



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
BUCKINGHAM



# Applying to UK University.....*Is it still worth it, how do you choose, what do we look for?*

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# All of them can go and most of them will...

- ▶ **UK University Graduates:**
- ▶ **Earn more and have more choice over their career**
- ▶ **Volunteer, Vote, Protest...**
- ▶ **Start their own business**
- ▶ **Invent new products, develop new ideas**
- ▶ **Can follow their passion in their favourite subject**
- ▶ **Engage in community activities**
- ▶ **Develop a wider circle of friends**
- ▶ **Travel further and live longer**
- ▶ **Meet their future partner at University...**
- ▶ [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lq27w\\_Ylx0s&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lq27w_Ylx0s&feature=related)



# UK Graduate Employment and Earnings

*ONS: Graduates in the Labour Market  
BIS Study 2013, HESA DLHE Survey*

- ▶ Graduate Earnings Premium £168,000 for men and £252,000 for women (BIS)
- ▶ Average starting salaries £22,000 (2016)
  - ▶ After 3 years salaries increase by c25% (HESA)
  - ▶ LEO project – Longitudinal Educational Outcomes
- ▶ Only 3% of “older” graduates (5 years after leaving University) were unemployed (ONS)
- ▶ 40+% of graduates are working in public administration, education and health, 7% in manufacturing (ONS)
- ▶ Russell Group “graduate earnings boost” is statistically insignificant (BIS study, reported in Times Higher Education)



# Knowledge is Power – Economic Power

- ▶ Natural resources, geography and history are still important BUT
  - ▶ High level knowledge and degree level skills are/will be key to a country's success
  - ▶ “The Mouse that Roared”
  - ▶ BRIC and others – investing heavily in Universities
  - ▶ OECD Report - China produces more graduates than UK, EU and USA combined



# Parents/Carers: How can you help on the journey?

- ▶ **Support and encouragement**  
...but it should be their decision
- ▶ **Open Days and visits**
- ▶ **Coping skills**
- ▶ **Money management and support**
- ▶ **Care with holiday plans (mid-late August 2019)**
- ▶ **Work longer hours.....**
  
- ▶ **They will change and so will you!**



# 2017 – what did we learn?

- ▶ Entry to English Universities static in 2017 but record levels of 18 year olds. Buckingham up 25%. UCAS Applications down 3%+ for 2018.
- ▶ Student Number Controls: cap removed for 2015 -16
- ▶ Most Universities flexible on grades on results day for Firm candidates
- ▶ Some Universities making unconditional offers before results day to wide range of candidates
- ▶ More offers, more quickly, more scholarships and accommodation offers
- ▶ Increase in School Leaver Programmes, Degree Apprenticeships, 2 year degrees and overseas University applications
- ▶ A levels, GCSEs are changing - we know this and aim to be flexible/fair
- ▶ It's been an “annus horribilis” for UK Universities...



# We want them...



# Applying to HE – Traditional Timetable – 2019 entry

- ▶ **Sept 17** **Sixth Form begins.....**
- ▶ **Feb-Sept 2018** **Open Days, HE research, masterclasses, UCAS Conventions**
- ▶ **1 Sept 2018:** **UCAS begins accepting applications**
- ▶ **15 Oct 2018:** **Closing date for Oxbridge & Medical**
- ▶ **15 Jan 2019:** **UCAS Applications official deadline**
- ▶ **March 2019** **UCAS extra begins for eligible students**
- ▶ **End April 2019:** **Deadline for deciding on Firm and Insurance Offers**
- ▶ **Mid August 2019:** **Exam Results. Places confirmed/clearing starts**
- ▶ **End Sept 2019:** **Higher Education term begins**





# Applying to HE - the Buckingham option – Open Day Sat 10<sup>th</sup> March

- ▶ Applications accepted all year round
- ▶ September and January intakes
- ▶ UCAS and Direct online application (no fee)
- ▶ Receive a decision, start the process of enrolment immediately
- ▶ Students who are unplaced/unhappy elsewhere in Sept/Oct can (and do) enrol at Buckingham in Jan/Sept
- ▶ 2 year degrees (Medicine is 4.5 years), some 3 year and foundation options
- ▶ Five counties scholarships – £2K per year for local students
- ▶ Small class sizes, Oxbridge style tutorial system
- ▶ TEF Gold, Ranked 1<sup>st</sup> for Teaching quality



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# Range of Courses – over 35,000

**Anthropology**

**Brewing and Distilling**

**Chinese**

**Dietetics**

**Equine Studies**

**Forensic Science**

**Geology**

**Humanities**

**International Relations**

**Journalism/Media Studies**

**Korean Studies**

**Logistics**

**Multimedia Technology**

**Neuroscience**

**Occitan**

**Palaeontology**

**Quantum Mechanics**

**Robotics**

**Speech Pathology**

**Toxicology**

**Urban Studies**

**Vision Sciences/Optometry**

**War Sciences (& Peace Studies)**

**X-Ray Techniques**

**Yacht Design**

**Zoology**



# Subject “Fit”

- ▶ A levels in/Interested in Biology
  - ▶ Biomedical Sciences, Human Biology, Genetics, Optometry, Zoology
- ▶ Geography
  - ▶ Business, Environmental Sciences, European Studies, Logistics, Surveying, Town Planning
- ▶ Maths
  - ▶ Accountancy, Computer Science, Engineering, Internet Gambling Studies
- ▶ 20%+ of Scientists/Engineers go into Finance/Accounting
- ▶ 50%+ of Graduate Jobs advertised don't specify a particular degree

