

BRYANSTON

Preparation for Higher Education

Exit 2019/2020

Choosing your Course & University



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I. How to choose your Higher Education course

You will be studying at university for three, four or maybe even five years so it is important that you enjoy your course and that you are fully committed to it from the very start. For this reason you should select your course before you choose your university. You may not yet know exactly what you want to do at university, so you will need to explore all your options during your A3 year. There are many courses and universities from which to choose, so the following exercises might help you narrow down your options:

1. Use the profile builder on <https://bridge-u.com> to get your university matches.
2. Try completing the interest questionnaires available on the internet; for example, on www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk.
3. Consult 'University Degree Course Offers' by Brian Heap. You will find copies in Careers. The first chapter contains two very useful tables: in the first, A level subjects are listed with related degree courses; in the second, career titles are listed against relevant degree courses.
4. Course descriptions can also be found on www.hotcourses.com (in the 'find' section on the 'home' page select 'undergraduate courses', then 'subject spotlight').
5. Most importantly, use the course search facility on the UCAS website www.searchucas.com (see below). Having discovered the universities at which particular courses can be studied you can then look at the entry requirements and profiles and visit the institutions' websites and review the course particulars in more detail. Be aware that universities sometimes alter their entrance requirements at relatively short notice (e.g. *between one and two years before the year of entry*), so you should also use the university websites for updates and changes. Clearly, you will need to have realistic ambitions; moreover, you cannot assume that if your predicted grades match the published entrance requirements you will automatically receive an offer: in many cases you will not, especially for competitive courses! See the section 'Will I get an offer?' on p.11 and Competitive Applications on p.13.
6. Use the worksheet on p.28 of this guide or the notes section on BridgeU to focus and record your research.

Using UCAS Course Search

You will probably find that this site will be the focus of your degree and university research. If you are not sure what you want to study you can browse by subject or location. If you want to search for particular courses or particular universities, you can do that too.

A simple search for 'Geography, for example, will take you to a list of over a thousand courses related to Geography, e.g. combined with other subjects such as Urban Engineering and Development. A search for 'Bristol' will take you to the three higher education institutions in Bristol and you can view all the courses each offers from there. Most people start with a course search, though others have heard about the reputation of certain universities and want to see what their entry requirements are for particular courses if they are unsure about exactly what they want to study.

When you click on a particular course you will be taken to an **entry profile**. These are there to help you decide between universities and courses. They are compiled by university staff, who understand what you need to know about their course and what personal qualities, interests and experiences it will be helpful for you to have in order to be successful. Many courses with the same title are actually very different in terms of content and study methods, so looking at entry profiles is an efficient way of sorting out which might suit you best. **Details are provided on the course, the university and entry requirements, as well as helpful contact details,** for example:

English

University of Bristol

Entry requirements: AAA at A level or IB 32-36 points (Higher Level points: 18 with 6 in HL English)

An English degree from the University of Bristol gives you the opportunity to study the full breadth and range of literature written in English.

Year one lays strong foundations, providing training in close reading, critical and theoretical approaches and in the skills and conventions of academic writing, alongside the study of poetry, narrative writing and drama from the medieval to the mid-eighteenth century. You may also choose an optional unit or a unit from another subject area at Bristol.

In year two the continued study of successive periods of English literature, from the mid-eighteenth century to the present day, is complemented with work on individual authors and topics chosen from a list of research-led special subject units, as well as options related to earlier literature. Single Honours students may choose to study abroad for one teaching block of their second year.

The third year is fully optional and offers a combination of options in later literature, in transhistorical topics and in special subjects, as well as the opportunity to write a dissertation on a topic of your own choosing.

This is just one example. Other universities will have their own and you should check to see what they are looking for. Some universities' entries are more informative than others but there will be a **direct link to the course page of the university's website** so you can explore it in more detail. You can also compare course information on the **unistats** website by clicking the link provided. This will tell you more about:

- Student satisfaction;
- Teaching, learning and assessment methods;
- Employment and salary data;
- Accommodation costs;
- Financial information, such as fees;
- Students' union information.

2. Factors to consider when choosing a course

Types of Higher Education courses available

The types of HE degree courses available can be classified into four main groups:

Training degrees

These are degrees that train students to do a particular type of work. Examples are medicine, veterinary medicine, education, architecture and engineering. This type of degree is associated with higher employment rates (*and higher graduate starting salaries*). Data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) states that around 91% of graduates in medicine and 87% in veterinary medicine secured jobs in their fields upon leaving university. This was the case for 88% of education graduates, 78% of architecture graduates and 73% of engineering graduates. For more details, visit www.hesa.ac.uk.

Vocational degrees

These may impart skills that are useful to a particular area of employment but are not the only entry route to that type of work. Examples include business studies and law. Employment rates for graduates will vary considerably from one course to another, and from one university to another. If a work placement is included in the course (e.g. *a sandwich course*) this will almost certainly improve future employment prospects.

Science degrees

Few subject areas are as challenging and interesting as Science or put as many of your skills to the test. The sciences are often viewed as 'difficult' options in the Sixth Form. Such a view is misleading because able scientists will usually do very well in them; however less able scientists can find the subjects inaccessible at this level. There are some excellent reasons to study science. Are you fascinated by the natural world? Students tend to do best in subjects that they enjoy and are enthusiastic about, so sticking with something you like could seriously improve your chances of graduating with a first-class degree. Science at university goes well beyond biology, chemistry and physics: there are actually over 10,000 different science and engineering-based degrees in the UK.

A masters degree in science would enable you to access a huge range of science related careers; for example, you could be a forensic scientist with a biology or chemistry background, and physics is an ideal option if you want to be a sound engineer. Other directly relevant employment opportunities include: Research Scientist; Analytical Chemist; Meteorologist; Electronics Engineer; Teacher; Medical Physicist and Materials Engineer. Science graduates are also highly employable in a wide range of non-science careers, especially where high levels of numeracy are needed. People who have studied science subjects are employed in: sales, law, marketing and advertising; management in commerce, industry or the public sector; business and finance; the health service; the army; publishing; the media – amongst many others. Around 20% of City fund managers are physical science graduates. Science students develop a wide range of those transferable skills so highly regarded by employers. These include: an ability to approach problems in an analytical and logical way; an ability to work methodically and accurately; a high degree of numeracy (*a skill in very short supply*); and the skill to communicate information effectively.

Non-vocational academic degrees

These have fewer obvious links to the employment market. Examples include English and History. In these disciplines, the employment prospects will vary considerably from one university to another; in general, those who have been to a more prestigious university will have better employment prospects than those who have been to one of the newer universities, although this is changing as reputations develop. Please note:

1. Many job vacancies do not require a specific degree discipline;
2. Some careers will require the student to do postgraduate study to a greater or lesser extent (e.g. *accountancy, law, many scientific careers*).

Types of degrees

Honours Degrees, Foundation Degrees and Diplomas

The vast majority of Bryanstonians will apply to study for an honours degree. Foundation degrees are training degrees of a less academic nature and relate to vocational areas. Diploma courses are at a lower level than degree courses;

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successful completion of the first year or two of such courses can lead on acceptance on to an honours degree course.

Exemption from professional examinations

Some degree courses will exempt you from taking certain professional exams (e.g. *in law, accountancy*) after graduation. Check university websites to find out whether particular courses offer such an exemption.

Joint/Combined Honours courses

These may appeal to students with a range of interests and abilities, but be aware that a joint honours (*two subjects*) or combined honours (*two or more subjects*) degree may put you under greater pressure than a single honours degree as you will be required to submit work in more than one subject. It is also worth checking whether or not the course will exempt you from taking professional examinations after graduating. Sometimes admission to joint or combined honours courses is less competitive than admission to single honours courses (*particularly at some of the more prestigious universities*).

Modular courses

Some universities offer modular degrees, the idea being that students can build their course by selecting modules of their choice. Modular degrees might appeal to students with a wide range of interests and abilities: by selecting modules appropriately your degree could span the arts, the sciences and the social sciences.

