



University of  
Central Lancashire  
UCLan

# The Ultimate Parents and Guardians Guide

[uclan.ac.uk/parents](http://uclan.ac.uk/parents)

Sending your child to university can bring up many feelings – excitement, loss, apprehension and sometimes frustration in getting to grips with this new phase of life.

We're here to support you in this process, lending advice and information along the way to help you feel empowered and able to be there for your dependant in whichever way they need.

This guide lays out everything you need to know at this point in the process and offers tips and advice from parents and guardians in the same shoes as you.

## About UCLan

**The most affordable University in the UK** (The Times 2023)

**Ranked third in the UK for the mental health support we give our students** (HUMEN 2022)

**Average monthly rent at UCLan is the 3rd cheapest in the UK and the cheapest in the North West** (Save the Student 2023)

## Student life is more affordable than you think

Studying for a degree is a big investment but don't worry, we provide a whole host of financial support options to help your dependant get off to a great start.

All UK full-time undergraduate students can apply for a loan to cover their tuition fees. They will need to apply via Student Finance England\* - applications usually open in March and close in May.

They can also apply for a maintenance loan to help with living costs which is based on household income and will only need to be paid back when they've graduated. For example, if they are a new student starting university in September 2024 they will repay 9% of everything earned over £25,000.\*\*

[gov.uk/student-finance](https://www.gov.uk/student-finance)

\*Students from Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland and the Islands have different student support arrangements.

\*\*Information correct March 2024.

## Applicant timeline

**January** The official UCAS deadline date is usually in the last week of January. Universities will give equal consideration to any applications made on or before this date. Applicants that do not make this deadline can still apply or enter into Clearing.

**March** Applying for Student Finance early is recommended, visit [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) for details on how your child can apply for a student loan.

**May** If your child applied by the January deadline and they are still waiting on a decision from one of their choices, universities have until May to decide whether they will make an offer. Visit [ucas.com](https://www.ucas.com) to find the deadline date for this year. Remind your dependant the Student Finance deadline is coming up, and also to respond to any further offers.

**June** If your child has received all their decisions by May, they must reply to any offers by June. Except if they're using UCAS Extra to find a place, otherwise they will be declined.

**July** Clearing opens, enabling students to find remaining places on courses.

**August** A Level, BTEC and T Level results are released. If your child has received a conditional offer, then the university will be waiting to find out their grades before they confirm their place.



## Jargon

You might have noticed the process of applying to university is full of acronyms and unfamiliar terms that can feel alienating, so here's your go-to guide for all the higher education jargon.

### **Admissions**

The process to apply to study with us. Our Admissions Team are experts in assessing prospective students' qualifications, personal statements, and references to check if they are suitable for a course.

### **Applicant**

Someone who has applied to university.

### **BA, BSc, BVMS, MEng etc**

Letters indicating degree type and study level, for example Bachelor of Arts (BA) - BA (Hons) History.

### **Bursary**

A monetary award based on need, that doesn't need to be repaid.

### **Clearing**

A system helping students find unfilled course places, often used after A Level results day, but can be used from 5 July 2024.

### **Conditional offer**

An offer to study based on meeting certain conditions. These are usually academic, eg achieving set grades in appropriate subjects.

### **Confirmation**

When an offer holder meets all conditions, confirming their university place.

### **Deferred entry**

Option to delay university enrolment, either when applying via UCAS, after you've submitted your UCAS application but before you have offers, or after you've accepted an offer of a place.

### **Enrolment**

The formal process where students confirm course details and agree to our rules and regulations. Students enrol every year of their course.

## **Firm choice**

A student's first choice course/university. It may be a conditional or unconditional offer and universities usually refer to this as a Conditional Firm or Unconditional Firm.

## **Foundation degree**

A preliminary year of study that provides a route to study for an honours degree.

## **Graduate**

Someone who has successfully completed their degree.

## **Insurance choice**

This is a student's second choice institution and is a backup to their Firm choice in case they don't meet the entry requirements. If the first choice is an Unconditional Firm, then they won't be able to select an insurance, as they don't have any outstanding conditions to meet.

## **Interview or audition**

Some courses require an interview or audition, to assess suitability for a course, before an offer can be made.

## **Offer Holder**

Someone who has applied to university and has been made an offer to study a course.

## **Postgraduate**

Someone who has successfully completed their degree and is studying for a higher level (usually master's) qualification.

## **UCAS**

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. It is a shared admissions service for higher education in the UK and separate from universities.

## **UCAS Extra**

If a student has used all five choices on their original application, but is not holding any offers, they can add an 'Extra' choice.

## **UCAS Hub**

A personalised space, helping students to research their options and apply for university in one area.

## **Unconditional offer**

This offer means that a student has already met the conditions required to study with us, so the place is theirs if they want it.

## **Undergraduate**

Someone currently studying for their first degree.

**Parent, Alison Gudgeon says:**

"I've had two different experiences, as my daughter chose to live at home and commute to uni, whereas my son is currently in his second year at uni and is living in a shared house. It does take a little while to adjust when they move away but I've found that terms are quite short and breaks for Christmas and Easter are generous, which means some quality time when they are back home. I try and arrange day visits every now and then to catch up and go for lunch. And take some food supplies and home-cooked food - free food is always welcomed!"

**Alison's Top Tip:**

Arrange regular times to catch-up whether it's every couple of days or once a week, that way you won't feel like you're being intrusive, but you'll have peace of mind that they're okay. Let them know you are there for them anytime.

