



HE Toolkit

Making a Decision:
Clearing and Adjustment

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What are the pathways available to me? – University and Level 4/5 College Courses

- University is the most common route taken by students going into 'Higher Education' (HE) for the first time.

However, HE can also be studied through a higher or degree apprenticeship, or at a college.

- College courses start at Level 4 (your A Levels/ BTEC or equivalent is a Level 3), and can take you all the way to Level 6, the equivalent of a full undergraduate university degree.

Others would require you to top-up at a university once you had completed your Level 4, or Level 5 qualification.

These are typically called HNCs or HNDs. With typically smaller class sizes, reduced tuition fees, and the option of staying at home and studying locally, and more flexible teaching hours, they can be an equally excellent route into HE!

What are the pathways available to me? – Degree Apprenticeships

- Degree and Higher apprenticeships combine work place learning, with your qualification.

Your employer will pay you a wage whilst you learn ('earn while you learn'), and will often pay for your tuition fees.

It also provides a fantastic opportunity to pick up some work-skills, and develop a relationship with your employer, meaning finding work after your course can be much easier.

- For more information, check out LiNCHigher's Your Guide to [Degree Apprenticeships](#)



What are the pathways available to me? – Open University

- [Open University](#) is a flexible way of studying and obtaining a degree classification.

They are 'Uniquely placed to understand the needs of part-time students, combining their learning while earning' (students who already have full-time work/careers or life commitments).

Open Universities 'award-winning distance teaching credentials have seen over 2 million students receive an education, otherwise denied to them at campusbased universities'.

- As with all routes, it is important to think about what YOU want to do, and we can provide you with more information about all of these pathways to support you with your decision making.



The Open University

I'm still undecided on my course

• Ultimately, your destination is going to be your decision! – Try and think about all of the things you considered when you first applied for your course, or your institutions, and what was it that made you want to study them, or go there?

Course – if you are a little bit undecided on your course, then get in touch with the institution and try and find out more about it!

'UniBuddy' is also a great tool, found on our partners', and our website, or also on another institutions – you can chat to current students, possibly studying the course you have applied to, to find out more about it.

With the extra time you have, maybe do some reading around the subject, to see if it interests you. If you are still having doubts, then have a look at alternative courses, and speak to institutions about whether you can change.



I'm still undecided my institution or whether to go?

- Institution – speak to your institution and try and speak to current students.
- As we said at the start though – this is going to be YOUR decision, so take your time.

If you are thinking of changing university, then our clearing and adjustment guides should come in handy. If you are thinking of studying HE at a College, then get in touch with our partners to find out more about what they have to offer!

You are not going to be penalised for changing your mind, and in any scenario, there will always be the opportunity to get back on to the route you want to take.



What is Clearing?



From 6th July, you can apply on UCAS to courses that institutions still have places for in ‘Clearing’. There are a number of reasons why people may apply for courses through UCAS:

- you’re applying after 30 June.
- you didn’t receive any offers (or none you wanted to accept).
- you didn’t meet the conditions of your offers.
- you’ve declined your firm place using the ‘decline my place’ button in Track.

The UCAS guide for clearing is very comprehensive, particularly for how to use it and when to use it.

UCAS Clearing will be the only official list

of vacancies for courses that are still available – and that might mean you have to get pragmatic whilst searching for vacancies!

Try different course titles, or even different subjects, as well as continuing to check back for more updates in courses.

Clearing is most busy on results day – and it is really important that you don’t panic on results day if you find out you haven’t met the conditions for your offers.

Your school/college should be able to support you on the day, and the various institutions will be at the end of a phone call to answer your queries and support you through the process!

What is Adjustment?

- Definition from UCAS: Adjustment is a chance for you to reconsider where and what to study. If you've had a conditional firm choice accepted – and therefore made into an unconditional firm choice – you could potentially swap your place for one on another course you prefer.
- Adjustment is available from A Level Results Day (13 August 2020), until 31 August. It's entirely optional, and a lot of competitive courses will be full – but other applicants might have missed their conditions or swapped a course too, so it could be worth seeing what's available.
- If you try Adjustment but you don't find anything, you'll still keep the course you gained on results day.
- You'll see the option to register in Track.
- Your original Firm choice will be safe while you're looking for another – you'll only lose it if you confirm you'd like to go elsewhere and the new university/college adds themselves to your application.