Modular degrees are not soft options as you will be under pressure to submit work in more than one subject. It may also be that the work covered in each module is the core component of the single honours course in that particular subject, and this component can be the most difficult part of the course. Furthermore, the freedom to choose modules is sometimes rather limited, perhaps because of timetabling constraints or through capping of numbers on popular modules. It is worth finding out how much freedom you will have in selecting modules and if guidance on the selection of modules is available. It is also worth considering whether or not postgraduate study will be possible on completion of the modular degree and how potential employers will view it.

Sandwich courses

A sandwich course integrates periods of academic study with periods of paid work experience in commerce, industry or the public sector, at home or abroad. The work experience is in either a 'thin sandwich' of two separate six-month placements or a 'thick sandwich' of one year. Sandwich courses are offered in a wide range of subjects at certain universities, including: Bath, Brunel, Cardiff, Loughborough and Surrey.

There are a number of advantages associated with sandwich courses:

- You can apply your academic studies to real-life working situations;
- Your experience of industry and commerce before graduation assists with career choice and allows you to test the water before seeking employment and entering the job market;
- You can make contact with potential employers and possibly secure a job offer when you graduate;
- Your employment prospects may be enhanced because your work experience helps you to stand out from the competition. You will also have sought-after skills (*technical, communication, teamwork, maturity and confidence*);
- The improved motivation you will gain may well lead to improved marks in your final examinations;
- Your period of work experience may count towards a professional qualification;
- You may have the chance to work abroad and consolidate/learn a foreign language;
- You will earn while you learn. This may well be even more desirable given current fee levels. It is also possible that the company you work for will decide to sponsor you during your fourth year at university.

3. Factors to consider when choosing a university

You should consider the following factors when choosing a university:

Geographical Location

You may wish to consider:

- Whether or not you wish to be close to home. There is a belief that students who move away from home to study become more independent and confident, and so have better employment prospects;
- How easy, or how expensive, will it be to travel home at the end of term or for the occasional weekend?
- Whether or not, if you have a car, it will be possible to park it easily close to your accommodation;
- Whether or not you want to be in a campus or a city environment;
- The availability of other attractions, such as the nightlife, cultural and major sporting venues;
- The cost of living. A survey by the Royal Bank of Scotland indicated that Birmingham, Leicester, Sheffield and York are amongst the cheapest university cities in which to live; London is by far the most expensive;
- Safety and security. Of the universities most popular with Bryanstonians, Manchester and Nottingham have higher crime levels, whereas Bath, Southampton and Newcastle have relatively low levels.

Type of University

Oxford (1150) and Cambridge (1284) are the oldest universities, followed by St Andrews (1411), Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh. UCL, KCL and Durham were founded in the first half of the 19th Century, but most of the traditional 'redbrick' universities gained university status in the second half of the 19th Century or the first half of the 20th Century; such foundations include Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield. The sixties saw the foundation of many new universities, some of which now enjoy outstanding reputations; these include Bath, Loughborough, Warwick and York. In 1992 almost all of the former polytechnics were given university status; these universities include Nottingham Trent, Sheffield Hallam, Bristol UWE, Northumbria and Oxford Brookes.

Oxford, Cambridge and Durham are collegiate universities. In these institutions the college is at the centre of the student's university life, providing accommodation and staging many social events. At Oxford and Cambridge the college also monitors academic progress, although in some subjects the majority of teaching is in departments. Colleges offer a small and caring community in which to live and such an environment contrasts markedly with that of a large urban university in which there may be a more impersonal approach. Some universities are fully integrated into the city in which they are situated; others occupy attractive but fairly isolated campuses, and many fall somewhere in the middle of these two settings.

Quality and Reputation

Various groups of universities have been set up to lobby for the interests of their members, and two of these (*the Russell Group and the University Alliance*) include the universities most popular with Bryanstonians, see below.

The Russell Group, www.russellgroup.ac.uk, which includes Oxford, Cambridge and universities like Bristol, Exeter and Leeds, is the most influential. It is a group of larger research-intensive universities, named after the London hotel in which it first met informally to protect and promote excellence in Higher Education in the UK. Russell Group members share the bulk of the UK's research funding and attract visits from the highest number of the UK's top 100 employers each year.

Facilitating subjects are those most commonly required or preferred by universities: *English; Modern Foreign or Classical Languages; History; Geography; Sciences; Maths*. **Some courses at Russell Group and other competitive**

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universities will be open to you without one of these subjects but others will ask you to be studying one (or more) of them. For more details about this visit: <http://russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/>.

Another group, the University Alliance, www.unialliance.ac.uk, contains institutions like Oxford Brookes, UWE Bristol and Nottingham Trent, all of which have excellent reputations and are also popular choices for Bryanstonians. There are also outstanding institutions outside of these groups such as Bath, Royal Holloway and St Andrews. You will hear much in the press about 'elite Russell Group universities' but you should not confine your research solely to these places and explore league tables thoroughly, see. p.10.

Russell Group Universities	Birmingham
	Bristol
	Cambridge
	Cardiff
	Durham
	Edinburgh
	Exeter
	Glasgow
	Leeds
	Liverpool
	London (<i>Imperial, KCL, LSE, QMU, UCL</i>)
	Manchester
	Newcastle
	Nottingham
	Oxford
	Queen's, Belfast
	Sheffield
Southampton	
Warwick	
York	

Bryanston UCAS Applications 2013-2018	
Top 15 most popular destinations (A-Z)	Top 15 most popular subjects applied for (A-Z)
Bath	Architecture/Urban Planning
Bristol	Art & Design
Cardiff	Classics/Classical Studies
Edinburgh	Economics/Business
Exeter	Engineering
Leeds	English Literature
Loughborough	Geography/Geology
Manchester	History
Newcastle	Medicine/Veterinary Medicine
Oxford	Modern Foreign Languages
Oxford Brookes	Philosophy/Theology
Reading	Politics/International Relations
Southampton	Property/Land Management
Sussex	Psychology/Sociology/Anthropology
UCL	Single Sciences

% of Bryanstonians who gained a place at a Russell Group university over the past two years:.....	51%
% of Bryanstonians who gained a place at a university ranked in the top 25* over the past two years:.....	51%

* www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk

League Tables

With over 330 Higher Education institutions offering thousands of courses, the choice of what to study and where is not easy. University league tables, although they do need to be treated with some caution, do offer some very useful information to help you make an informed choice. In addition to ranking universities and courses, many of them also offer useful profiles of individual institutions.

So what are league tables based on? How is it possible that a university can be rated in 8th place in one league table and then a lowly 30th in another? The answer is that all league tables use a range of different indicators.

The main indicators taken into account are:

- A level points: the average number of UCAS points held by first year students;
- Application vs. places: the total number of applications to degree courses against the total number accepted. This gives you an indication of how competitive it will be to get onto this course;
- Student/staff ratio: on average the number of staff in relation to the number of students;
- Teaching: the marks received in teaching assessments by individual departments;
- Research: the research rating received by each department;
- Degree classifications: 1sts and 2.1s as a percentage of all classified degrees;
- Employment: the percentage of graduates entering full-time employment (*may also include universities targeted by graduate recruiters*);
- Drop-out rate: the percentage of students failing to complete courses;
- Library and computer spending;
- Student satisfaction.

Ensure, therefore, that the league tables you use are based on the criteria that are most important to you in your choice of institution. A particularly good league table (because it is independent) is:

The Complete University Guide

<https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk> Features: table of top-ranking institutions and subject-by-subject ranking

Other useful resources

Research Assessment Exercise: www.rae.ac.uk

Universities are regularly assessed on the quality of research they carry out. Check to see how your chosen universities rank and find out how research intensive the course is.

Unistats: <https://unistats.ac.uk>

Allows comparison of courses at different universities and colleges.

Push guide: www.push.co.uk/

The Independent: www.independent.co.uk/student/

Method of Teaching, Method of Assessment

You may already have decided which subject you wish to study, but you should now ask yourself whether the course on offer at a particular university is right for you. Points to consider include:

- Two semester or three term year?
- Number, frequency and size of lectures;
- Number, frequency of practicals;
- Fieldwork assignments;
- Frequency and size of seminars and tutorials;
- Amount of self-directed learning;
- Opportunities to study abroad;
- Amount of computer-based or distance learning;
- Mode of assessment: proportion of coursework/continuous assessment, terminal examinations.

Will I Get An Offer?

