

ASPIRENorth Jargon Buster



Adjustment	An option through UCAS. If you received a Conditional offer which then becomes Unconditional when you get your exam results and you have better results than you expected, you can use Adjustment to look at other courses which have spaces – possibly ones you did not consider before. Full information on UCAS website.
Articulation	This is when a course you have already studied allows you to progress into another course at a higher level. For example, if you complete a HND you may be able to progress into Year 3 at University, meaning you only have two years to complete. This is often called a 2+2 (2 years at College, 2 at University) or a 1+3 (1 year at College, 3 years at University). In Aberdeen there is an agreed programme called “Degree Link” between NESCol and RGU which shows the possible routes into University study from College.
Bursary	Depending on the financial situation at home, you may be eligible for a bursary from the Scottish government. This is money to help fund your studies and you do not need to pay it back. Some courses, such as nursing, give bursaries to all students on their courses regardless of financial situation. All of this information is available from SAAS.
Clearing	An option through UCAS. If your exam results do not go as expected and you do not get what you needed to get into your chosen course you can use Clearing to find which universities still have places on their courses. It may mean you consider somewhere, or something, you did not previously. Many people use this every year to successfully find a course they are interested in. Full information on UCAS website.
Conditional	When a College or University offer you a place on your chosen course but state there are certain conditions you must meet, such as passing your exams or getting specific grades.
Contextualised Admissions	A fancy way of saying that the College or University will take your background into consideration when making an offer of a place, for example what school you attend.
Credits	At College or University each module is given a credit rating. In order to pass the whole course/degree you usually have to pass a minimum amount. For example, for an Honours degree you may need a total of 480 credits over 4 years. Each module you study may count for 15 or 30 credits and you would be expected to average the 480 out over 4 years (120 each year).
Degree	Usually studied over the course of 4 years in Scotland at a University. They have different letters that come before the subjects to tell you the kind of degree. For example, BSc Chemistry is a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry, BA Politics is a Bachelor of Arts degree in Politics.
Entry Requirements	What a College or University looks for in order to offer you a place on your chosen course. Often (but not always) HND courses will look for 2 or more Highers and University degrees will look for 4 or more Highers. Some courses also have a minimum amount of work experience that you must have. Some universities will offer you a place if you complete a Summer School/Access programme – this is where you attend a short course over the summer before you begin full University studies to give you a head start.
Extra	An option through UCAS. If you receive replies from everywhere you have applied but did not receive an offer, or you have rejected them all, you can search for other course options using Extra. You can apply for one course at a time through this service to see if the course will accept you. Full information on UCAS website.
HNC	Stands for Higher National Certificate. Normally a course studied full time over one year at College. It may be possible to progress to Year 1 or Year 2 of University with this. Tuition fees are funded by SAAS.

HND	Stands for Higher National Diploma. Normally a course studied full time over two years at College. It may be possible to progress to Year 2 or Year 3 of University with this. Tuition fees are funded by SAAS.
NC	Stands for National Certificate, normally takes one year full time study to complete. You could progress onto a HNC after completion or go straight into employment if you choose. If you are eligible for EMA you can usually still get this whilst completing this course. You can apply to the College to have the tuition fees paid for you.
Module	Modules are the small topics which make up your whole course. For example, as part of a Law degree you may have a module on Human Rights which takes place one semester and another on Criminal Law which takes place in a different semester. Sometimes you get to select these from a list, others are compulsory for your course.
Personal Statement	When making applications you normally have to include a personal statement. This is a document, roughly 4000 characters, about you as an individual and why you should be offered a place on your chosen course. It should outline your subject interests, what you have done already to show this, any relevant work or voluntary experience.
SAAS	The Student Awards Agency for Scotland. This is the organisation which all students must apply to make sure their tuition fees are paid to the College/University. You can also apply to them for a student loan or bursary.
Semester	Colleges or Universities often split their academic year into two semesters. Often (but not always) this is September – June and January – June.
Student Loan	Money borrowed to help fund your studies. This is paid monthly to you over the academic year (9 months, not 12). You only start to pay it back when you make over £17,495 in one year and it is taken as a small percentage of your salary each month. Many people use student loans – they aren't as scary as some think. Full information available from SAAS.
Track	When you have submitted your UCAS application you gain access to a system called 'Track.' This allows you to see updates on your applications, including when universities make you offers and what they are. When it comes to making a decision you make a Firm choice. If your Firm choice is a Conditional offer you have the option of selecting an Insurance choice as a backup. The insurance choice normally has lower entry requirements than your Firm choice. If your Firm choice is an Unconditional, you do not need to select another choice as you have accepted your place and need no other grades to start.
Tuition Fees	Colleges and universities charge money for their courses. If you are a Scottish resident (have stayed in Scotland at least 3 years) or an EU citizen, the government will usually pay your tuition fees. This does not happen automatically so you must make sure you apply through SAAS for every year of your studies.
UCAS	The University and Colleges Admissions Service. In the UK all University applications go through the UCAS system online. Individuals can apply for up to 5 courses in one year. Applications must be received by January 15 th for all courses (except courses at Oxford/Cambridge and Medicine or Vet Medicine courses where the deadline is October 15 th). The website has lots of information about courses available all over the country and you can search subject areas to find out which universities offer the course.
Unconditional	When a College or University offers you a place on your chosen course without any conditions. This means you are guaranteed the place if you choose to accept it as you do not need any more grades or work experience to secure your place.

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