling, therapy, wellbeing apps
- **Academic support:** study skills centres to support with academic writing, communication, english language skills and studying independently. 1:1 tutorials, drop-ins and workshops
- **Personal tutors** for every student
- **Developing skills** - boost skills in essay writing, note taking and referencing
- **Students Union** - independent support and advice for students - ask anything policy
- **Accessible to all**, not just for those in crisis



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Belonging and community

Outside of the classroom...

- **Home away from Home Events** - celebrate rich variety of cultures on campus and ensure international students feel they belong
- Student societies: **cultural, religious, identity, academic, representative... and for fun!**
- Student Unions run **advocacy campaigns** and **support networks** independent from the university
- Dedicated **housing support services** for students 'Residence Life' and 'House-mating' - social events include movie nights, cooking sessions and ice-breaker games
- **Cultural showcases and cross-cultural appreciation** - international food evenings, language enhances and global culture nights
- Students can **influence change**



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Every identity, every background is supported

- 🏳️‍🌈 **LGBTQ+ societies**, trans-inclusive healthcare, gender-neutral facilities, dedicated LGBTQ+ officers within Student Unions
- ♿ **Disability and neurodivergence services**: academic accommodations, assistive technology
- 🕌 **Faith-based support**: prayer rooms, dietary and accommodation considerations, prayer times respected in exam scheduling, multifaith chaplaincies
- 🦊 **Ethnic and Racial Minority support**: Cultural societies, Race equality officers, campaigns on decolonising the curriculum and talking racism
- 👤 **Targeted support** for underrepresented groups (e.g., care-experienced, first-gen)
- 📣 **Representation and student-led advocacy**: Elected student officers, Diversity and Inclusion training for staff and students

The goal isn't simply to support students in difficulty — it's to help them thrive from the start.



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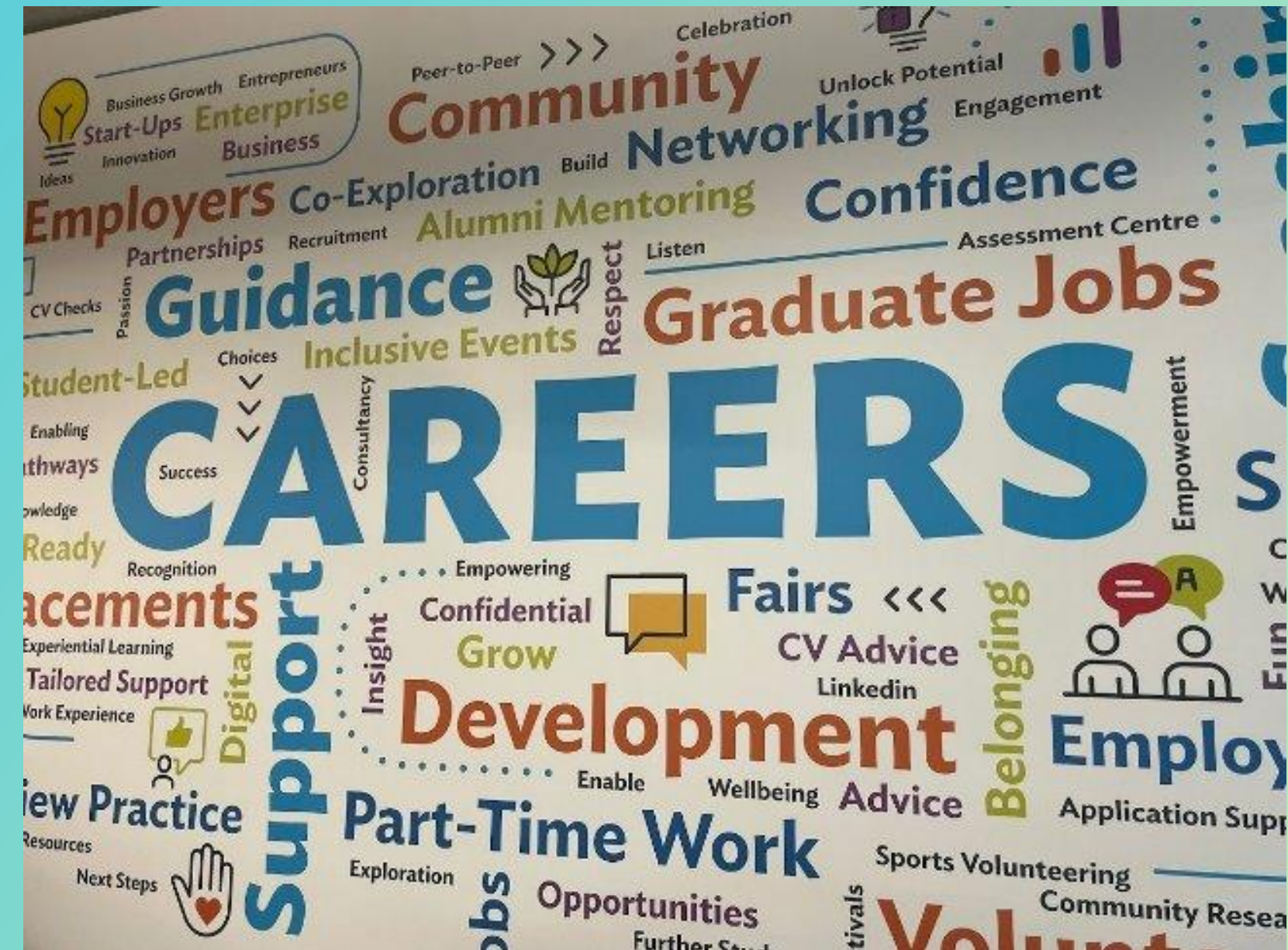
PART FOUR - FROM DEGREE TO CAREER



