



Nottingham Trent University

# Clearing Guide For Parents



There's a lot of Clearing information to get to grips with — plus some myths and misconceptions that need challenging! If you're supporting a prospective student, you have an important role to play; our guide will explain the Clearing process, and give you some great tips on making it run smoothly.



## What is Clearing?

Simply, it's a matching scheme — helping students find the right course at the right place. It's a dynamic process that's focused on the applicant's needs and ambitions. Almost all universities have a presence in Clearing, with thousands of places available across a huge range of courses.

Clearing officially opens on Monday 5 July. Prospective students need to have already received their grades to apply, and so most Clearing activity takes place from A-level results day onwards (Tuesday 10 August). Students can find out their application decisions from 8:30 am on results day by checking UCAS Track — and depending on their outcomes, Clearing can then become a real game-changer.

The accompanying scheme to Clearing is Adjustment. This process supports students who've achieved even better results than predicted, and who want to explore new university and course options. UCAS have some useful information on Adjustment [here](#).



### Tip 1:

Clearing helps students find a university or college place. It covers lots of scenarios — from lower than expected grades, to students changing their minds about where (or what) they want to study.

# Who is Clearing for?

Students enter Clearing for lots of reasons, including when:

- they've been unsuccessful in gaining a place at their first and insurance choices
- they've changed their mind about what or where they want to study
- they didn't apply to university before receiving their results, and are now assessing their options
- they've done even better than expected and want to explore new opportunities.

The reasons for entering Clearing don't tend to affect the application process. However, given the different contexts behind those reasons, expectations of Clearing can vary.

There's no denying it — missing out on grades or offers is upsetting, both for you and your student. It's easy to get too down-hearted too quickly. That's why preparing for Clearing is key, and why your own role — offering strength, support and guidance — is so important. Approached with the right mindset, it isn't just an exciting process; it's a potentially life-changing one.



## Tip 2:

Usually, Clearing applications are made over the phone — but check college and uni websites (ahead of results day) to find out how to apply.



# How do students apply?

Clearing vacancies are advertised on institutional websites, and also on UCAS.

Typically, Clearing applications are made by phone. Most universities have a dedicated Clearing number, or a hotline that takes callers through to the relevant team (at Nottingham Trent University [NTU], ours is **0115 848 6000**). All universities are different, and Clearing offers have been made in many different ways — from online forms to WhatsApp and social media. That said, our advice is always the same: phone the university or college as your first point of contact, especially if your student's query is a little more complex or if it's not clear there are vacancies available.

When A-level results day arrives, NTU has around 250 staff and students working on our Clearing hotline — not only to take applications, but to also offer support and advice to prospective students. When we say we're here for our students, we mean it; their NTU experience starts from the moment they first get in touch with us.

Clearing information should be on university websites, so it's worth checking those sites ahead of time. Make a note of the advertised telephone number or application route — having these small details available can save you and your student a lot of unnecessary stress! Alternatively, you can get in touch with the Admissions teams at prospective universities to learn more about the process. We also offer prospective students the chance to speak directly with our teaching staff and students via our **chat** function: this can provide a really helpful insight into life and learning at NTU, and most universities offer a similar system.



### Tip 3:

**Remember: it must be the student themselves that universities speak to during the Clearing process. We won't be able to share any information with you without talking to them first — so be strong, focused and supportive, and help them prepare for their calls.**



# What does the application process involve?

Students are asked a range of questions during their Clearing application. Typically, these include:

- personal details (name, address, date of birth, email, phone number)
- their UCAS ID number (if they have one)
- qualifications at Level 2 (GCSEs, Functional Skills etc.) and Level 3 (A-level, BTEC, Cambridge Technicals etc.)
- the course(s) or academic area(s) they're interested in studying.

Some courses might also ask the student to submit a portfolio or attend an interview, but any additional requirements like these will be explained during the application call. Unless it's made clear, students don't need a personal statement to apply through Clearing — but it's definitely worth having a few bullet points on hand covering why the student wants to study the course. A good old-fashioned pen and paper are really useful for note-taking, too — and they're often forgotten about until the middle of a call!

