

Guidance Bulletin 46, 18th June 2018

Year 12: UK offers Most universities in the UK express their offers for places to read degrees using the IB grades. For example, Sociology at the University of Exeter demands 34 points with 6,6,5 at Higher Level; Biological Sciences at the University of East Anglia 32 points with 5 in Higher Level Biology and 6 in Standard Level English A; and Medicinal Chemistry at the University of Edinburgh 37 points with Higher Level 6,6,6. Some universities, however, express their offers using UCAS points. To calculate these, go to <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/tariff-calculator>. For example, Pass-Pass in the BTEC Level 3 Diploma (QCF) yields 32 UCAS points, Merit-Pass 48 UCAS points. 4 in IB Higher Level secures 24 UCAS points and A in the CP Reflective Project 12 UCAS points. Biological Sciences at Northumbria University asks for 120 UCAS points overall with 4 in Higher Level Biology; and Pharmaceutical Science at the University of Hertfordshire 112 UCAS points overall with 4 in both Higher Level Biology and Chemistry. Details of offers can be found on the webpages of each university.

Years 11 and 12: Supercurricular activity Prof Brian Butterworth from University College London will talk on «L'enfant et le nombre aux fondements du développement de l'arithmétique» at the auditorio Roullier, Uni Dufour, at 18:30 on 27-Jun-18. The lecture is in English and admission is free.

Years 11 and 12: Open Days Universities hold open days over the summer holiday. These offer the chance to explore campuses, compare courses and attend talks. Among the many in the UK, the following may be of interest: 30-Jun-18 Oxford Brookes, Newcastle, Nottingham; 01-Jul-18 York; 04-Jul-18 Portsmouth; 06-Jul Cardiff, Southampton; 07-Jul-18 Brighton, Kent, Bournemouth; and 27-Aug-18 Dundee. A complete list can be found at www.ucas.com/ucas/events/find/type/open-day. Personal visits can also be arranged at a time and date of choosing by going to the web pages of the relevant admissions offices or contacting individual academic departments. University College London, for example, runs guided tours three times a week: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/access-ucl/open-days>. With prior notice US and Canadian universities always welcome visits. Go to the website of each institution and look at their policy, for example <https://apply.rollins.edu/portal/rollins-visit>, <https://www.aup.edu/visit> and <https://future.utoronto.ca/visit/campus-tours>.

Years 11 and 12: Notes from the visit by UCLA on 15-May-18 The truism that UCLA enjoys 329 days of sunshine each year is not a forecast, but rather an outlook. With such a beautiful climate it is inevitable that most people wake up with a good feeling each day. Yet it is also a state of mind: there exists no problem human ingenuity cannot solve. To disagree respectfully in discussion on campus means that everyone learns from each other. Founded in 1919, UCLA is nearly always the youngest in the list of top US institutions. The chancellor sets grand challenges. One recent challenge is to become water sustainable in the next seven years. With housing on campus guaranteed for three of the four years of an undergraduate degree course, the population, including faculty and staff, is large. To cope with this large body of people new technology is going to have to be invented, whether to extract water from the regular morning mist or to turn saline water into fresh. Currently the psychology students are looking at ways of influencing undergraduates to take three-minute showers. Another recent challenge is to learn how better to help those who are suffering from depression. There are 30,000 undergraduates and 125 different majors spread across six schools. Music, Architecture and Art are based around talent and require a portfolio or audition. Nursing and Engineering are focussed on mathematics and science. Once admitted to one of these five schools, it is difficult to switch courses. The sixth school of Liberal Arts and Sciences, however, does allow for changes of mind. The choice of school should be decided on personal interests. UCLA stands out by the sheer volume of research conducted. That was in fact the prime reason why it was established. Over \$1 billion annually thus is generated. There are two undergraduate research centres: one for science, mathematics and engineering, the other for arts and humanities. A mentor is provided to oversee individual projects. Conversely undergraduates can be involved in faculty projects. Some examples of recent projects include the development of a microscope application on a mobile phone, culturing healthy cells to repair heart defects in order to avoid transplants, and recreating ancient Rome for exploration using 3D glasses. With professors being accessible through their teaching, there is built a strong sense of community. Alongside standard classes are interdisciplinary courses, different angles on an issue being taught, for instance, from a scientific,