When choosing a university you should aim as high as you realistically can. The university will decide whether or not to make you an offer on the strength of your GCSE results, your personal statement and the School's reference (*which will include A level/IB predictions*). Your teachers will discuss your predicted grades with you and they will be finalised in Week 2 of the Autumn term of A2. The UCAS website, or universities' websites can be consulted to discover the minimum entrance qualifications for a particular course, and you should match your predicted grades against the likely offer.

Bear in mind that at least one or two of your choices should be for courses for which you are confident of satisfying/exceeding the entrance requirements. Even if your A level/IB predictions are on a par with, or higher than, the standard offer you are by no means certain of securing an offer. **An indication of the popularity of the course (and therefore your chances of securing an offer) can be gleaned from a study of the applications to places ratio published in Heap's 'Degree Course Offers'.**

Taster Days & Open Days

What is it like to live and study there?

Each university has its own personality. To decide whether or not you will feel right in your chosen university you should visit it and talk to current students, preferably recent OBs if there are any there, before submitting an application. If possible you should visit during the school holidays; you must obtain the permission of your hsm to make such visits during term time, and in order to ensure that your academic work retains the highest priority the maximum number of term-time visits is five per year. You should therefore plan open day visits as far as possible in the holidays. To extract the maximum benefit from your visit you will need to do some research before you go. The checklist below can be used to plan and make your visit more useful. In order to convince your hsm that you will benefit from attending an open day you should present him/her with some evidence of your research. S/he is more likely to view your request favourably if you can prove that you are serious about it.

Nowadays many students go to open days with their parents and you are strongly encouraged to do so. They will probably pick up on some of the points you miss, not least because, being older and wiser, they will ask the embarrassing questions you may not think of. Don't worry about your parents cramping your style: many universities hold separate activities for parents so they can ask their own questions and to give you some breathing space. Open days allow you and your parents to ask searching questions and discover how impressive, or otherwise, the lecturers really are. You will be able to gauge the culture of the institution, check out all the facilities, assess academic standards and get the measure of current students. By comparing notes with your parents afterwards you will get a better understanding of what it is really like to study there than you would by visiting by yourself or with a friend.

You should also consider applying for a place on a taster course, particularly if it falls during the school holidays; as with open days, you should seek the permission of your hsm before making arrangements for such visits during term time. Taster courses are often free and sometimes allow you to stay overnight on the university campus. You can therefore gain an impression of both your intended course and a particular university. You can find details by searching for 'university taster courses' on the internet; alternatively, you will find details of taster courses in the 'UCAS Guide to Open Days' (*available in Careers*).

Checklist for use on Open Day visits **Before the visit (if possible):**

- Visit the UCAS website and record the standard offer for the course you are considering. Compare this with the grades you think you will get at A level/IB (*your subject teachers will be able to help in this respect if you are uncertain about your prospects*);
- Make a note of your travel arrangements (e.g. *train times, fares, departure times*);
- Check the alternative prospectus produced by students themselves - this may well be very revealing. You might be able to access it via the university website;
- Read the university's pages in the 'Virgin Alternative Guide to Higher Education' (*which contains some excellent contributions from current undergraduates*) and 'The Push Guide to Which University' (*written for students by students and which is humorous and accurate*);
- Look at the student reviews on www.whatuni.com;
- Make a list of questions that arise from this research; in particular, try to identify what you are looking for in the course you have chosen and in your choice of university.

During the visit:

- Over the years universities have developed their own unique personality. Try to assess whether or not you will feel right studying there;
- If you haven't already found it, acquire a copy of the alternative prospectus;
- Look carefully at the staff/student ratio: do you really want to be herded into overcrowded rooms and be taught by people who will not have learnt your name by the end of your degree because of the sheer weight of numbers?
- Ask what proportion of the student population is housed in university accommodation and about the availability of other accommodation;
- Find out the cost of student residences and whether you will have to pay for weeks during the holidays. (*Yes, is usually the answer but it is worth checking*);
- Discover the geography of the site and assess how much time and money will you have to spend travelling;
- If you have a car, find out if you can park it near your accommodation;
- Assess how safe the campus is. Is it well lit? Would you feel safe returning to your accommodation at night?
- Assess whether or not the location right for you? Do you want to live in a big city or a small town, or would you prefer a self-contained campus?
- Find out whether or not the leisure and arts facilities are easily accessible;
- Talk to current students about what it is like to live and study there. Find out what the social life is like and ask them about student support (*welfare, health, tutorial support*);
- Try to gauge the cost of living.

4. Competitive Applications

Medicine

You are allowed to enter only four medical schools on the UCAS form, but you are also allowed to enter a non-medical 'insurance' course if you wish to. The official line is that such 'insurance' applications will not prejudice your application, but you should discuss your tactics with Mrs Harwood (ANMH) before completing your UCAS form. All applications to medical schools must be submitted by 1st October.

Most medical schools demand A level Chemistry as an entrance requirement, and the vast majority also require Biology; all potential medics are therefore advised to study both Biology and Chemistry in the Sixth Form. Excellent GCSE results are needed: many medical schools automatically reject candidates with fewer than six grades at A or A* (some require at least eight A*s at GCSE) and very high A level/IB predictions are also necessary.

Successful applicants will need to demonstrate their interest in, and commitment to, medicine; a full portfolio of appropriate work experience is therefore essential (at least one period shadowing/observing a medic at work, and one at the less glamorous end of the 'caring professions' spectrum, perhaps performing mundane tasks in a hospice or a care home). It is also compulsory for all medical students to have been vaccinated against hepatitis B before being admitted to the course.

The clinical aptitude test (UKCAT) was introduced by a consortium of medical schools including Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham and Sheffield, and has to be taken by anyone applying to these schools. The 90-minute exam tests the candidate's mental abilities and assesses how s/he might respond to patients. Scientific knowledge is not tested. Further information, together with a few sample questions, is available on the UKCAT website www.ukcat.ac.uk. Please note that candidates must book the test online (not through the school) by the specified deadline. You will need to explore suitable test dates before the end of the summer term.

Candidates for Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial or UCL will need to sit the BMAT test at Bryanston at the beginning of November. You will need to contact the examinations officer Mr McClary (IWM) to register for this test. The BMAT test, which tests, amongst other things, scientific knowledge, is very demanding; see ANMH for guidance on how to prepare for it. Because most medical schools require UKCAT and a few do not, and because most interview candidates and a few do not, applicants need to consider tactics very carefully before submitting an application.

Veterinary Medicine

You are allowed to enter only four veterinary schools on the UCAS form, but you are also allowed to enter a non-veterinary 'insurance' course if you wish to. The official line is that such an 'insurance' course will not prejudice your application, but discuss your tactics with ANMH before completing your UCAS form. All applications to veterinary schools must be submitted by 1st October.

Entry to veterinary school is very competitive. You will need high A level/IB predictions in Chemistry and Biology, plus one other academic subject, together with excellent GCSE results. You will also need to sit the BMAT test if you are applying to Bristol, Cambridge or the Royal Veterinary College; see ANMH for guidance on how to prepare for it. Successful applicants will need to demonstrate their interest in, and commitment to, veterinary medicine; appropriate work experience is therefore vital. It is also essential that you are at ease with animals; for example, in the interview at the Nottingham Veterinary School, a practical test forms part of the assessment.

Law

Please note that you do not need study law as your first degree to become a solicitor or barrister. It is possible to study an alternative but well-respected discipline at undergraduate level and then complete a law conversion course. Entry to undergraduate law courses is very competitive, particularly at the more prestigious institutions. You will need high predicted A level/IB grades, together with excellent GCSE results. Successful applicants will also need to demonstrate their interest in, and knowledge of, the courses applied for. Appropriate work experience will also be an asset and demonstrating critical thinking skills will be essential.

You should certainly read a quality newspaper on a regular basis and become familiar with analysing what you read. At interview you will be expected to talk about current legal issues in the news and to comment on what makes them interesting. You will also be required by many universities to sit the LNAT test in November of the A2 year. You should view the LNAT website to register for this test, and consult Mrs Weatherby (HEJW) for guidance on how best to prepare for it.

