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Applying to University

B

Roderick Smith

Director of Admissions

Over 50,000 different courses available

- Viking Studies UCL
- Surf Science Plymouth
- Maths (with a year in Australia) UEA
- Animal Behaviour and Welfare Leeds
- Gambling and Leisure Studies Salford
- Dance with Football Studies Liverpool Hope
- Fire and Explosion Leeds
- Liberal Arts and Sciences Birmingham

Questions to ask ...

- What subjects do you enjoy now
 - What skills do you have
 - What do you want to do afterwards
 - What pays best
-
- Two-thirds of graduate level jobs will accept a degree in any subject

Course content varies

- Not all courses with the same name offer the same content
- Modern languages: literature or society or linguistics
- English: Shakespeare or 20th century
- Geography: physical or human
- Engineering: practical or mathematical
- History: political / military or social / cultural
- Specialisms that reflect the department's research interests

Entry requirements

1/2

- Are there any specific requirements, for example particular subjects at A or AS level or particular combinations of subjects
- Are additional entrance exams needed
- Is General Studies in or out
- Are they realistic for you

Entry requirements

2/2

Economics	LSE Sussex	A*AA AAB
English	Bristol Hull	AAA BBB
French	Southampton Kent	AAB ABB
Mechanical Eng	Imperial College Kingston	A*AA ABB
Sport Science	Birmingham Brunel	AAA BBB

What pays best

	<i>Salary</i>	<i>Employed or studying</i>
Medicine	£28,897	100%
Chemical Eng	£26,366	85%
Philosophy	£21,466	58%
French	£20,268	69%
Law	£19,805	72%
History	£19,198	58%
Sports Science	£18,562	60%

Type and location of the university

- Ancient / Traditional – Cambridge, Durham, Oxford, St Andrews
- Redbrick / Civic – Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle
- Campus – Exeter, East Anglia, Warwick, York
- Specialist – Arts, Agriculture, Music
- Consider the location ... near countryside, near the coast, in a town, in a city, on a campus ... small and intimate or large and busy ... night life or quiet life

Accommodation

- What is the university accommodation like
 - how close to where you will be studying
 - guarantee schemes
 - what's included in the price
 - catered or self-catering, en-suite or shared facilities
- What is the private accommodation like
 - how close to where you will be studying
 - approved private landlords for flats and houses
 - private halls

Sources of information

- The university prospectus and website
 - Look at specific department/course pages
- Open days
 - Go to the subject talks
 - Visit the accommodation
 - Ask questions (of staff and students)
- UCAS website and Entry Profiles
- Key Information Sets (KIS) and Unistats website
- Current and former students

Key Information Sets

- New for 2013 entry
- they cover

Student satisfaction	from National Student Survey
Destinations data	from employment data
Finance	fees and support (from university)
Accommodation	availability and cost (from university)
Course structure by year	contact hours and assessment methods (from university)

Example KIS

- NSS, DLHE,

Finance and Accommodation

BA History (V100)

STUDENT SATISFACTION

84% Overall Student Satisfaction



Source: National Student Survey

GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

£17,000 Average annual salary after 6 months

94% go on on work and/or study

54% of those who work are in a graduate job

FINANCIAL

£9,000 Tuition fees, per year (for UK domiciled students)

Financial support available:

Fee waiver ✗

Means tested support ✓

Non-means tested support ✓

National Scholarship Programme ✓

For more information on financial support visit

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/undergraduate/index.aspx>

£4,580-£5,900 Average annual cost of institution owned/sponsored accommodation

4570 beds available

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/accommodation/index.aspx>

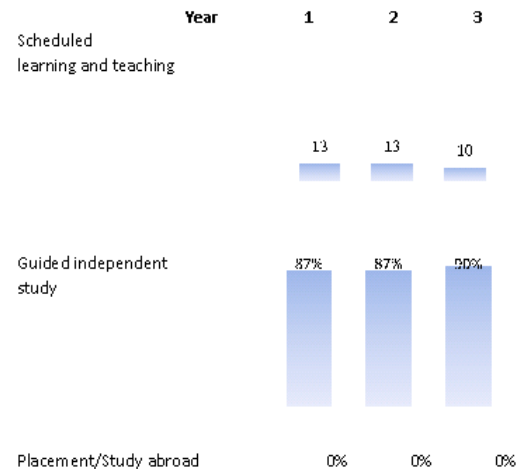
£3,280-£5,950 Private rental market

Example KIS

– Assessment and Contact hours

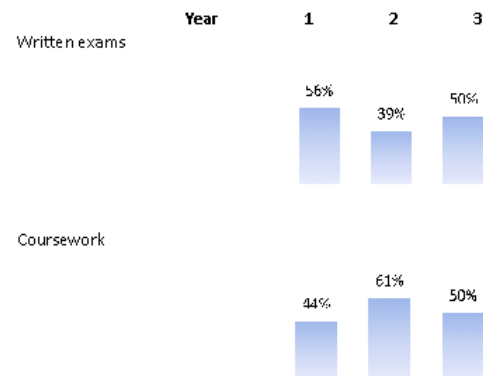
LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

12% of course spent in scheduled learning and teaching



<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/history/history.aspx>

48% of assessments are written exams



<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/history/history.aspx>

Comparing 7 courses

[Map view »](#)


Display information set

Key Information Set

KIS KEY INFORMATION SET

What is KIS?

