

You may find this factsheet useful if your son or daughter is thinking about applying to university or college for courses starting from September 2017. It explains:

- what the UCAS Tariff is and why it's changing
- how the new Tariff differs from the current Tariff
- the impact on your son or daughter
- when the new Tariff will come into effect
- how you can get further information about the new Tariff

Background on the UCAS Tariff

Some universities and colleges use UCAS Tariff points in their course entry requirements. You may hear your son or daughter refer to the number of UCAS Tariff points they need to get onto a particular higher education course.

Most common qualifications studied when students are aged 16-18, have UCAS Tariff points.

The UCAS Tariff was introduced in 2001 when lots of alternative qualifications to A levels started to appear. Its purpose was to help universities and colleges understand the wide range of different qualifications available to students.

Many universities and colleges use specific qualifications and grades to describe their entry requirements and make offers, but some use the UCAS Tariff points to describe entry requirements and make offers to students.

Why the Tariff is changing?

Universities and colleges, students and teachers asked UCAS to change the UCAS Tariff points for a number of reasons. One reason was to ensure more vocational and non-traditional qualifications could attract UCAS Tariff points to support fair access to higher education.

About the new UCAS Tariff

The new UCAS Tariff points, which will be used for courses starting from September 2017, are based on a very different number system.

For example, today entry requirements or offers made using Tariff points may say:

- 280 UCAS Tariff points: can include A levels, Scottish Highers, or BTECs
- 280 UCAS Tariff points: including A levels in chemistry and biology
- 280 UCAS Tariff points: including 120 points from Chemistry A level

Under the new Tariff, the same entry requirements or offers would be expressed as:

- 112 UCAS Tariff points: can include A levels, Scottish Highers, or BTECs
- 112 UCAS Tariff points: including A levels in chemistry and biology
- 112 UCAS Tariff points: including 48 points from Chemistry A level

Although the number of points required appears to be less i.e. 112 instead of 280, this is because the new UCAS Tariff points system is based on much lower numbers. For example, an A* at A level gets 140 points under the current UCAS Tariff and will get 56 points under the new UCAS Tariff point system. The value of the A level grade A* has not changed.

Overall, students will still need to achieve the same grades at A level, Scottish Advanced Highers, Scottish Highers or BTEC, or in any other qualification they are taking to meet higher education course entry requirements.

It is important to note that sometimes universities and colleges that refer to UCAS Tariff points will also state that certain qualifications **cannot** count towards the total number of points. Just because a qualification has UCAS Tariff points does not mean it is considered suitable for entry onto higher education courses by all universities and colleges. For example, some entry requirements may be stated as follows:

- 112 points: points from keys skills, General Studies A level and AS qualifications **will not** be considered

One key change that has been made under the new UCAS Tariff is to the points allocated to the AS qualification. Under the current Tariff it has points worth 50% of an A level but under the new Tariff it is allocated points worth 40% of an A level. UK qualification regulators manage the standards of A levels and AS qualifications and this change is in line with their view of the AS qualification.

Impact of the new UCAS Tariff on your son or daughter

The new Tariff should not impact on your son or daughter's qualification choices. Teachers and advisers at school or college will provide the best advice and information to ensure your son or daughter studies the most appropriate qualification based on their learning style and future aspirations, which may be to progress into higher education, employment, further training or an apprenticeship.

Start date for the new UCAS Tariff points

The new UCAS Tariff points are coming into use for higher education courses starting from September 2017. This means if your son or daughter is applying in 2016 to start a university or college course from September 2017, they may see some universities or colleges refer to the new UCAS Tariff points in course prospectuses and on the UCAS search tool.

If you have an older daughter or son applying to university or college for a course starting in 2015 or 2016, the current UCAS Tariff points will still apply.

Where to get further information about the new Tariff

The UCAS Tariff tables are available on the UCAS website at <http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/advisers-and-referees/tariff-2017>. The tables show the points allocated to different qualifications, but it's a good idea to talk to a teacher or adviser in your child's school or college to understand how the points work.

If you haven't already done so, sign-up to the UCAS parents' newsletter at <http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/parents-and-guardians>, which will include details and updates about the new Tariff.

If you have any questions about the new Tariff, you can also email us at newtariff-feedback@ucas.ac.uk or you can call the UCAS Contact Centre on 0371 468 0 468.