## Location

As a compact campus, almost everything is within walking distance, including accommodation, lectures, shopping centres, nightlife and great places to eat - this means they'll save money on transport and get active at the same time.

It's easy to get around Lancashire and beyond, thanks to excellent public transport links. If your dependants are thinking of staying at home and commuting, there's a robust network of trains, buses and cycle routes with options to pay weekly, monthly and per semester to save a little more cash.

Railcards are pretty handy when it comes to travelling, with 1/3 off certain fares, they'll be more likely to make the trip home to see you. We're on one of the main train lines in the UK, with places in easy reach such as :

- Edinburgh - 2hr 18 mins
- Glasgow - 2 hr 37 mins
- London - 2 hr 12 mins
- Birmingham - 1 hr 32 mins

A little closer to home we have great links with Manchester, Liverpool, Blackpool, Southport and Yorkshire.



## Home from home

If your dependant chooses to live in halls, they will be part of a vibrant community, immersing themselves in student life, meeting loads of new friends and making memories they'll never forget.

We offer rooms starting from £85 per week, which is amongst the most affordable around. Our accommodation boasts bright, modern and fully furnished study bedrooms, with access to kitchen facilities and relaxing social spaces - perfect for hosting movie nights and impressing friends with their cookery skills.

Our all-inclusive accommodation contracts mean they won't have to worry about bills either. The costs of heating, water and Wi-Fi are all included in their rent, giving them extra peace of mind.

### Our on-site support team

We'll be on hand from day one. Our dedicated Residences Team will help students settle in and have the best experience with us. They'll provide support with maintenance issues, academic worries or feelings of loneliness, along with a wide range of regular social events to help them make friends like movie nights and BBQs.

[uclan.ac.uk/accommodation](https://uclan.ac.uk/accommodation)

## Financial support

We want our students to excel at university, whatever their financial situation.

We have several bursaries, scholarships and financial support packages available to help your dependant. Our support teams can also help them to feel more confident in understanding finances at university.

Here are a few of the scholarships and bursaries we provide:

- Financial Bursary (low-income household)
- Care Leaver Bursary
- Carers Bursary
- UCLan Sports Scholarships

What's more, as your child holds an offer with us, they can access Blackbullion, the UK's largest hub of support funds, scholarships and grants for students to see what they might be eligible for.

To see the full range plus eligibility criteria visit [uclan.ac.uk/bursaries](https://uclan.ac.uk/bursaries)





## Helping them to thrive

University can be overwhelming, but fear not! Our Student Support and Wellbeing service offers a wide range of services, including accommodation, counselling, and inclusive support, ensuring your dependants feel heard from day one.

They can connect via telephone, online, or face-to-face at our inviting Student Centre, equipped with a café and social spaces for breaks between lectures.

Concerned about their safety? Our 24/7 security and the SafeZone app provide reassurance. The app allows students to request urgent assistance and features location tracking for added security until they confirm they're safely home. With six consecutive years of holding Purple Flag status, Preston ensures safe, clean, and enjoyable nights out.

Other types of support include:

- Academic Skills Development: One-to-one tutorials, drop-in sessions and workshops
- Improve Digital Study Skills with guided training packages, access to knowledgeable technical and academic expertise, plus extra resources and reading
- Student coaches
- Independent confidential advice from the Students' Union
- On-site Residences Team



## Perks of studying with us

There's a whole host of perks when studying with us, including some great services, freebies and additional support to save them money and help them to thrive, such as:

- Affordable gym and sports membership which includes full access to the fitness suite, a wide range of classes and access to facilities
- Free night bus from the Library to PR1 and PR2 postcodes after late-night study sessions
- Discounted prices on textbooks, home items, clothing, and tech, plus much more via UCLan Achieve
- Over 10,000 items are available to loan from our IT Hub including laptops, audio equipment, cameras and more
- Free access to Microsoft 365 and Adobe Creative Suite for relevant courses
- Free language learning classes and resources for over 20 different languages
- Low-cost eye clinic appointments from as little as £5 plus a medical centre on campus
- Free, fun events at the Students' Union and great value food and drink

For a full list, see [uclan.ac.uk/money-tips](https://uclan.ac.uk/money-tips)

## Your four takeaways

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### **This isn't our first rodeo**

We've helped thousands of students through this process over the years, so we're best placed to answer any questions you may have. If you need any more information feel free to give us a call on **01772 201201** or drop us an email at **admissions@uclan.ac.uk**

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### **Connect with other parents or guardians**

It really does take a village, so make things easier by chatting to others in the same boat. Our Facebook group is the best place to speak to academics, admissions colleagues and current students, as well as supporting other parents/guardians going through the same process as you. **Search 'UCLan Parents & Carers' on Facebook.**

2

### **Embrace the emotional rollercoaster**

Whether it's the first time you're sending your child off to university, or you've done this before, it can be quite emotional and overwhelming. It's a big decision for your child and we understand you'll want to help them as much as possible. Keep calm, be patient and soak up as much information as possible to digest later. We'd recommend starting with our dedicated page: **uclan.ac.uk/parents**

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### **Don't panic on results day**

If things don't go the way your child expected on results day, or they have a change of heart - firstly, don't panic! They can enter into Clearing, which means they can use their qualifications to apply for another course, sometimes at another university. Clearing is how unis and colleges fill places they still have on courses - over 30,000 courses in fact.

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