If a student is made an offer over the phone, they'll usually receive an email very shortly afterwards with more details, including guidance on booking accommodation and adding the university as a Clearing choice on UCAS Track. These processes are very straightforward, and nothing to worry about.

Check the information in the email carefully. Some offers will have a deadline for acceptance — but try not to rush into a choice. Think carefully and logically as a team, and try not to let emotion get in the way of making a sensible decision.



## Tip 4:

Before they make their Clearing call, make sure your student has all the essentials on hand — their results (including GCSEs and any other Level 2 qualifications), their courses of interest, and a pen and paper for taking notes.



## Tip 5:

Help your student make an informed decision by staying calm, preparing ahead of time, and doing plenty of research.

# What do we do next?

Clearing can move quickly — but that doesn't mean your student should rush their decision. Uni is their new home, not just a place to study, and research is as valuable to Clearing as it is throughout the rest of the year's application cycle. Take a virtual tour, attend an open day (ideally in person), review the course content online, and chat with staff and students to ensure your own student has found their perfect university. Keep the panic to a minimum, help out however you can, and remember that preparation is everything.

NTU offers a **pre-registration service** for prospective students who are interested in receiving Clearing updates but who aren't ready to apply yet — as well as a newsletter dedicated to parents and carers. We're also hosting a range of virtual and in-person events, from online Q&As to **open house events** that's not to be missed. Check out our **website** for more details.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us — either through our **chat** facility or our Clearing hotline (**0115 848 6000**). We're here for you, and our experience can really help.

We hope this guide's been useful. Every year, students from across the UK fulfil their university dream through Clearing. It's not a consolation — it's simply an alternative, and an alternative that has shaped and enhanced many thousands of lives. Approach the process positively, seize its potential, and remember that Clearing is just another way for your student to find the right place.

At NTU, we hope that our place becomes their place.

Follow us for the latest on Clearing:



Questions? Just **ask NTU**



# Other Clearing FAQs

## **I've been accepted by my firm and insurance choices, but now I've changed my mind — can I go through Clearing?**

Absolutely! Just contact the universities you're interested in joining and see if they're willing to make you an offer. If they do, you'll then need to be released from your firm choice to add a Clearing choice. This is easily done on UCAS Track — just sign in and click the 'decline my place' button on the profile page. Don't do that until you're sure you've got a place elsewhere, though!

You might be eligible for Adjustment, too, but check with the university first to find out the best way to apply

## **Is there a good time to make my Clearing call?**

Every university will have different opening hours during Clearing, but results aren't published until 8:30 am on A-level results day, so you won't be able to apply until after then. As soon as you're ready to make the call, go for it — you might have to wait in a queue, however, so be prepared and make sure your phone is fully charged!

## **I want to change my course, but I already have a place at the same university — do I need to decline and then go through Clearing?**

No — just contact the university and they'll be able to advise if there are spaces on the course that you'd like to transfer onto, and then confirm if they can change your course. At NTU we have an **online form** for students to complete if you want to make changes to your course (including transferring and deferring).

## **Will there be any accommodation left?**

Check university websites, or contact them directly to find out how accommodation applications work during Clearing. The NTU Accommodation team are happy to help and we email instructions to all our Clearing students on applying for accommodation.

## **Do I need to let Student Finance know I've applied through Clearing?**

Yes. Whether you're a new student applying for funding or changing your course or university, contact **Student Finance England** (or your relevant authority) to let them know.

# Results day checklist



1. School / college confirmed where and how to receive results on the day and have them to hand ready



2. UCASTrack email address and password, ready to log in from **8:30am**



3. Shortlist of universities / colleges, course areas of interest and Clearing hotline numbers noted



4. Pen and paper



5. Make the call **(the student themselves)**



6. Read the offer information carefully, checking that all details are correct



7. Decide on the offer to accept



8. Add a Clearing choice on UCASTrack **(after 2 pm on A-level results day)**



9. Response from chosen university received on UCAS (usually within 24 hours)



10. Accommodation application (check individual university requirements for eligibility)



11. Student Finance England (or equivalent) application (either as a new student or if the university / course has changed)



12. Welcome to university!