# Choosing the “Best” - [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

- ▶ **Best for whom?**
- ▶ **Course**
  - ▶ **Structure**
  - ▶ **Content**
  - ▶ **Assessment**
  - ▶ **Breadth**
  - ▶ **Specialisation**
  - ▶ **Flexibility**

# Choosing the Best

- ▶ **Teaching Quality, National Student Survey (NSS)**
- ▶ **TEF Gold/Silver/Bronze**
- ▶ **Contact time/teaching methods – Key Information Sets: KIS**
- ▶ **Professional accreditation (e.g. IMechE, BPS, Law Society)**
- ▶ **Offer Levels, entry requirements, specific subjects, applications per place**
- ▶ **League Tables – useful but treat with caution...it's not just the Russell Group and never has been!**
- ▶ **“Reputation”, “Cache” with parents/teachers /friends**



# Choosing the Best

- ▶ **Employability/Graduate Success**
  - ▶ **HESA First Destination Statistics – “The DLHE Survey”**
  - ▶ **Quality of jobs also important – “Graduate Level”**
  - ▶ **LEO datasets**
  - ▶ **Targeting by and reputation with employers**
    - ▶ **Times Top 100 Graduate Employers**
  - ▶ **Buckingham amongst UK’s lowest unemployment and highest (75-80%) in “Graduate Level” destinations**



## and of course.....

- ▶ **Location – Campus, City/Town, City and Campus**
- ▶ **Age/style/academic structure**
- ▶ **Size of University – 2,000 – 40,000 Students**
- ▶ **Distance from home**
- ▶ **Accommodation**
  - ▶ **Guarantees, Availability, on-campus support**
  - ▶ **Cost, location, catered v self catering, standard**
- ▶ **Facilities**
  - ▶ **Staff/student ratios**
  - ▶ **Teaching, Student support, disability issues**
  - ▶ **Social, sports, welfare**
- ▶ **Finances/cultural/family issues**

# Student Life

- **Getting involved – clubs, volunteering and societies**
- **2,000-40,000 students!**
- **Develop transferable skills attractive to employers**
- **Managing your money, organising your time**
- **Balancing studies with work and play**



# Useful websites:

- ▶ [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) – course search, apply on line, general info and advice
- ▶ [www.unistats.com](http://www.unistats.com) – teaching quality info, National Student Survey, info on employability, entry grades, drop-outs etc
- ▶ [www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk) – *course info, rankings and lots of other useful information*
- ▶ [www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com) – pretty obvious!
- ▶ Whatuni.com, thestudentroom.com
- ▶ [www.buckingham.ac.uk](http://www.buckingham.ac.uk)

# Strategy may be subject dependent

## ▶ More Selective

- ▶ Medicine, Dentistry, Law, Vet Sci, Physio, English, Psychology, some Business, some Physics, Primary Teaching, History, some Sports courses
- ▶ high competition, higher grades, varies between Universities

## ▶ More Seductive

- ▶ Some Engineering, Chemistry, Pharmacy, Languages, Sociology (compared to Psychology), Philosophy
- ▶ Less competition, lower grades (but often excellent prospects!)

# What do Admissions Tutors look for?

- ▶ Academic Potential (Predicted Grades)
- ▶ Academic Record (GCSE, AS if offered)
- ▶ Reference from School/College
- ▶ *Relevant, well written Personal Statement*

## Evidence of:

- ▶ Motivation and Commitment
- ▶ Leadership, Teamwork, Communication
- ▶ Evidence of research into subject
- ▶ IT/Business/Key Skills/social capital (if relevant)
- ▶ NOT Nobel Prizewinners, just general enthusiasm...

# Applicant Strategy

- ▶ 5 UCAS choices, direct also available
- ▶ Applications all on-line: [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)
- ▶ Realistic but positive choices
  - ▶ 1-2 aspirational, 2-3 realistic, x1 safety net
- ▶ “Blind” Choices for UCAS
- ▶ Beware grade inflation
- ▶ AS grades
- ▶ “Points/Grades spread”
- ▶ Flexibility at Results Confirmation: eg last year
- ▶ Split choices?
  - ▶ special cases – medics, dentists, vets
- ▶ UCAS Extra: Mar-Jun, Clearing Jul-Sept
- ▶ Buckingham accepts UCAS/direct applications all year – an additional choice



# Realistic but positive....

- ▶ **Vast majority get 4 or more offers (80% plus)**
- ▶ **Applications per place – don't forget students are making 4 other applications!**
- ▶ **Check entry requirements and specific requirements (eg A/AS/BTEC/GCSE)**
- ▶ **eg: Buckingham: c2,500 applications for c750 places: over 80% of applicants received offers, typical entry BBC-AAB, 32-33 points at IB**
- ▶ **UK Medical School applications down 15%+ in 3 years. Buckingham up 30% in 2017-2018**
- ▶ **A levels are changing for 2018, 2019, 2020 entry – we know this**

# Is it worth it?!

## Yes!

- ▶ 65% of all UK Graduates go into “Graduate Level” employment or further study within 6 months of graduation. This figure rises to c80% for a University such as Buckingham
- ▶ Be proactive, get involved, do your course research wisely, don't panic but enjoy.....



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# Thanks for listening, best of luck!

- ▶ Questions/comments welcome
- ▶ [james.seymour@buckingham.ac.uk](mailto:james.seymour@buckingham.ac.uk)
- ▶ University of Buckingham Open Days Sat 10 March, Sun 24 June

[www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com)

[www.buckingham.ac.uk](http://www.buckingham.ac.uk)

[www.unistats.com](http://www.unistats.com)

[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

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