Results day 2024 will be on Thursday 22nd August, and UCAS will open Clearing on Friday 5th July. Read on to find out more!

...but you haven't received the results you hoped for, or perhaps your plans have changed?

Don't worry, you're not alone, and you still have options, such as to find out what Clearing has to offer.

In 2023, 9% of UCAS applicants were placed in clearing, up from 7 per cent in 2022.

In 2023 493,940 students were accepted through Clearing – UCAS

Ready For Higher Education?

Results day 2024 will be on Thursday 22nd August, and UCAS will open Clearing on Friday 5th July.

Read on to find out more!
What is Clearing?

This year Clearing will be open from 5th July 2024 and close on 21st October.

Clearing is a chance to find a different course at the same institutions you originally applied to, or even somewhere new! Clearing is how unis and colleges fill any places they still have on their courses, and there are many reasons why students go through the Clearing process.

You are eligible to enter Clearing if:

- You're applying after 30th June.
- You haven't met the conditions of your offers and so haven't been offered any places.
- You haven't been made any offers at all (or none you wanted to accept) and didn't go through UCAS Extra.
- You've declined your offers and want to go somewhere else.

What is Clearing Plus?

If you find yourself in Clearing this year, UCAS will match you to courses you may be interested in, using what they know about you from your application, and what universities and colleges are looking for in a student.

If you're unplaced or have started a new application, a button will appear in Track - My Matches. This will take you to your top 50 course matches. You’ll then be able to tell universities and colleges you’re ‘interested’ in their courses. If they still have vacancies and you meet their entry requirements, they may call you.

Don't worry, if you want to apply for a different course subject, you can still find courses available in Clearing using the UCAS search tool.

"Clearing gives you the ability to re-evaluate your options and you can find yourself going to a better university or doing a course you're more suited to that you didn't know existed!"

Ella, BA (Hons) History with English
Do your research

Becoming a Clearing candidate might feel like a compromise at first, but once you start exploring the vacancies available you’ll realise there are plenty of unique and exciting courses still open to you.

Try following these steps to create your new shortlist:

1. If you applied before the 30th June, check your UCAS application, are any of your original selection going into Clearing? If you are applying after the 30th June, you will be fast-tracked directly into Clearing.

2. Is there a course running at any of your preferred universities/colleges that interests you?

3. Search the course title you originally applied for (or would like to apply for) and see which universities/colleges are still recruiting for a similar study programme or a programme that interests you.

4. Check your Clearing Plus matches in Track - 'My Matches'. This will take you to your top 50 course matches.

5. Once you’ve narrowed your search to 5-10 courses, check out each institution’s website and social media to get a feel for life on campus. You can browse some of the universities virtual tours on the NSSW website.

6. Build an honest picture of what it’s like to study on each course, and compare the pros and cons. You’ll find helpful information on websites such as Which?, The Student Room, and What Uni?

7. Seal the deal! Once you’ve made your decision, it’s time to pick up the phone.
To make an application through Clearing you may have to make a telephone call. Not everyone feels confident picking up the phone, but some simple preparation will make sure your conversation runs smoothly.

Most universities and colleges have a dedicated hotline number for you to call, with a team of friendly advisers waiting to hear from you. Phone calls may range from quick checks of your A-level results to in-depth interviews checking your suitability for the course.

Follow the checklist overleaf to make the right impression!
1. Have your UCAS Clearing number and A-Level/BTEC/IB results to hand.

2. Note down each university/college’s name and phone number.

3. Find the course code, name and details of the course you’re enquiring about.

4. Re-read your personal statement and have a copy nearby to refer to when questioned.

5. Make some notes on why each course appeals to you, why you deserve the place, and any questions you have for them.

6. Keep a pen and paper ready to note down the course code if they accept you.

7. Make sure your phone is charged and you have good signal in a quiet place where you won’t be disturbed.

1. Be patient – you may not get through to an adviser straight away as there are many young people in the same position as you.

2. Manage your time – if you tried the same number a few times and can’t get through, move onto the next one and try again later.

3. Take down the name, email and telephone of whoever you speak to, just in case you get cut off or need to get back in touch.

4. Speak clearly and confidently – sell yourself and ask as many questions as you need to – this is your moment to shine.

5. If an offer is made over the phone then remember to write down the code they give you.

6. If they don’t make you an offer, move onto your next phone call.

1. Whether you accept one verbal offer or multiple offers over the phone, you may only enter one code into UCAS Track.

2. Login to your account at track.ucas.com and click “Add Clearing Choice” to confirm your decision.

3. Take a deep breath. You did it! Look out for a confirmation letter from the university and remember to update your student finance and accommodation applications.
"We understand that going through Clearing can be nerve-racking, but you don’t need to panic, there are still options available to you. We’re always happy to talk to students about our degree courses and help them choose what’s right for them."

Kate Leyland – HE Admissions

I’ve just missed out on my predicted grades, what can I do?

If you came really close to receiving your predicted grades you may still be in with a chance of getting on to your preferred course. Call up your firm university choice (and your insurance if you’ve missed the requirements for both) and ask if there’s any wiggle room. You may have to explain your reasons for missing the mark, but you’ve nothing to lose by trying. Refer to the “It’s Your Call” section of this guide to make the right impression.

