

# UCAS APPLICATION CYCLE 2021/22 >>





### UCAS Application timeline

We are experiencing a different admissions cycle to previous years with a lot of uncertainty amongst applicants. We are not expecting any changes to the 15th January equal consideration deadline, though UCAS have changed the deadline by which students need to respond to their offers to June (as was the case in the 2020 entry application cycle). As previously announced, A-Level results day has moved to **Tuesday 24th August 2021**.



### Offer making this cycle

We are currently making offers or issuing interview invitations. We have been pacing ourselves a bit more this year as there is some uncertainty around the examinations process in 2021. How quickly your students will hear will depend on the discipline and even the programme within that. We make decisions and release offers at different rates for different courses. This means that there is no need to worry if some students have heard from Exeter but others have not. This may just be to do with different processing timelines for their subject. We are working to get all our offers out by the end of March as usual.

Each year we receive far more applications than we have places available for Medicine. This year is no exception. We have a strict limit of 208 Home and 10 International places for 2021/22 entry. Although we offer a higher number of interviews, most of our Medicine applicants will go on to achieve the grades required for their place so securing an interview is very competitive. In order to make this process as fair as possible we tier applicants based on the grades they are predicted or have achieved. We then use the GAMSAT or UCAT to split a tier where there are too many applicants within it as outlined in our [policy here](#).

This year we have invited everyone in Tier 1 to interview. Applicants in Tier 1 have already achieved the equivalent to A\*A\*A\* in A-Levels or other accepted qualifications. Tier 1 also includes applicants who are eligible for additional consideration within our contextual admissions policy, provided they are predicted or have achieved AAB or better at A-Level (or equivalent). We were unable to invite any international applicants for interview outside Tier 1. For Home applicants we have been able to invite a small number of those in Tier 2, using the UKCAT to determine who was invited to interview. The UCAT cut-off was extremely high, at 3040, as we only had a few interview spaces remaining after we had accommodated Tier 1.

To give as many people an opportunity as possible, we have invited over 700 candidates to interview. Whilst it is always challenging to secure an interview for Medicine, this is especially so this year because there was a small increase in the number of

applicants applying with achieved grades. There was additional pressure on interview spaces this year; as part of our commitment to widening participation we have improved our identification of those who should benefit from our contextual admissions policy. Consequently more applicants have been identified for additional consideration and were included within Tier 1, as outlined in our [policy](#).

Offers and decisions are communicated via UCAS Track and advisers should be able to see the grade and subject requirements on their side of the system. We follow-up with an email to the applicant which contains any additional details pertinent to the offer which we cannot fit in the offer text for UCAS Track.

In some instances we will make a firm guarantee that if the applicant places us as their firm choice, we will accept them if they miss the offer by a grade. We did this prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and it is part of our normal process. In addition to this, we make an alternate offer to those completing an EPQ or Core Maths qualification in recognition of the additional preparedness this provides the applicants for University. Those with, or planning to complete, EPQ or Core Maths who achieve a grade A and firmly accept our offer will be made an offer one grade below their standard offer. E.g. an AAA becomes an AAB. This alternate offer will sometimes be in addition to the firm guarantee and therefore could amount to a two grade adjustment.

Where an applicant has been unsuccessful in their application to study a course at the University of Exeter we will look to make a suitable alternative offer in some cases. In this instance applicants will be emailed and asked if they wish to take this up. If the applicant agrees the change, the offer will be reflected in UCAS Track and if they turn it down or do not reply by the specified deadline an unsuccessful decision will be processed.

Our applicant webpages: ([exeter.ac.uk/study/applicants](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/study/applicants)) have lots of useful detail about our offer making process, events for offer-holders and registration processes for new students. We hope these are helpful.



### Contextual offers

At the University of Exeter, we believe a diverse and inclusive community is essential to our core values, and that diversity amongst our student body enriches learning, teaching, and research. We are committed to ensuring that no student with potential to succeed academically is deterred from applying. All applications take into account individual context and this is reflected in our offer making.

The UCAS application form includes a number of questions which give us details about the context in which applicants have achieved their academic qualifications.

Evidence of contextual factors will not necessarily mean that preference will be given to a candidate, as each case will be considered on its individual merits.

However, in cases where there is clear evidence that contextual factors have affected performance and achievement, and where the applicant is able to demonstrate motivation and potential to achieve, the University will consider this as part of its holistic assessment of the application and take it into account when deciding whether to make an offer and the level of offer to be made. We also recognise that non-academic excellence adds value to the University and that students who excel in non-academic areas (such as sport or music) can make a specific additional contribution to the University.

There are clear and transparent criteria for securing a contextual offer. Further information may be found on our website – [exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/entryrequirements/contextual/](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/undergraduate/entryrequirements/contextual/)



### Teacher references in relation to the impact of Covid-19 on the teaching and learning experience

We recognise that schools and colleges will have experienced the pandemic in different ways and to different degrees. However we believe it is the responsibility of the examination boards to come up with a fair response to this in terms of how terminal awards/grades are issues. If there has been significant disruption to the cohort in terms of absence in Year 13 you could mention this in a line or two within the UCAS reference and, as always, if a particular student has experienced severe disruption or sadness at home because of illness, bereavement or similar, it is helpful for us to know this. However, we are not, at this time, offering a reduction in grades across the board as part of Covid-19 mitigation.



### Work experience

We understand that opportunities for work experience have been more limited over the last year. This should not present a worry or a problem. For almost all programmes, there are no specific work experience requirements at the University of Exeter. Schools and colleges often stress this element as part of university preparation, but with the exception of certain vocational programmes, interest in and wider reading around the chosen subject is more important.



### Study abroad and industrial placements

We are hoping that by the time 2021 applicants are considering a study abroad or industrial placement, things will be back to some kind of normal. Currently, applications for study abroad courses have been affected nationally by the pandemic and there has been a fall in demand for those course types. Industrial placements have not been impacted as much. We feel hopeful that because of the recent news about a vaccine that study abroad placements will be able to go ahead, however in ever changing circumstances we do have mitigation plans in place for students to be able to participate in learning experiences in other parts of the world.



### Increased competition for places

We know that many schools and colleges are worried about increased competition for places for entry in 2021. For the most part, we have not experienced this. Whilst we do have higher numbers of deferred students hoping to start in 2021, this is not limiting the number of offers we make to this year's applicants. What we cannot say at this stage is whether or not we will have the same flexibility in the summer to take some students who have missed the original conditions of their offer. The situation is also different for Medicine. We had an additional 50 applicants with previously obtained grades this year and this was one element in the pressure on interview places for the BMBS. However, a larger factor was an increase in the number of students eligible for interview under our contextual admissions policy and this is very positive news for many students.

### Getting in touch

Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you have any further queries about our offer making approach for the 2021/22 cycle. You may do so by contacting our Admissions team at: [ug-ad@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:ug-ad@exeter.ac.uk) or by calling on **0300 555 60 60**.