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- provide support with career planning as well as interview preparation and resume writing
- support students looking to work overseas or in the UK
- often allow students to use their services beyond graduation



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Helping Students Prepare for Global Futures

- **Work experience opportunities**
 - Many degrees offer an optional professional placement, or 'sandwich', year where students can spend time working in industry
 - Opportunities to undertake internships or gain work experience as part of a module or during vacation periods
- **On-campus start-up/entrepreneurship incubators and pitch competitions**
- **Networking opportunities with employers at on-campus events**
- **Post-study work: Graduate visa**
 - 18 months
for applications made from 1 January 2027
 - 3 years
for PhD/doctoral graduates
- **Support beyond graduation for an international career**
 - International career planning after graduation
 - Global employer connections
 - Alumni connections

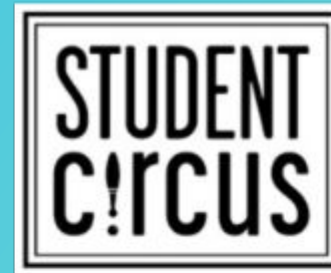


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Employer and Industry Exposure

- International to UK Transition
- Placement & Work based Learning
- International Students Day
- Careers Fairs
- LinkedIn Days
- Alumni Panels & Events
- Employer Drop-ins & Networking
- Workshops & Skills sessions
- Sector-specific Focus weeks
- Student Entrepreneurship service
- Job Shop – advertising open roles



Student Circus

Support for International students with visa-sponsorship jobs, resources, tools and more!



Shortlist.Me

Guidance on Job, Admissions or Enterprise pitches for students needing that extra push!



Graduates First

Gain insight on support for aptitude tests, assessments, questionnaires surrounding jobs!



Career Set

Our AI CV tool checker that can provide instant feedback on your CV structure and outline!



eCareersGrad

Prepares students for the competitive world of applying to grad-level jobs, internships and work experience with video based interactive courses.



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Gradlink Graduate Success Story



Job title: E-commerce Executive for Health and Beauty for GB market

How did your course at UWE help you to get this job?

“Besides the academic knowledge and getting my degree, I would say the biggest thing that has helped me secure a job a month after finishing my studies was going on my placement after my second year.”

The student says their placement gave them drive and confidence to gather more work experience. After their placement, they:

- Did a summer internship
- Started their own society on campus
- Worked as a ResilientU and Academic PAL leader in their final year
- Feel they had a competitive edge when applying for jobs.