I missed the January deadline. Can I still apply for HE?

Yes - if you are applying after 30th June you will be fast-tracked directly into Clearing.

I haven’t made a UCAS application before. Can I still apply for uni or college this year?

Yes, it’s not too late! Create a new profile through UCAS and you will be placed straight into Clearing.

Can I defer my offer if I’m accepted onto a course through Clearing?

Most universities/colleges offer Clearing vacancies for this academic year. If you don’t want to enrol this September you will need to contact their admissions department and discuss your options. They may ask you to withdraw your offer and apply again next year.

I applied for student finance before going through Clearing. What do I do?

Now that you’ve selected a choice through Clearing you will need to change your application details with Student Finance England.

Visit gov.uk/studentfinance or your loan provider to quickly update your details.

It’s results day and I have not applied for student finance yet. What do I do?

You will have missed the official student finance deadline, so your loan may not arrive in time for the start of your course.

Don’t worry, just start your application as soon as possible so that Student Finance England can begin processing your details.

Will exam grading be different in 2024?

A Level scoring consistency was a major problem for both OfQual and the Department of Education during those unfortunate lockdown years.

Therefore consistency from 2023 A Level pass marks to 2024 A Level grades has been a priority this year.
Glossary

You’ll see plenty of new words and abbreviations while conducting your research, but we’ve highlighted the ‘need-to-know’ phrases below.

**UCAS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clearing</td>
<td>A second-chance process for higher education applicants who did not receive offers, declined their offers or did not meet entry requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearing Plus</td>
<td>Available alongside Clearing. This new tool is designed to help you find your perfect course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conditional Offer</td>
<td>An HE offer made that is subject to conditions, usually related to exam results.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>When an HE offer has been accepted by the college or university, and is now ‘unconditional’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferral</td>
<td>If an applicant decides to delay their enrolment and start in the following academic year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry Requirements</td>
<td>What an applicant needs to have to get onto their HE course of choice. This may include qualifications, subject specialisms, interviews, portfolio reviews, admission tests, and more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm Choice</td>
<td>The HE course offer a student accepts as their first choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance Choice</td>
<td>A HE course offer a student accepts as a second choice, in case the conditions for the firm offer are not met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Statement</td>
<td>A piece of text applicants write to demonstrate their suitability for a study programme.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCAS</td>
<td>Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. The website that will process your application to higher education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCAS Track</td>
<td>The name of the online tracking system where you can check your application’s progress, reply to offers, and make Clearing choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconditional Offer</td>
<td>A HE offer made to you with no extra conditions to meet.</td>
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</table>

**Qualifications**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>An institution that provides further education (post-16) and sometimes higher education. Nowadays, lots of colleges that offer ‘FE’ (A-levels &amp; BTECs) also offer HE study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEI</td>
<td>Higher Education Institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education (HE)</td>
<td>An optional stage of learning beyond secondary level, usually offered by universities and colleges. You can apply for this level of education once you have completed A-levels, BTECs, or IBs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>The next level of study after higher education, for those who have completed their undergraduate degree. You cannot apply for this until you’ve completed an undergraduate course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Degree</td>
<td>A qualification combining a degree from an HEI and work experience from an employer. Applications do not have to go through UCAS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>An institution that only provides higher education (i.e. undergraduate and postgraduate).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Degree</td>
<td>Combines academic and vocational skills in a higher education course. Equivalent of two years of a bachelor’s degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Year</td>
<td>Also known as ‘Year 0’: a one-year preparation course for students who may not have gained entry requirements to go straight onto a degree, or want to explore a variety of disciplines before committing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Hotlines

Next Steps South West represent 14 universities and colleges throughout the South West, each with their own unique variety of study programmes.

"Plans can change – and there’s nothing wrong with that – but it’s better to have a plan that changes than to have no plan at all."

NSSW

Devon

- City College Plymouth: 01752 305 300
- Exeter College: 01392 400 555
- University Centre Petroc: 01271 345 291
- Arts University Plymouth: 01752 203 402

Cornwall

- UCSD University Centre South Devon: 08000 213 181
- University of Exeter: 03005 556 060
- University of Plymouth: 03332 416 929
- Falmouth University: 08000 152 534

Somerset

- Cornwall College: 01209 617 580
- University Centre Somerset: 01823 366 366
- Yeovil College: 01395 845 454
- Strode College: 01458 844 404
Good luck!

If this guide helped you secure a place at university or college, let us know on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter!

Clearing Timeline

- **5th July**: Clearing opens.
- **15th August**: A-Level results day. You can now apply for your preferred Clearing choice.
- **Early August**: BTEC results released.
- **Mid August**: Universities release information about their course vacancies.
- **21st October**: Clearing closes.

@NextStepsSW

nextstepssw@plymouth.ac.uk
Get in touch

Visit our website to explore the range of ways we can help you navigate your personal journey towards higher education, or contact our friendly team for more information. Join the conversation on social for up to date Clearing info from NSSW and our partners.

nextstepssw.ac.uk
nextstepssw@plymouth.ac.uk

@NextStepsSW #UniConnect