Art and Design BA University of Bedfordshire	Contemporary Craft and Design BA University of Cumbria	Design Studies BA University of the Arts, London	Fashion Design and Development BA Bath Spa University	Industrial Design and Technology BA Brunel University	Graphic and Communication Design University of Leeds
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	Art and Design BA	Contemporary Craft and Design BA	Design Studies BA	Fashion Design and Development BA	Industrial Design and Technology BA	Graphic and Communication Design
Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course More on student satisfaction »	74%	82%	81%	70%	66%	75%
Staff are good at explaining things	75%	68%	69%	81%	64%	58%
Staff are enthusiastic	68%	n/a	81%	81%	58%	75%
Feedback on my work has been prompt	85%	n/a	90%	90%	90%	86%
Feedback on my work has been helpful	86%	n/a	89%	87%	89%	87%
Middle range salary for graduates More on employment and accreditation »	£16,000	n/a	£18,100	£18,400	£19,200	£16,500
Salary range for graduates	£14,000 - £18,000	n/a	£14,000 - £18,000	£14,000 - £18,000	£14,000 - £18,000	£14,000 - £18,000
Middle range salary for graduates across the country after 6 months	£14,000	n/a	£14,000	£14,000	£18,000	£18,000
Middle range salary for graduates across the country after 40 months	£30,000	n/a	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000

Data from 31 students
Data for all Design studies courses due to small sample size

Link from online prospectus to KIS

Students

- Course finder
- Foundation
- Undergraduate**
- Single Honours
- Joint Honours
- Major/Minor
- How to apply
- Study options
- Postgraduate
- English preessional
- Term dates

Entry requirements

- Birmingham Foundation Academy
- Teaching and learning
- Why Birmingham?
- Student support
- Careers
- Accommodation
- Fees and funding
- Visit us
- Teachers, careers advisors and parents
- Study abroad

History BA

Key information

Additional information

Careers and employability

[Open all sections](#)

Summary

Our Single Honours History programme concentrates on medieval and modern Britain and Europe but it also provides scope to range beyond European boundaries. You have the chance to investigate unfamiliar territory and to question some of the prevailing myths, preconceptions and prejudices that surround history from the Middle Ages to the present day.

Key facts



Entry requirements



Contact details



How to apply



Fees and funding



Programme overview



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The application and selection process

The application process

1/2

- All applications must go through UCAS
- Five choices available (plus Extra)
- Deadlines
 - 15 October for medicine, dentistry, veterinary science and Oxbridge
 - 15 January for all other courses and universities
 - applicant's decision to UCAS by 5 May
 - LNAT / BMAT / UKCAT
- All applications received by the deadlines considered equally

The application process

2/2

- UCAS sends the application to your chosen universities, who do not know where else you have applied
- Decision times can vary from a few weeks to several months
- Formal letter about each decision from UCAS
- Use UCAS Track to follow your progress
- Universities will also send letters and other information and invite you to visit

The selection process

Admissions Tutors are looking for evidence that you ...

- have the ability to cope with the course
 - subjects being studied
 - skills
 - exam results and predictions
 - reference
- have an interest in the subject
 - personal statement
 - reference

The Personal Statement

The Personal Statement is ...

- Essential for all courses at some universities and for some courses at all universities
- An opportunity to tell the Admissions Tutor why you want to study the subject
- Not so much about what you've done but about what you've learnt from what you've done
- Improved by research and practice
- All your own work
- 4,000 characters or 47 lines

The Personal Statement should cover ...

- The reason for the subject choice
- What you enjoy about that subject now
- Interests around the subject
 - what you do that is relevant to the subject or career
 - what you have read, over and above course texts, that relates to the subject
- Skills relevant to your subject choice
 - writing, debating, problem solving, technical or mathematical expertise
- Achievements and experience, at school and elsewhere
- Work experience and employment

What we're looking for

- Self-awareness
- Knowledge of the subject
- Motivation and commitment
- Appropriate skills
 - Independent study
 - Numeracy and literacy
 - Essay writing
 - Research
 - Time management
- Enthusiasm

Subject specific skills ... Medicine

- Sound academic background
- Physical stamina
- Manual dexterity
- Communication skills
- IT skills
- Study skills
- Team working
- Self motivation

Subject specific skills ... Engineering

- Clear logical thinker
- Analytical skills
- Good at problem solving
- Innovative
- Numerate
- Good spoken and written communication
- IT skills
- Able to work independently and in teams

Subject specific skills ... Law

- Ability to write good essays
- Able to extract and manipulate information
- Able to analyse written material
- Enjoy listening, arguing, debating and negotiating
- Logical approach to factual situations
- Ability to think under pressure
- Awareness of the political scene

Subject specific skills ... English

- Reading skills
- Ability to write good essays in clear and concise English
- Knowledge of different literary texts
- Enthusiasm for “literature”
- Curiosity about language (linguistics)
- Willingness to be challenged and engage in debate

What we don't want to see

- Lists, lists, lists, lists, lists, lists
- rather, select one or two key activities and expand on them
- Intellectual pretension
- wait until you're a professor!
- Misdirected humour
- some tutors like attempts at humour but many hate it
- No mention of future aspirations or direction
- GBH on the English language
- “I so don't want to miss this opportunity”

Some examples from real Personal Statements

What not to say ...