Job Title
E-commerce Executive for
Health & Beauty for GB

Country
Czech Republic

Company
Dyson

Job Sector
Business, Accounting &
Finance

University
UWE Bristol

Subject Studied
Business

Year One →

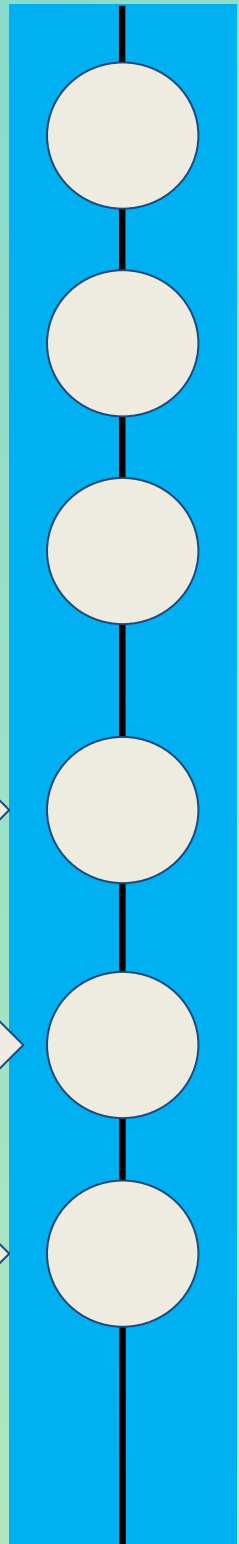
Year Two →

Placement Year →

Summer
Internship →

Final Year →

Graduate job →



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Graduate Outcomes

HESA published the latest Graduate Outcomes survey results on **4 June 2026**. Here's a selection of national level accredited official statistics from the survey of graduates from the class of 2023/24:

1,002,175

graduates surveyed between 2
December 2024 and 30 November
2025

353,755

responses received - thank you!

87%

of graduates were in some form of work or further study

57%

were in full-time employment, 5% were in full-time further study and
7% were unemployed

85%

of UK graduates agreed that
their current activity is
meaningful

76%

of UK graduates felt their current
activity fitted with their future plans

68%

of UK graduates agreed they were
using what they learnt while
studying

Graduate outcomes and employability - Understanding the data

Graduate Outcomes is the UK's largest annual survey of university graduates. More than one million graduates are invited to participate each year.

Conducted by **HESA**, it surveys graduates about 15 months after they finish their studies to find out whether they are employed, in further education, starting businesses, or undertaking other activities.

You can use HESA data to find out:

- Employment and further study rates by university
- Outcomes by subject/ Major studied

Compare national graduate outcomes with those of the universities and degrees you are interested in!



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Resources for you and your students

Top 6 Resources Every International Student Should Know About

1. **UCAS / University Websites**
 - Search out the entry requirements and the university policies - clear and readily available
2. **International “Admissions Reps”**
 - Pre-arrival, visa, housing, and arrival support
3. **Student Support & Wellbeing Services**
 - Mental health, pastoral care, disability support
4. **Academic Success / Study Skills Centres**
 - 1:1 tutoring, workshops, learning adjustments
5. **Careers Services**
 - CV, interviews, job search, and lifelong support
6. **Students’ Union and Cultural Societies**
 - Belonging, advocacy, and community building

 **Ask prospective universities what these services look like and how accessible they are to international students**



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Wrapping up

UK University Fit: 8(ish) Key Questions to Ask

- Does the student know what they want to study?
 - Does the proposed course match the student's **specific academic interests**?
- Does the student meet the minimum **academic entry requirements** as outlined on the university's website?
- Is the student prepared for independent learning and fewer contact hours compared to U.S. models?
- Does the course offer opportunities for internships, placements, or research experience? - Is this important to the student?
- Has the student considered funding options (GI Bill / FAFSA)?
- Does the university offer robust pastoral and academic support, including mental health services and study skills?
- Are there services available for the student's specific identity or background (e.g., LGBTQ+, neurodivergent, disabled, faith-based) - is this important for the student?
- Has the student got any additional support needs (e.g., disability, health), have they disclosed this via UCAS or directly to the university?

 **The right UK university isn't just about getting an offer. It's about finding the right fit for the whole student journey.**



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Discussion points for you...

Opening it up to the floor!

- What are the main concerns your students have about studying internationally?
- Are there specific challenges for students from marginalised backgrounds that might put them off UK study?
- What additional resources would help you better advise students about UK study?



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Thank you!



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