Oxford & Cambridge

The School has a very good record of preparing pupils for Oxbridge entrance and is delighted to support able pupils who choose to apply. However, the competition at this level is intense, as shown by the fact that around half of the candidates that Cambridge regularly rejects go on to gain three A* grades at A level. To be a realistic candidate you will need to have outstanding GCSE grades; if you have more than one 'B' grade you are unlikely to be successful, and in practice most successful applicants will have eight or more A* grades. You will also need very high A level/IB predictions (*at least A*AA/40 points*). A number of Bryanstonians choose to post apply to Oxbridge so they can see whether their A level grades or IB scores makes them a viable applicant.

For a successful Oxbridge application mere competence at A level/IB is not be enough; you need to aspire to academic excellence! Candidates will be expected to demonstrate, at interview and in their personal statement, that they have extended their studies beyond the A level/IB specification in their chosen (*or nearest*) discipline. In order to demonstrate genuine interest and a broader and deeper knowledge, applicants in Arts and Social Science subjects will need to reveal evidence of extensive additional reading. A great deal of private study will need to be undertaken before the end of the summer holiday, as past experience suggests that if it is not done by then, it will not be done in time for the December interview season. Applicants in Science subjects must really know their specification material (*the interview is, for all intents and purposes, a technical examination*), but they should also expect to be stretched beyond this level by answering questions on less familiar material.

In addition, you will be required to sit an admissions test in November for certain subjects which will need registering with IWM and, if you are applying to Cambridge, the Supplementary Application Questionnaire (SAQ) will need to be completed. You will also need to submit examples of your written work.

Oxford Admissions Tests

Economics, Geography, Philosophy, Politics, Psychology.....	(Thinking Skills Assessment) TSA
Physics, Engineering, Materials Science.....	(Physics Aptitude Test) PAT
Modern Foreign Languages.....	(Modern Languages Admissions Test) MLAT
Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Biomedical Science.....	(Biomedical Admissions Test) BMAT
Classics.....	(Classics Admissions Test) CAT
English Literature.....	(English Literature Admissions Test) ELAT
History.....	(History Aptitude Test) HAT
Mathematics.....	(Mathematics Aptitude Test) MAT

Cambridge Admissions Tests

Anglo-Saxon, Norse & Celtic.....	Comprehension and Essay (120 minutes)
Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.....	Comprehension and Essay (120 minutes)
Economics.....	Problem-solving/Maths MCQs, Data response and Comprehension (120 minutes)
Engineering.....	Maths/Physics MCQs and in-depth Engineering questions (120 minutes)
English.....	ELAT (90 minutes)
Geography.....	TSA, Comprehension and Data response (120 minutes)
History (<i>inc. with MFL or Politics</i>).....	Comprehension and Essay (120 minutes)
Human, Social and Political Sciences.....	Comprehension and Essay (120 minutes)
Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.....	BMAT
Natural Sciences.....	Maths/Science MCQs and in-depth Science questions (120 minutes)
Psychological and Behavioural Sciences.....	TSA, Maths/Science MCQs and Essay (120 minutes)
Theology, Religion and Philosophy of Religion.....	Comprehension and Essay (120 minutes)

You should contact the relevant HoD (see p.17) as soon as possible to plan your Oxbridge programme and, if called for interview in due course, arrange interview practice in the weeks leading up to the real interview, which is likely to be between mid-November and the week before Christmas. You might also view the website www.oxbridge-admissions.info, which includes a number of profiles of Oxbridge applicants from the past; the sections on the interview might be of particular interest (see also p.15 of this guide).

Applications for other competitive courses and universities (e.g. some courses at Bristol, Durham, Edinburgh, St Andrews, LSE and Nottingham)

Entry to some courses (e.g. English, History, Economics) at some universities (e.g. Bristol, Durham, Edinburgh, St Andrews, LSE, Nottingham) is intensely competitive. In addition to this, Edinburgh University has a wider access policy, which takes account of various factors including locality; applicants from schools in the local area, or the wider locality, might therefore be given priority over pupils from schools south of the border. Pupils who are considering applying to one of these universities for a competitive course need to be aware that even with the right predicted grades and an excellent personal statement, they may not be successful.

5. Interviews

You can expect to be interviewed if you have applied to Oxford or Cambridge, or any medical or veterinary school, before an offer is made. Some other universities also interview candidates in certain subjects. It has not unusual for universities to invite candidates who are likely to be made an offer to an open day or an informal interview as a means of weeding out those who lack commitment, so if you are keen to receive an offer you should accept the invitation. Do not assume that you need only turn up on such occasions, since an academic interview may be involved. If necessary, ask your tutor or HoD to arrange a practice interview before attending.

1. Before you go:
 - a. *Make sure you are familiar with the course content and how it is assessed. Identify your strengths and match them to the requirements of the course. Be able to explain why this is the right course for you;*
 - b. *Review carefully your personal statement and identify any points that might be picked out for discussion by the interviewer. Be ready to develop your ideas at interview;*
 - c. *You could contact the college/university and ask who will be interviewing you and then Google them to discover their particular interests or specialisms.*
2. Get there in good time. You need to be relaxed and composed if you are to give of your best.
3. Dress smartly; at the very least look like you have made an effort. I would recommend that boys wear a jacket and tie, and that girls choose equivalent attire. Avoid wearing jeans or trainers.
4. Try to remain calm during the interview. The interviewer is trying to establish how you can use what you do know rather than what you do not know!
5. Expect to be asked testing, thought-provoking questions. Often the answers will not be obvious, and the questions will be asked to enable you to demonstrate your ability to think on your feet. Expect to be challenged and don't be put off if the interviewer gives nothing away facially.
6. If you do not understand the question ask the interviewer to repeat it. Do not pretend that you know what you are talking about when you do not have a clue. If the worst comes to the worst you may have to admit that you are struggling, but try to think of a related topic and start by saying something along the lines of, "I have not met this particular situation before but it appears similar to..." Be prepared to pause and think, but try to avoid very long periods of silence by talking through what you are thinking.
7. Be prepared to defend your views if you believe that you are right (however, you will not necessarily be penalised for changing your mind if this shows that you are thinking clearly).
8. At the end of the interview you may be asked if you have any questions. You might aim to have one or two questions in mind, but not ones which can easily be answered by reading the prospectus. You might, for example, ask about:

- *Teaching methods. e.g. how interactive are lectures, tutorials?, how much computer-based (independent) learning is there?*
- *Clarification of the assessment. e.g. how many fail the first year exams, are re-sits possible?*
- *What type of employment have recent graduates taken up?*

6. Gap Years and Deferred Entry

Many Bryanstonians opt for a gap year before going to university. If you decide to take a gap year you can either apply in A2 for deferred entry or post apply at the start of your gap year. If you are considering a gap year there are a number of points to consider:

- The prospect of an extended holiday may be very appealing; if this is what motivates you, forget it: you would merely be wasting a year;
- You will delay the start of employment by a year;
- Would a sandwich course be more beneficial than a gap year?
- Who would finance you for another 12 months? Would you work for the first half of the year and travel in the second half? Are there any scholarships available? Visit www.gostudyuk.com;
- Which course are you planning to follow? For long courses like Medicine, Veterinary Medicine or Architecture, it is often argued that you should start your degree as soon as possible;
- Will a gap year put you off study? There may be the risk that you are put off the idea of studying once your gap year is over. Some tutors in Maths and Physics also fear a loss of impetus after a break. On the other hand, it may enable you to mature as a person and you may return to your studies with a more sensible approach.
- A gap year could offer an opportunity to travel; for example, you might arrange voluntary or charity work to broaden your horizons;
- A gap year could allow you to gain valuable work experience or to learn a new skill, such as another language or a directly vocational skill. It might also lead to the award of sponsorship: it can be difficult for students to supplement their loans with part-time vacation work, and sponsorship can guarantee vacation work which is generally well paid;
- Visit the Careers department to discuss your options.

Deferred Entry

Reaction to deferred entry will vary from course to course. For example, mathematics departments generally prefer candidates to progress straight from school to university. Deferred entry is often viewed favourably by Arts subjects, although Edinburgh is likely to reject such applications out of hand. In the case of Oxbridge, reactions can even vary from college to college; for example, most colleges are opposed to deferred entry in mathematics. Generally speaking it is more difficult to obtain a place by deferred entry, and this is particularly true in the case of Oxbridge. As a rule Oxbridge candidates are advised against applying for deferred entry. If you are applying to any other university and are considering a GAP year you should consult your HoD before submitting your UCAS application; s/he will advise on the best tactics to adopt.

