

# *Are you thinking about going to a Russell Group University?*

University of Oxford,  
University of Cambridge,  
University of Birmingham,  
University of Bristol,  
Cardiff University,  
University of Edinburgh,  
University of Glasgow,  
Imperial College of London,  
Kings College London,  
University of Leeds,  
University of Liverpool,  
London School of Economics  
& Political Science,  
University of Manchester,  
Newcastle University,  
University of Nottingham,  
Queens University Belfast,  
University of Sheffield,  
University of Southampton,  
University College London,  
University of Warwick



## **Are you thinking about going to a Russell Group University?**

(University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, University of Birmingham, University of Bristol, Cardiff University, University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow, Imperial College of London, Kings College London, University of Leeds, University of Liverpool, London School of Economics & Political Science, University of Manchester, Newcastle University, University of Nottingham, Queens University Belfast, University of Sheffield, University of Southampton, University College London, University of Warwick.)

Russell Group Website: <http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/our-universities/>

### **A Levels**

*If I want to apply for University, what do I need to think about when making my AS and A Level choices?*

Your choice of options will be critical in determining the university courses open to you. Generally speaking, universities will expect you to be taking four AS-Levels, with 3 out of the 4 taken on to A2.

The guidance provided in relation to subject requirements will help you to make informed choices about your AS-Level and A2 subjects.

### **Vocational Options: BTEC National and OCR National**

*I am thinking about taking a BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma what are the issues when it comes to university application?*

Let us imagine you are Year 11 and instead of considering a 4 AS-Level package you are looking at doing a 2 year course in a vocational field such as Business. You could do a BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma or an OCR National. If you are going to be studying Business in sixth form or college you may be considering studying Business and Management at university.

Please note: Several university courses do not consider vocational courses to be suitable.

Important points to consider:

- If you do a vocational course you will need very high grades indeed plus a high grade in an extra A-Level to be considered by most Russell Group universities.
- Some Universities consider these Vocational Qualifications in certain circumstances but the circumstances do vary. It is therefore particularly important to check requirements with individual universities.

- Entrance requirements of individual universities will differ. However, as a general guide, applicants with these vocational qualifications wishing to study for a degree in Management at a competitive university may encounter the following entrance requirements: BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma -In many cases universities will accept this only when combined with other qualifications. You are likely to be required to achieve other qualifications and very high results in the BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma.

### **This 5 point plan might help you make the right choice!**

1. Know what you want to study at University – Check the course requirements by going to the university website or UCAS Course Search.  
Remember: If you take a Vocational Course option check the course requirements available.
2. If unsure keep your options open!  
Choose at least 2 facilitating subjects (Maths, English Literature, History, Geography, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Languages). These subjects are most likely required or preferred by universities for entry to degree courses so choosing them will give you more options for university entry.
3. If wanting to apply to a competitive university GCSE Grades matter!  
Look at the UCAS Website and/or the relevant University Websites to see what course requirements they set.
4. Have a balance  
Do your subjects reflect your ability, strengths and interests? Have you considered how your subject choices relate to university courses?
5. Make sure you know WHY  
If you are selecting a subject that you have not studied before consider what interests you about the subject – your thoughts should be justified.

### **Oxbridge**

If Oxbridge is where you want to go please note that offers will be a minimum of AAA (Oxford) or A\*AA (Cambridge) and they are likely to require A\* targets, so you should be studying subjects in which you feel you are likely to achieve very highly.

Oxford and Cambridge expect you to have a real passion for the subject you choose to study. Therefore reading material outside the curriculum, relevant work experience,

attending lectures, visiting museums and exhibitions associated with the subject you are interested in will help you to build on the courses you study.

## **Oxbridge Course Information**

- <http://www.cam.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/requirements/course.html>
- [http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate\\_courses/courses/courses\\_and\\_entrance\\_requirements/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate_courses/courses/courses_and_entrance_requirements/)

## **Examples of essential A-Levels required for specific degrees:**

- Accountancy (also Banking/Finance/Insurance):  
Essential Advanced Level Qualifications -  
Usually none although 1 or 2 universities require Mathematics  
Useful A Levels – Maths, Business Studies (AGCE, National & Diploma) and Economics.
- Actuarial Science/Studies :  
Essential A Level – Maths  
Useful A Levels Further Maths, Economics, Business Studies (AGCE, National & Diploma).
- Aeronautical Engineering:  
Essential A Levels – Maths and Physics  
Useful A Levels – Further Maths, Design Technology
- Archaeology:  
Essential A Levels – None  
Useful A Levels – Geography, History or Science subjects can be useful.
- Architecture:  
Essential A Levels – Some courses say they want Arts/Science mix. Some require Art.  
Useful A Levels: Art, Maths, Design Technology and Physics. A portfolio may be asked for.
- Art & Design:  
Essential A Levels – Art or Design Technology.  
Useful A Levels – Design Technology, Art & Design. Most students will have done an Art Foundation after Year 13.