historical, cultural and religious perspective. International students should feel supported. Not only is Los Angeles one of the most diverse cities in the world, but also on campus there exist almost a thousand different clubs and organisations. The volunteering day before the first day of classes is the largest of its kind in the USA. UCLA excels at sport: this year the women's beach volleyball won the national championships. Of the first year undergraduates, 97 per cent live on campus. This takes about fifteen minutes to cross on foot, so everything is close to hand. Adjacent to UCLA is Westwood, a residential area that has flats for rent and the usual range of shops and supermarkets, and some students choose to live there instead. Across US higher education as a whole about 90 per cent of students graduate in a degree subject other than the one they originally chose to take. The application process is unique to the nine institutions that comprise the University of California. It is the same form whether the application is to just one or to all the institutions. That each institution can know only about applications to it, and not to the others, means that the proposed majors can be mixed, for example Film at Irvine and Engineering at UCLA. For the application there is no transcript or letter of recommendation. Therefore the only voice heard by the admissions office is that of the applicant. If predicted grades are not published by the school, then these are not required. The questions set for admission should be pondered carefully. Since the allocation for each is only 350 words, applicants must get to the point quickly and succinctly. It is better to treat the questions as a written interview rather than a creative experience. UCLA is a highly selective institution. It considers the context of both the IB diploma and Campus des Nations. For the score in the IB about 38 (out of 42) points are generally needed. Involvement outside the classroom also should be shown. Depth (see Guidance Bulletin 26) is often better than breadth: focussing on one or two interests can be more persuasive than engagement in multiple activities. What students choose to do over the summer before applying is a personal choice; reading, travelling, working and volunteering are all worthwhile, but are not prescribed. The essay section of SAT and ACT is required. The acceptance rate for international students is about 12 per cent. No scholarships are offered for non-US citizens. For more details see <http://www.ucla.edu/>.

Years 11 and 12: Visit to the University of Toronto Scarborough on 13-Jun-18 The University of Toronto Scarborough is situated to the east of the city of Toronto in a leafy suburban area. The degree awarded is the same as the University of Toronto; what differs is the experience. Attached to the campus is a massive sports complex where the 2015 Pan American Games were held. This complex includes a swimming pool, indoor race track, basketball court and other facilities. The campus is growing, the environmental science building having just opened. The Student Centre provides office space for clubs and societies, a cafeteria, a book store and a multi-faith prayer room. Students should apply to a specific admissions category: regular (just academic) or coop (with work experience). Some programmes are offered jointly with nearby Centennial College, for example Journalism, Media Studies and Paramedicine. For Paramedicine Canadian citizenship or residency is required. The pattern of any four-year degree can be adjusted to suit individual interests: specialist, double major or major and double minor. Several combined degree programmes run over five years. These include the Bachelor of Science (BSc) and Master of Science in Social Work (MSW); the Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Master of Teaching (MT); and the Bachelor of Science (BSc) and Master of Engineering (MEng). The letter from the admissions office clearly states the conditions of each offer. It also gives the instructions that the applicant must follow to secure the offer. At the same time notification is given of any scholarships or awards. Any questions surrounding an offer can be addressed to the e-mail given on the letter. A specialist course entails a 75 per cent focus on the chosen subject, a major 50 per cent. Other complimentary courses make up the rest of the degree. No deposit on the academic courses is required until the middle of July. This is when the final selection of courses is made and enrolment takes place. On the campus are 765 rooms, 92 per cent of which are single, and all first year undergraduates are guaranteed housing. The deposit for accommodation must be made by the beginning of June. That the retention rate from first to second year is 92 per cent proves the validity of the teaching methods and the welfare support. In response to the demands of employers, a Co-Curricular Record (CCR) is offered. This is a transcript of the soft skills and work experience gained alongside academic study. Several buses connect University of Toronto Scarborough with the city centre. The journey time is about forty-five minutes.

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