The alternative to applying for deferred entry is to **post apply at the start of your gap year**. The same support from your tutor, your HoD and me will be available, you will just need to make sure you are really organised, that you can come into school in the second week of September to see everyone and keep in contact by e-mail and 'phone thereafter.

7. Appendix I: List of UCAS Heads of Department

The HoD overseeing your application will be able to offer advice on the characteristics of an HE course in his/her subject area(s). A recommended reading list for a range of subjects can be found on p.18-27.

Art & Architecture (<i>including foundation courses</i>)	DGK
Biology & Biochemistry.....	ELPS
Business & Economics (<i>including events and property management</i>)	BEL
Chemistry	AJE
Classics & Ancient History	CTH
Computer Science.....	MJD
Design (<i>industrial & product</i>).....	CJM
Drama (<i>including drama schools</i>)	JFQ
Engineering.....	MTK
English.....	HEJW
Film.....	SNW
French.....	CAMD
Geography, Geology & Environmental Science	KEA
German.....	LCJ
History, Politics & International Relations.....	ALS
History of Art.....	JMCL
International Applications (<i>USA, EU</i>).....	LCK
Law.....	HEJW
Maths.....	ACH
Medicine & Nursing.....	ANMH
Music & Music Technology (<i>including conservatoires</i>).....	GMS
Philosophy & Theology	LJDP
Physics.....	CC
Psychology.....	HAH
Sociology.....	IWM
Spanish	AEGA
Sports Studies.....	AFD
Veterinary Medicine.....	ANMH

You should be in regular contact with your HoD for guidance as you research your course and university options and as you draft your personal statement.

8. Appendix 2: Reading Lists

Archaeology

Test Tubes and Trowels: Using Science in Archaeology
 Companion Encyclopaedia of Archaeology
 A Companion to Archaeology
 How Humans Evolved
 Digging Up the Past: An Introduction to Archaeological Excavation
 The Oxford Illustrated History of Prehistoric Europe
 Europe between the Oceans: 9000 BC - AD 1000
 In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early American Life
 Field Archaeology: An Introduction
 Archaeology: The Basics
 Revealing the Buried Past: Geophysics for Archaeologists
 Archaeology: An Introduction
 Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology
 Archaeological Theory: An Introduction
 The Human Career
 The Archaeology of Human Bones
 Social & Cultural Anthropology: A Very Short Introduction
 The Archaeology of Animal Bones
 The Archaeology of Death and Burial
 Death by Theory: A Tale of Mystery and Archaeological Theory
 The Archaeology of Britain: The Upper Palaeolithic to the Industrial Revolution
 Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice
 Archaeology: The Key Concepts
 The Human Past: World Prehistory and the Development of Human Societies
 Handbook of Material Culture
 A History of Archaeological Thought
 Patterns in Prehistory: Humankind's First Three Million Years

Andrews & Doonan
 Barker, G.
 Bintliff, J.
 Boyd & Silk
 Collis, J.
 Cunliffe, B.
 Cunliffe, B.
 Deetz, J.
 Drewett, P.
 Gamble, C.
 Gater, K.
 Greene, K.
 Hodder & Hutson
 Johnson, M.H.
 Klein, R.
 Mays, S.
 Monaghan & Just
 O'Connor, T.
 Parker Pearson, M.
 Praetzelis, A.
 Ralston & Hunter
 Renfrew & Bahn
 Renfrew & Bahn
 Scarre, C.
 Tilley, Keane et al.
 Trigger, B.
 Wenke & Olszewski

Anthropology

General Introductions

An Introduction to Social Anthropology: Sharing our Worlds
 Introducing Anthropology
 Small Places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social Anthropology
 What is Anthropology?

Hendry, J.
 Davies & Piero
 Eriksen, T.H.
 Eriksen, T.H.

Biological Anthropology

Biological Anthropology: The Natural History of Humankind
 Guns, Germs & Steel: A Short History of Everybody...
 Introduction to Physical Anthropology

Stanford, C.
 Diamond, J.
 Jurman, R.

Ethnographies

An Anthropologist in Japan: Glimpses of Life in the Field
 Songs at the River's Edge: Stories from a Bangladeshi Village
 The Sport of Kings: Kinship, Class and Thoroughbred Breeding...
 Veiled Sentiments: Honour & Poetry in a Bedouin Society

Hendry, J.
 Gardner, K.
 Cassidy, R.
 Abu-Lughod, L.

Anthropologist at Work

Anthropologists in a Wider World: Essays on Field Research
 Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines
 Being there: Fieldwork in Anthropology
 An Inside Job: Policing and Police Culture in Britain

Dresch, James & Parkin
 MacClancy, J.
 Watson, C.W.
 Young, M.

Important Readings on Key Topics

Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter
 Anthropology, Art and Aesthetics
 Film as Ethnography
 Exchange
 Purity and Danger
 Primitive Classification
 Feminism and Anthropology
 Ethnicity, Identity, and Music

Asad, T.
 Coote & Shelton
 Crawford & Turton
 Davis, J.
 Douglas, M.
 Durkheim & Maus
 Moore, H.
 Stokes, M.

Bryanston School: Preparation for Higher Education

Classic Field-based Studies

Patterns of Culture
Homo Hierarchicus
Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande
The Nuer
The Interpretation of Cultures
Divinity and Experience: the Religion of the Dinka
Argonauts of the Western Pacific
Knowledge and Passion: Notions of Self and Society among the Ilongot
The Forest of Symbols

Benedict, R.
Dumont, L.
Evans-Pritchard, E.
Evans-Pritchard, E.
Geertz, C.
Lienhardt, R.G.
Malinowski, B.
Rosaldo, M.
Turner, V.

Art, History of Art & Architecture

ART

British Prints from the Machine Age 1914-1939
Learning to Look at Paintings
Ways of Seeing
Another Way of Telling
Beyond Multicultural Art Education: International Perspectives
Media in Art
The Photograph
Welded Sculpture of the Twentieth Century
Critical Studies and Modern Art
Objects of Desire
Art Education and Human Development
Women Artists
Representation
Hiding in the Light
Women Artists
The Shock of the New
Visual Culture
The Gender Object
The Drawing Book
Reading Images
Art Today
History of Art
Concise History of Modern Sculpture
Sensation
Comics: Comix & Graphic Novels

Ackley, C.S.
Acton, M.
Berger, J.
Berger & Mohr
Boughton & Mason
Carroll, T.
Clarke, G.
Collischam, J.
Dawtrety et al.
Forty, A.
Gardner, H.
Grosenick, U.
Hall & Stuart
Hebdige, D.
Heller, N.
Hughes, R.
Jenks, C.
Kirkham, P.
Kovats, T.
Kress & Van Leeuwen
Lucie Smith, E.
Pointon, M.
Read, H.
Rosenthal, N.
Sabin, R.

History of Art & Architecture

History of Modern Art
Modern Times, Modern Places
Selected Essays of John Berger
Art History and its Methods
A History of Italian Renaissance Art
A World History of Art
The Shock of the New
Understanding Architecture
The Art of Art History
A Companion to Medieval Art
The Books that Shaped Art History
A History of Western Architecture

Amason, H.
Conrad, P.
Dyer, G.
Fernie, E.
Hartt, F.
Honour & Fleming
Hughes, R.
McCarter & Pallasma
Preziosi, D.
Rudolph, C.
Shone & Stonard
Watkin, D.

Biology

The Trials of Life: A Natural History of Animal Behaviour
The X in Sex
Ecological Principles and Environmental Issues
A Short History of Nearly Everything
Guns, Germs & Steel
Climbing Mount Improbable
The Blind Watchmaker
The Selfish Gene
Bad Science
Bully for Brontosaurus: Reflections in Natural History

Attenborough, D.
Bainbridge, D.
Beeby & Brennan
Bryson, B.
Diamond, J.
Dawkins, R.
Dawkins, R.
Dawkins, R.
Goldacre, B.
Gould, S.J.