Should I use Clearing or Adjustment?

- Both Clearing and Adjustment have different reasons for being used. As with most of these guides, this is ultimately your decision!
- In most scenarios, you are likely to use Clearing where you haven't quite met the conditions of your offer, or want to consider an alternative course, and so have declined your firm choice/your offers.
- Adjustment is similar, but is more exclusive to where you have surpassed your expectations, and so want to consider higher-tariff courses, or a course that perhaps you wanted to apply to, but didn't in the initial application stage.
- Always speak to the various institutions first before making a decision, and where possible, speak with someone at school/ College, and even at home, who may be able to support you through these processes!

Adjustment

Ask for advice

- Talk to an adviser at your school, college, centre, or careers office.

Register

- Click 'Register for Adjustment' on the choices screen in Track – remember you need to have met and exceeded the conditions of your firm offer. If you register for Adjustment in error, don't worry – as long as you don't contact any other unis about applying through Adjustment, you'll stay with your firm choice. After the five day period has finished, the Adjustment info will disappear.

Talk to any unis or colleges you're interested in

- There's no vacancy list for Adjustment – you'll need to check course details using the search tool and contact admissions offices at unis and colleges to talk about any possible vacancies.
- Tell them you're applying through Adjustment and give them your Personal ID. (They won't be able to see your application unless you've registered.)
- They'll check you've met and exceeded your conditions. (Remember if you contact them on results day there could be a short delay while your application is updated.)

Adjustment

continued

- Talk to them about course vacancies, but be careful to confirm that you're just gathering information at this stage – only verbally agree an offer with a university or college if you're absolutely sure you want it.
- See if there's an offer you want to accept
- If a uni or college offers you a place over the phone, you just need to let them know if you'd like to accept it. Remember you can only have one Adjustment offer, and it's the university or college that will add themselves to your application. ***Only verbally accept one offer, and make sure it's the right one!***
- If they're happy to accept you, your Track screen will be updated with the new choice and we'll send you a confirmation letter. If not, you can keep on looking, or once your Adjustment time limit is up, you'll just keep your original place.



Clearing

Ask for advice

- Talk to an adviser at your school, college, centre, or careers office.

See what courses are available

- Use the UCAS website to search for courses. If you can't find the course you're looking for: consider different subjects – you don't have to stick with your original idea. You could also look at joint honours courses, so you can study a mix of subjects
- keep checking – unis update their course information regularly. You might not find the exact unis/colleges/courses you were

looking for – some might be full, but some might get vacancies later on.

Talk to any unis or colleges you're interested in

- Before you add a Clearing choice in Track, you need to call the uni and give them your Clearing number (you can find this in Track), and Personal ID, so they can look up your application.
- Ask if they'd accept you – they might reconsider you (maybe for the same course) even if you applied to them earlier in the year.

Clearing

continued

- Get informal offers over the phone – maybe from a variety of universities and colleges – then decide which one you want to accept.
- Ask about accommodation options – is there any on-campus?
- Take a look around the campus – if you have the time, it's the best way to see what a university/college is like – most will be happy to meet you and show you around. Alternatively, see if they have a [virtual tour](#) or a [virtual open day](#).

Add your Clearing choice in Track

- Only add a Clearing choice once you have permission from the university or college.
- Click 'Add Clearing choice', and fill in the course details by the date the university/college gave you on the phone.
- This counts as you definitely accepting the offer, so if they confirm, it'll show as an acceptance on your 'Choices' page in Track.
- You can only add one choice at a time, but if the university/college doesn't confirm your place, you'll be able to add another.

Results Day: is it stressful?

What can I do to help?

- Most importantly, is to talk to people about all of this! Try not to go through the process alone if you are feeling overwhelmed by it all – this could be a parent or carer, a teacher, a friend, or get in touch with support networks like Mind, Childline or Kooth!
- Try and rest the night before results day – it may be difficult but it will help! Maybe stay off social media too the evening before – do something else to help your mind unwind!
- Try and take someone with you – not necessarily into school or College but have someone sat in the car who can support you! This could be to support with any disappointment – but it might also mean having someone with you to celebrate – think positive!
- Remember as well, there are LOADS of options! There are alternative routes into HE, and also Clearing and Adjustment to consider! It has also been a very strange year for receiving results, so remember that!

Additional Resources



UCAS Clearing Guide



 [ncoplinhigher](#)

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