The world is becoming increasingly global (*Economics*)

I enjoy the theatre and used to go a couple of times a year (*Drama*)

I am a keen reader and committed to the study of human behaviour through TV soaps (*Psychology*)

My interest in medicine stems from my enjoyment of 'Casualty' and other related TV series (*Medicine*)

I always wanted to be a Physiotherapist or a primary school teacher (*Physiotherapy*)

Get it right!

“To be or not to be, that is the question”. It was this quote from Shakespeare’s Macbeth that persuaded me to study English (*English*)

Don't be too clever

If I should be accepted to your University, I would wish to pursue my chosen field of study, Psychology, for one very basic reason: I want to Rule the World. I'm not talking about your run of the mill big company or being Prime Minister, no I'm talking about Julius Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparte, King Tutankhamen type of Ruling the World, except succeeding where they failed, because quite simply they lacked a basic understanding of human psychology. (*Psychology*)

Mention relevant work experience

My work experience at Ove Arup involved designing a building, as part of a team of other students, and then presenting our ideas to a group of engineers. This helped my presentation and team working skills as well as giving a valuable insight into the work of a civil engineer. *(Civil Engineering)*

Show your interest in the subject

My favourite aspect of literature is poetry. I love to study both form and meaning, mainly in modern poets like Carol Ann Duffy, Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes, although I have also read and enjoyed work by John Donne, John Clare and of course Shakespeare.

(English)

Show your interest in the subject

I am particularly interested in the dominant role of the language in French culture, finding the Francophone determination to preserve the language fascinating (especially when compared to the English attitude to language). (*French*)

Show what extra reading you've done

For one of my pieces of French coursework I will be studying the issue of children fathered by German soldiers during the Occupation. In preparation for this I will be reading 'Enfants Maudits' by Jean-Paul Picaper and Ludwig Norz and 'Carnets de Memoires' by Michele Rotman. (*French and Modern History*)

Say what you enjoy about the subject

The problem solving aspects of maths challenges appeal to me as they bring together different branches of mathematics and go beyond what is taught in the classroom. (*Mathematics*)

Show you understand the demands

I know that in medicine there is not always a perfect solution to a patient's problem, but there is always something that can be done. I would like to bring my caring and compassionate qualities, together with communication, confidence and teamwork ... to ensure the best possible outcome for the patient. *(Medicine)*

Show you understand the demands

My decision to study medicine has been reaffirmed after undertaking work experience placements in various parts of the health service ... these enabled me to gain an insight into the working life of a doctor and showed the need for good teamworking, communication and interpersonal skills. (*Medicine*)

Other activities

I play hockey for the school team and for my local club. I also sing in my local church choir. Taking part in these activities has improved my communication and teamworking skills. It has also increased my confidence in my own abilities and shown me the importance of good time management. (*Economics with French*)

A good Personal Statement ...

- Concentrates (70%) on why you are applying for the particular course
- Shows motivation, commitment and enthusiasm for the chosen course or subject
- Analyses experiences and skills (including work experience) and relates them to the course or subject
- Is grammatically correct with no spelling mistakes
- Is specific, honest and positive
- Is your own work

Financial issues

Tuition fees

- Most universities are charging £9,000
- You can borrow the full cost of tuition, which is paid directly to the University (by the Student Loans Company)

Living costs

- The amount you can borrow (also from the Student Loans Company) is determined by your household income and where you choose to study
- The loan is paid directly to the student in three installments (at the start of each term)
- Up to £5,500 (minimum £3,575) if living away from home, outside London (£7,675 in London)
- Up to £4,375 (minimum £2,843) if living at home
- Up to £6,535 if studying abroad as part of course

Additional support

- A “living cost grant” is available to students from low-income backgrounds
- Paid directly to the student in three installments
- £3,354 for household incomes up to £25,000
- Tapers down to £50 for household incomes from of £42,611
- Does not have to be paid back
- University support for students from low-income backgrounds

Applying and repaying

- Applications (fees, living cost loans, living cost grants) through “Student Finance England”
- You do not start to repay until you have left university and are earning more than £21,000 a year
- Repaid at 9% of income above this threshold, deducted automatically from your salary
- Written off after 30 years
- Salary of £25,000 – a monthly repayment of £30
- Salary of £40,000 – a monthly repayment of £142.50

Any questions?