Bryanston School: Preparation for Higher Education

Lucy: The Beginnings of Humankind
The Language of the Genes
The Origin of Humankind: Unearthing Our Family Tress
Introduction to Animal Behaviour
The Symbiotic Planet: A New Look at Evolution
Mendel's Dwarf
The Origins of Life
The Origins of Virtue
Evolution
Genome: The Autobiography of a Species in 23 Chapters
The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks
The Story of Life
An Introduction to the Study of Man

Johanson & Edey
Jones, S.
Leakey, R.
Manning, A.
Margulis, L.
Mawer, S.
Maynard Smith, J.
Ridley, M.
Ridley, M.
Ridley, M.
Skloot, R.
Southwood, T.R.E.
Young, J.Z.

Business & Economics

Periodicals: The Economist, Economics Today, The Economic Review, The Financial Times.

Business

How to start your own business for entrepreneurs
43 business mistakes and how to avoid them
How I made it: 40 successful entrepreneurs reveal how they made millions
How to make a million before lunch
23 Things They Don't Tell You About Capitalism
Brands and Branding
Marketing: a guide to the fundamentals
Forbes' greatest business stories of all time
Guide to management ideas & gurus
Start it up: why running your own business is easier than you think
How they started: global brands
How they started: how 30 good ideas became great businesses
How they started: in tough times
Innocent: out story and some things we learned
The City: A Guide to London's Global Financial Centre
Pour your heart into it: how Starbucks built a company one cup at a time
Innocent: the inside story of Innocent told from the outside
Eminent Corporations: The Rise and Fall of the Great British Brands
The definitive business plan: the fast track to intelligent business planning...
Guide to Analysing Companies

Ashton, R.
Bannantyne, D.
Bridge, R.
Bridge, R.
Chang, H-J.
Clifton, R.
Forsyth, P.
Gross, D.
Hindle, T.
Johnson, L.
Lester, D.
Lester, D.
Lester, D.
Reed, R.
Roberts, R.
Schulz, H.
Simmons, J.
Simms & Boyle
Stutley, R.
Vause, B.

Economics

Animal Spirits: how human psychology drives the economy and why it matters...
Identity Economics: how our identities shape our work, wages and well-being
Economics: An A-Z Guide
What You Need to Know About Economics
How Markets Fail: The Logic of Economic Calamities
The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing
Surrender: How British Industry Gave Up the Ghost, 1952-2012
50 Economics Ideas You Really Need to Know
The Soulful Science: what economists do and why it matters
Economics: Making Sense of the Modern Economy
Made in Britain: How the Nation earns its living
Style Guide
The Economic Naturalist: Why Economics Explains Almost Everything
Redefining Global Strategy: Crossing Borders in a World Where Differences Still Matter
World 3.0: Global Prosperity and How to Achieve it
The Undercover Economist
The Accidental Theorist, and other dispatches from the dismal science
The Return of Depression Economics and the Crisis of 2008
The Armchair Economist
Freakonomics
Keynes: The Return of the Master
Free Lunch: Easily Digestible Economics
A Guide for the Young Economist
Naked Economics: Undressing the Dismal Science

Akerlof, G.
Akerlof, G.
Bishop, M.
Buckley & Desai
Cassidy, J.
Collier, P.
Comfort, N.
Conway, E.
Coyle, D.
Datta, S.
Davis, E.
The Economist
Frank, R.
Ghemawat, P.
Ghemawat, P.
Harford, T.
Krugman, P.
Krugman, P.
Landsberg, S.
Levitt & Dubner
Skidelsky, R.
Smith, D.
Thomson, W.
Wheelan, C.

Chemistry

Periodicals: New Scientist, Scientific American, Chemistry Review.

The Chemistry of Explosives
Atoms, Electrons & Change
The Elements of Physical Chemistry
Four Laws that Drive the Universe
Molecules
Elegant Solutions: Ten Beautiful Experiments in Chemistry
Chemistry 3
Organic Chemistry
The Consumer's Good Chemical Guide
Nature's Building Blocks
Why Chemical Reactions Happen
Mechanisms in Organic Chemistry
Food & Drugs
Pushing Electrons
Ionic Organic Mechanisms

Akhavan, J.
Atkins, P.
Atkins, P.
Atkins, P.
Atkins, P.
Ball, P.
Burrows, Parsons et al.
Clayden, Greeves et al.
Emsley, J.
Emsley, J.
Keeler & Wothers
Sykes, P.
Tooley, P.
Weeks, D.
Went, C.

Classics

Plato: A Very Short Introduction
Classics: A Very Short Introduction
The Silver Pigs (historical fiction)
Pompeii (historical fiction)
It's all Greek to me
The Dream of Rome
The Roman Empire: A Very Short Introduction
Presocratic Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction
Greek History
In Search of the Greeks
In Search of the Romans
Roman Blood (historical fiction)
Greek Art: an introduction

Annas, J.
Beard & Henderson
Davis, L.
Harris, R.
Higgins, C.
Johnson, B.
Kelly, C.
Osborne, C.
Osborne, R.
Renshaw, J.
Renshaw, J.
Saylor, S.
Woodford, S.

Classical World Series (BCP)

Greek Tragedy: An Introduction
Women in Classical Athens
Democracy in Classical Athens
Greek and Roman Historians
Augustan Rome

Baldock, M.
Blundell, S.
Carey, C.
Duff, T.
Wallace-Hadrill, A.

Greece & Rome: Texts & Contexts (CUP)

Tacitus and the Principate
Herodotus and the Persian Wars
Greek Theatre in Context
Socrates and Athens
Virgil: A Poet in Augustan Rome
Cicero and the Roman Republic

Burmand, C.
Claughton, J.
Dugdale, E.
Johnson, D.
Morwood, J.
Murrell, J.

Design

Smart Design: The Products of Lateral Thinking
Industrial Design
Dictionary of Design Since 1900
Materials for Inspirational Design
Design Museum Book of 20th Century Design
Designing Interactions
The Design of Everyday Things
Emotional Design
Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius
Presentation Techniques

Grinyer, C.
Heskett, J.
Julier, G.
Lefteri, C.
McDermott, C.
Moggridge, B.
Norman, D.A.
Norman, D.A.
Pevsener, N.
Powel, D.

Drama

Your first point of call should be www.drama.ac.uk, which contains an excellent guide on applying to drama school: the Drama UK Guide. You may also find the following helpful and of interest:

Bryanston School: Preparation for Higher Education

The Theatre and its Double	Artuad, A.
The Director and the Stage: From Naturalism to Grotowski	Braun, E.
On Theatre	Brecht, B.
The Empty Space	Brook, P.
The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre	Brown, J.R.
So You Want to Go to Drama School?	Freeman, H.
The Theatre: A Concise History	Hartnoll & Brater
100 Exercises to Get You into Drama School: Improve Your Acting and Audition Skills	Howl & Rowe
Avant Garde Theatre 1892-1992	Innes, C.
Fifty Key Theatre Directors	Mitter, S.
Year of the King	Sher, A.
An Actor Prepares	Stanislavski, C.

Engineering

Try the following websites: The Engineering Council www.engc.org.uk and Year in Industry www.yini.org.uk

Made to Measure	Ball, P.
How Things Work	Bloomfield, L.A.
New Science of Strong Materials: or why you don't fall through the floor	Gordon, J.E.
Structures: or why things don't fall down	Gordon, J.E.
Mechanics of Flight	Kermode, F.
Engineering: A Beginner's Guide	McCarthy, N.
Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air	MacKay, D.
Invention by Design	Petroski, H.
To Engineer is Human	Petroski, H.

English

A full list of key texts for each period of literature can be obtained from NMK. The following will provide an excellent overview of literary history and critical analysis:

The Routledge History of Literature in English	Carter & McRae
Mastering English Literature	Gill, R.
English Literature: A Student Guide	Stephen, M.

Film

Documentary Film: A Very Short Introduction	Aufderheide, P.
Projections 12: Filmmakers on Film Schools No. 12	Boorman & Donohue
Essential Film: A World History	Borden et al.
Film School Confidential: The Insider's Guide To Film Schools	Edgar & Kelly
Film Production Theory	Geuens, J.P.
Understanding Movies	Giannetti, L.
Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts	Hayward, S.
Making A Winning Short	Levy, E.
On Film-making	Mackendrick & Cronin
501 Movie Directors	Schneider, S.J.
The Film Director Prepares	Schreibman, M.A.
Film Theory: An Anthology	Stam, R.
Film History: An Introduction	Thompson & Bordwell
Cinematic Storytelling: The 100 Most Powerful Film Conventions...	Van Sijll, J.
A Short History of Film	Winston, Dixon & Foster

Geography & Geology

We do not expect that all of the books below will be read, but you cannot begin to understand the world unless you begin to find out about it. It is a journey, not a destination. A number of these books reside on the shelves in Poole. Many of these authors will have published other books more recently, which will no doubt be worth reading if you come across a title that looks interesting.

