

Section 1 – Understand what happens on Results Day



Deferring your university place

Like many students starting university in 2020, you may be facing feelings of uncertainty in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak. It's always good to talk things through with family, friends and the School's Careers Team who can help you to put your feelings into perspective and support you to make some decisions about what is the right next step for you.

Some students may be considering delaying the start of their university course. This is called 'deferring'.

What is a deferred entry to university?

Deferring means applying for a course then taking a year out before going to university – for example, you may have originally applied to start university in September 2020 but now want to start in September 2021 instead. Usually, you can only defer your entry by one year.

Why defer entry?

For students finishing school or college, taking a year out before starting university – often called a gap year – gives them a chance to go travelling, earn some money to support their studies, and gain valuable experience. For others, it may be that they need to work, or have other commitments to fulfil before starting their course.

Applying for deferred entry means you can get your results confirmed and your university place set up and waiting for you to start the following year.

Like any decision, there are pros and cons which need to be considered, including:

- Many universities will be incorporating some elements of online learning into a blended teaching and learning approach. You need to be sure that you have the motivation to work much more independently and take responsibility for your own work and progress;
- Some students feel they may not be able to get an authentic 'university experience' this year, as social events are likely to be very restricted. Delaying their start by a year, could mean that things will have returned the 'normal' next year;

- A well planned gap year could give students a chance to gain work experience or, when travel restrictions are eased, the opportunity to travel. However, if there is a second wave of COVID or outbreaks in other countries, it may be very difficult to find work or travel.

What is our advice?

Choosing to defer entry is a personal choice, and one which only you yourself can make. We encourage you to chat to friends, family, The Careers Team and talk to the University you are interested in studying at. This way, you'll be as informed as you can prior to making any final decisions.

On balance, unless you already have a firm plan for a gap year, we encourage you to move on to the next step in your education and take up your university place this year, despite the circumstances.

How do I defer my university place?

If you feel that deferring your university place for another year and taking a 'gap year' before starting higher education is the right decision for you, follow these steps:

- You will have to contact the university or college directly to request deferred entry and will be expected to give reasons for your decision.
- There is no guarantee that your request will be accepted, so think long and hard before deferring in this way. It's also worth bearing in mind that some courses, such as medicine, do not accept deferred entry and you would be asked to reapply.
- Be absolutely sure you wish to defer. Once you have done so, you won't be able to go back and change your mind a second time.

As always, the Careers Team will guide you through the process, so please do get in touch if you need any help. If you do need to reapply next year, the School is happy to process your application for UCAS 2021, in the normal way.