Tubes: Behind the Scenes at the Internet	Blum, A.
Wars, Guns & Votes: Democracy in Dangerous Places	Collier, P.
Guns, Germs and Steel: A Short History of Everybody	Diamond, Jared
The Earth: An Intimate History	Fortey, R.
Trilobite!	Fortey, R.
The Ghost Map: The Hidden Power of Urban Network	Johnson, S.

Bryanston School: Preparation for Higher Education

What does China think?	Leonard, M.
High Tide: News from a Warming World	Lynas, M.
Sustainability: Without the Hot Air	Mackay, D.
The Global Casino: An Introduction to Environmental Issues	Middleton, N.
When the Rivers Run Dry	Pearce, F.
The McDonaldisation of Society	Ritzer, G.
Treasure Islands: Tax Havens and the Men Who Stole the World	Shaxson, N.
The World: A Beginner's Guide	Therborn, G.
Atlantic: A Vast Ocean of a Million Stories	Winchester, S.
The Map that Changed the World	Winchester, S.

Any relevant titles from the OUP Very Short Introductions series e.g. Geopolitics; Globalisation; Climate Change; American Immigration; International Migration; Malthus; Marx; Empire; The British Empire; Keynes; Film; Nationalism; The Blues; Barthes.

History

Non-fiction

Testament of Youth	Britten, V.
What is History?	Carr, E.H.
Britons	Colley, L.
Freedom at Midnight	Collins & Lapierre
The Stripping of the Altars	Duffy, E.
The Pity of War	Ferguson, N.
People's Tragedy	Figes, O.
The End of History and the Last Man	Fukuyama, F.
Hand Me My Travellin' Shoes: In Search of Blind Willie McTell	Gray, M.
The Tudors	Guy, J.
Dispatches	Herr, M.
Nationalism and Society in Germany 1800-1945	Hughes, M.
Last Days of Henry VIII, & Thomas Cromwell	Hutchinson, R.
Edward VI	Loach, J.
Peacemakers	Macmillan, M.
The Uses and Abuses of History	Macmillan, M.
In Europe: Travels through the Twentieth Century	Mak & Garrett
The Time Traveller's Guide to Medieval England	Mortimer, I.
The Origins of the British	Oppenheimer, S.
Essays	Orwell, G.
Talking about Jane Austen in Baghdad	Rowlatt & Witwit
The Peloponnesian War	Thucydides

Fiction

A Woman in Berlin	Anonymous
Regeneration Trilogy	Barker, P.
The Past is Myself	Bielenberg, C.
The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas	Boyne, J.
Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China	Chang, J.
Sharpe Series & Saxon Series	Cornwell, B.
Birdsong, Charlotte Grey, & On Green Dolphin Street	Faulks, S.
Pillars of the Earth	Follett, K.
The Death Maze	Franklin, A.
The Cellist of Sarajevo	Gallaway, S.
Goodbye to all that	Graves, R.
Any titles	Gregory, P.
A Conspiracy of Violence, Blood on the Strand, & The Butcher of Smithfield	Gregory, S.
Defying Hitler	Haffner, S.
The Reluctant Fundamentalist	Hamid, M.
Enigma, & Fatherland	Harris, R.
Berlin Noir	Kerr, P.
Small Island	Levy, A.
Flashman	MacDonald Fraser, G.
A Place of Greater Safety, Wolf Hall, & Bring up the Bodies	Mantel, H.
Warhorse	Morpurgo, M.
Good Evening, Mrs Craven	Panther-Downes, M.
Dissolution, Dark Fire, Sovereign, Revelation, & A winter in Madrid	Sansome, C.J.
The Reader	Schlink, B.

Bryanston School: Preparation for Higher Education

Tender is the Night, & The Great Gatsby
Oil!
Child 44
Grapes of Wrath
Any titles

Scott Fitzgerald, F.
Sinclair, U.
Smith, T.R.
Steinbeck, J.
Weir, A.

Law

Understanding Law
Law and Modern Society
The Law Machine
How to Study Law
Law, Liberty & Morality
Learning Legal Rules
About Law
The Idea of Law
Letters to a Law Student: A Guide to Studying Law at University
Law: A Very Short Introduction
Learning the Law

Adams & Brownsword
Atiyah, P.S.
Belins & Dyer
Bradney et al.
Hart, H.L.A.
Holland & Webb
Honoré, T.
Lloyd, D.
M McBride, N.J.
Wacks, R.
Williams, G.

Mathematics

A Brief History of Infinity
Mathematics: The New Golden Age
Alan Turing the Enigma
The Man Who Loved Only Numbers
The (Mis)Behaviour of Markets
The Music of the Primes
Finding Moonshine
Zero: The biography of a Dangerous Idea
Lewis Carroll in Numberland

Clegg, B.
Devlin, K.
Hodges, A.
Hoffman, P.
Mandelbrot, B.
du Sautoy, M.
du Sautoy, M.
Seife, C.
Wilson, R.

Medicine & Veterinary Medicine

Life at the Extremes
Getting into Veterinary School
Bad Science
Bad Pharma: How drug companies mislead doctors and harm patients
Succeeding in your medical school interview
Medical Ethics: A Very Short Introduction
Getting into Medical School
Medical School Interviews: A practical guide to help you get that place at medical school
Blood and Guts: A Short History of Medicine
Learning Medicine
Succeed in your medical school interview
A Career in Medicine: Do you have what it takes?
Choosing a Medical School

Ashcroft, F.
Barton, J.
Goldacre, B.
Goldacre, B.
Green & Edgar
Hope, T.
Homer, S.
Lee & Picard
Porter, R.
Richards et al.
See, C.
Shakur, R.
Young et al.

See also reading lists for Biology and Chemistry.

Modern Foreign Languages

Courses in (or including) modern languages come in a wide variety of forms, and differ considerably in their precise content. Useful background to any of them can, however, be gained by reading general cultural and social introductions such as the following:

France in the New Century
Encyclopaedia of Contemporary French Culture
Contemporary Germany: A Handbook
Encyclopaedia of Contemporary German Culture
Contemporary Spain: A Handbook
Encyclopaedia of Contemporary Spanish Culture

Ardagh, J.
Hughes & Reader
Lewis, D.
Sandford, J.
Ross, C.
Rogers, E.

The best way to keep abreast of current affairs is to regularly read a good newspaper in your chosen language(s). Many major local and national newspapers are available to read in online versions, and one of the best portals providing links to these publications is at the following website: www.onlinenewspapers.com. If the course you are intending to follow contains literature, you may wish to do some prior reading in this area also. If so, consult your HoD about the best books to read for your particular degree syllabus.

Music

World Music: A Very Short Introduction
A Guide to Musical Analysis
Music: A Very Short Introduction
A History of Western Music
Music Ho! A Study of Music in Decline
The Classical Style
The Rest is Noise
Oxford History of Western Music
Who Killed Classical Music? Maestros, Managers & Corporate Politics

Bohlman, P.
Cook, N.
Cook, N.
Grout & Palisca
Lambert, C.
Rosen, C.
Ross, A.
Taruskin, R.
Lebrecht, N.

Philosophy

Subscribe to 'Think', a periodical on Philosophy that is designed to be read by even the general reader. You should also look at the universities to which you are applying and find their specific reading lists.

Core

Think
Meditations
Utilitarianism: For & Against

Blackburn, S.
Descartes
Smart & Williams

Additional

Routledge Guidebook to Descartes and the Meditations
Meno and Euthyphro
The Problems of Philosophy

Hatfield, G.
Plato
Russell, B.

Physics

Quantum: A Guide for the Perplexed
University Physics
The New Cosmic Onion
Particle Physics: A Very Short Introduction
We need to talk about Kelvin
Thinking Physics
The Character of Physical Law
QED
The Feynman Lectures Vol. I, II, III
The Quark and the Jaguar
The Elegant Universe
Mr Tomkins in Paperback
Physics for the Inquiring Mind
Big Bang
Black Holes and Time Warps
Spacetime Physics

Al Khalili, J.
Benson, H.
Close, F.
Close, F.
Chown, M.
Epstein, L.C.
Feynman, R.
Feynman, R.
Feynman, Leighton & Sands
Gell Mann, M.
Greene, B.
Penrose & Gamow
Rogers, E.
Singh, S.
Thorn, K.
Wheeler, J.

Politics & International Relations

Introduction to Politics
Essentials of British Politics
Contemporary Political Philosophy
Modern Political Thinkers and Ideas
Politics: A Very Short Introduction
US Government and Politics
Political Philosophy: A Beginners' Guide for Students and Politicians

Garner et al.
Heywood, A.
Kymlicka, W.
Jones, T.
Minogue, K.
Storey, W.
Wolff, J.

Psychology

Introductory Textbooks

Foundations of Psychology: An Introductory Text
Psychology
Basic Psychology
Psychology: The Science of Mind and Behaviour

Hayes, N.
Hewstone & Fincham
Gleitman
Gross, R.D.

Introduction to Psychology
Zero Degrees of Empathy: A New Theory of Human Cruelty
The Essential Difference: Male, Female & Extreme Male Brains
Madness Explained: Psychosis and Human Nature

Atkinson et al.
Baron-Cohen, S.
Baron-Cohen, S.
Bentall & Beck.

Bryanston School: Preparation for Higher Education

Games People Play
The Magic of Reality: How do we know what is real?
Consciousness Explained
Bad Science
Your Memory: A User's Guide
The Private Life of the Brain
Psychology in Action
The Mismeasure of Man
Body Language
Talk Language
How the mind works: A General Introduction to Understanding the Mind
The Language Instinct: Is Language Innate or Linked to Culture?
Phantoms in the Brain: Human Nature and the Architecture of the Mind
Nature via Nurture: Genes, experience and what makes us human
The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat
The Minds Eye: How Humans Perceive the World Around Them

Berne, E.
Dawkins, R.
Dennett, D.C.
Goldacre, B.
Gregory, R.L.
Greenfield, S.
Huffman, Vernoy & Vernoy
Jay Gould, S.
Pease, A.
Pease, A.
Pinker, S.
Pinker, S.
Ramachandran & Blakeslee
Ridley, M.
Sacks, O.
Sacks, O.

Sociology

Introductory Sociology
An Introduction to Sociology
Sociology: A Very Short Introduction
Sociology & Social Work
Dead White Men and Other Important People: Sociology's Big Ideas
Sociology
Sociology: Introductory Readings
Sociology: Themes and Perspectives
The Crowd: Study of the Popular Mind
Introducing Sociology: A Graphic Guide
Sociology: The Basics
A Dictionary of Sociology
Sociology, Work & Organisation

Bilton et al.
Browne, K.
Bruce, S.
Cunningham, J.
Fevre & Bancroft
Giddens, A.
Giddens & Sutton
Haralambos & Holbom
Le Bon, G.
Osborne & Van Loon
Plummer, K.
Scott, J.
Watson, T.J.

Sport, Exercise & Health Science

Websites

www.pponline.co.uk: This website contains articles on the latest ideas and techniques involved in enhancing elite performance. It ranges from exploring new approaches to training and coaching to looking at techniques used in specific sports such as cycling. Articles cover the three main disciplines of sports science: Exercise & Health Physiology, Biomechanics and Sport Psychology.

<https://sportsscientists.com> This website is updated daily with articles relating to the science behind the most recent success or failure in specific sporting events. All sports are discussed in detail.

Journal of Sports Sciences: This journal is produced monthly on behalf of the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences and covers all disciplines related to sport and exercise sciences. Most issues contain at least one article on exercise physiology or training.

Exercise and Health Physiology

Manual of Structural Kinesiology
Physiology of Sport and Exercise
The Nine Key Elements of Fitness
Physiological Assessment of Human Fitness
Exercise Physiology
The Anatomy of Sports Injuries

Floyd R.T.
Kenney, Wilmore & Costill
Mackenzie, B.
Maud & Foster
Powers & Howley
Walker, B.

Biomechanics

Sport Mechanics for Coaches
Biomechanics of Sport and Exercise

Carr, G.
McGinnis, P.M.

Sport Psychology

Sport Psychology: Concepts and Applications

Cox R.H.

Theology & Religious Studies

General Theology

Invitation to Theology

Brown, D.

General Books on Biblical Interpretation

The Literary Guide to the Bible

Alter & Kermode

Bryanston School: Preparation for Higher Education

A Short History of the Interpretation of Scripture
Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook
Biblical Interpretation
Introduction to the Bible

The Old Testament

The Living World of the Old Testament
Introducing the Old Testament
Who Wrote the Bible?
Teach Yourself the Old Testament
Ancient Israelite Religion
Beginning Old Testament Study
The Old Testament World

The New Testament

The New Testament Background: Selected Documents
The Origins of Christianity
The New Testament World
The Stories of Jesus' Birth
The Writings of the New Testament
The Birth of the New Testament
The Gospels and Jesus
Reading the New Testament

Theology of Jesus

The Cambridge Companion to Jesus
Theology: A Very Short Introduction
Jesus
Christian Theology: An Introduction
Truly Human and Truly Divine
Jesus through the Centuries
The Meaning of Jesus

Modern Theology

A History of Christianity
A Very Short Introduction to Theology
Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology
Invitation to Theology
Christian Theology: An Introduction
The Making of the Creeds

World Religions

An Introduction to Judaism
Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices
The Insider/Outsider Problem in the Study of Religion: A Reader
Comparing Religions Through Law: Judaism and Islam
Religious Experience of Mankind
An Introduction to Islam

Grant and Tracey
Hayes & Holladay
Morgan & Barton
Rogerson, J.W.

Anderson, B.W.
Coggins, R.J.
Friedman, R.E.
McConville, G.
Nititch, S.
Rogerson, J.W.
Rogerson & Davies

Barrett, C.K.
Brown, S.
Court, J. & K.
Freed, E.D.
Johnson, L.T.
Moule, C.F.D.
Stanton, G.N.
Tuckett, C.

Bockemuehl, M.
Ford, D.F.A.
Ford & Highton
McGrath, A.E.
Need, S.W.
Pelikan, J.
Wright & Borg

Johnson, P.
Ford, D.F.
Migliore, D.L.
Brown, D.
McGrath, A.E.
Young, F.

de Lange, N.R.M.
Lipner, J.J.
McCutcheon, R.T.
Neusner & Sonn
Smart, N.
Waines, D.

9. Appendix 3: Degree course research worksheet

What should you look for in a degree course?

It is important to recognise that one course is not better than another: it is simply different. The best course is the course that best suits your needs and aspirations.

University:

Course being researched:

1. What are the entry requirements for this course?

GCSEs:

A level/IB subjects and grades:

Admission/Aptitude tests or other requirements:

2. Is the course largely theoretical, practical or vocational? Be specific if possible.

3. How is the teaching delivered? Via lectures to hundreds of students where you just sit, listen and take notes; or via tutorials and seminars where groups are smaller and you are required to participate?

4. How much written work is there (e.g. *how long and how often*)?

5. How structured is the course? (*Do you need the structure and discipline of regular assignments and exams?*)

6. How is the degree assessed (*e.g. final written examinations or continuous assessment, or both*)? Are examinations in the first year just a hurdle to pass into the second year or will your performance count towards your final degree classification?

7. How much choice and flexibility is there in the degree course? What options are available and at what stage?

8. How much contact will you have with the university tutors?

9. If relevant, how many hours of laboratory work will you be required to do? Is this different in different years?

10. Research the library, laboratory and ICT facilities for this course, e.g. availability and cost.

11. What kind of employment did graduates from this course achieve during the last few years?

12. What is the drop-out rate from this course?

13. If relevant, does a degree in this course give any exemption from the academic requirements of professional bodies (e.g. Accountancy, Law, Surveying, Psychology)?

14. How do the tutors on this course regard gap years and deferred entry?

15. Additional notes