- **Biochemistry:**  
Essential A Levels – Always Chemistry and some want Biology as well, while some say Chemistry plus one from Maths/Physics/Biology. Doing Chemistry, Biology and Maths or Physics will keep all Biochemistry courses open to you.  
Useful A Levels – Biology, Maths, Further Maths, Physics.
- **Biology:**  
Essential A Levels – Biology, Chemistry  
Useful A Levels – Maths or Physics.
- **Biomedical Sciences (Including Medical Science):**  
Essential A Levels – Normally two from Biology, Chemistry, Maths and Physics.  
Chemistry is essential for some courses.  
Useful A Levels – Maths, Further Maths, Biology, Chemistry, Physics.
- **Business Studies:**  
Essential A Levels – None  
Useful A Levels – Maths, Economics, Business Studies (AGCE, National & Diploma).
- **Chemical Engineering:**  
Essential A Levels – Chemistry, Maths and sometimes Physics.  
Useful A Levels – Physics, Biology, Further Maths.
- **Chemistry:**  
Essential A Levels – Chemistry and occasionally Maths. Most courses require Chemistry and would like Maths and 1 other Science (Biology or Physics).
- **Childhood Studies:**  
Essential – None  
Useful A Levels – CACHE, Psychology, Sociology, AGCE/National.Diploma Health & Social Care.
- **Computing:**  
Essential A Levels – Some courses, Maths  
Useful A Levels – Maths, Further Maths, Computing, Physics, Philosophy, ICT.
- **Dentistry:**  
Essential A Levels – Chemistry and Biology for most, but some require Maths or Physics as well.  
Useful – Maths, Physics, Further Maths.
- **English:**  
Essential A Levels – English Literature or combined English Language & Literature (some courses accept English Language)  
Useful A Levels – History, Religious Studies, a foreign language.

- **Environmental Studies:**  
Essential A Levels – Many courses will ask for two from Biology, Chemistry, Maths, Physics and Geography.  
Useful A Levels – Another facilitating subject, particularly a science.
- **European Studies:**  
Essential A Levels – A modern foreign language.  
Useful A Levels – Another modern foreign language, English Literature, History, Politics.
- **French:**  
Essential A Level – French  
Useful A Levels – Another foreign language, English Literature, history, Politics.
- **Geography:**  
Essential A Levels – Most degrees require Geography.  
Useful A Levels – Some Geography BSc (science) degrees prefer 1 from Biology, Chemistry, Maths or Physics.
- **Geology/Earth Sciences:**  
Essential A Levels – Usually two from Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Biology  
Useful A Levels – Geography, Geology
- **History**  
Essential A Levels – Most degrees require History  
Useful A Levels – Economics, English Literature, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology, Theology/Religious Studies, a modern or classical language.
- **History of Art:**  
Essential A Levels – None  
Useful A Levels – Art, English Literature, history, Theology/Religious Studies, French, German, Spanish, Italian.
- **Law:**  
Essential A Levels – Usually none. Although a few universities require English.  
Useful A Levels – History; other facilitating subjects (one essay/report writing subject).
- **Management Studies:**  
Essential A Levels – Sometimes Maths  
Useful A Levels – Maths, Economics, Business Studies (AGCE, National & Diploma).
- **Materials Science (Including Biomedical Materials Science):**

Essential A Levels – Normally two from Chemistry, Maths, Physics, Biology (also Design Technology at some universities).

Useful A Levels – Chemistry, Design Technology, Further Maths.

- Maths:  
Essential A Levels – Maths and sometimes Further Maths  
Useful A Levels – Further Maths & Physics
- Mechanical Engineering:  
Essential A Levels – Maths, Physics. There may be a preference for Maths with a strong mechanics component.  
Useful A Levels – Further Maths, Design Technology
- Media Studies (including Communication Studies):  
Essential A Levels – A few ask for English or Media Studies  
Useful A Levels – English, Media Studies, Sociology, Psychology
- Medicine:  
Essential A Levels – If you do Chemistry, Biology and 1 from Maths or Physics you will keep the medical schools open to you. If you do Chemistry and Biology you will keep open the vast majority. If you do Chemistry and one from Maths and Physics you will limit your range of choices much more.  
Useful A Levels – Further Maths or a contrasting (non-science) subject.
- Music:  
Essential A Levels – For most traditional courses, Music and Grade VII/VIII.  
Useful A Levels – Some universities have a preference for at least one essay based subject.
- Nursing and Midwifery:  
Essential A Levels – Usually Biology or another Science.  
Useful A Levels – Biology, CACHE, Sociology, Psychology, Chemistry.
- Occupational Therapy:  
Essential A Levels – Some courses ask for Biology  
Useful A Levels – Psychology, Physical Education, Sociology or another Science.
- Optometry (Ophthalmic Optics):  
Essential A Levels – 2 from Biology, Chemistry, Maths or Physics (some courses prefer Biology as one of the choices).  
Useful A Level – Further Maths
- Orthoptics:  
Essential A Levels – Biology

## Useful A Levels – Chemistry, Maths, Physics

- Pharmacy:  
Essential A Levels – two from Biology, Chemistry, Maths or Physics (some courses prefer Biology as one of the choices).  
Useful A Levels – Further Maths
- Philosophy:  
Essential A Levels – None  
Useful A Levels – Maths, Classical Civilisations, Philosophy and Religious Studies/Theology.
- Physics:  
Essential A Levels – Maths, Physics.  
Useful A Levels – Further Maths, Chemistry
- Physiotherapy:  
Essential A Levels – Most course will consider you with just Biology, however some also require a second science from Chemistry, Maths or Physics.  
Useful A Levels – Chemistry, Maths, Physics, Psychology.
- Politics:  
Essential A Levels – None  
Useful A Levels – Politics, History, Philosophy, Law, Sociology
- Psychology:  
Essential A Levels – A few courses ask for one from Biology, Chemistry, Maths, Physics.  
Useful A Levels – Biology, Maths, Psychology, Sociology
- Religious Studies/Theology:  
Essential A Levels – None  
Useful A Levels – Religious Studies/Theology, Philosophy, English Literature, History.
- Sociology:  
Essential A Levels – None  
Useful A Levels – Sociology, Psychology, Geography
- Spanish:  
Essential A Levels – Spanish (some degrees also consider French, German or Italian)  
Useful A Levels – Another Modern Foreign language, English Literature, History, Politics.
- Speech Therapy:  
Essential A Levels – Some degrees want a Science (Biology, Chemistry or Physics).  
Some specify Biology, but some degrees will consider candidates with none of these.

Useful A Levels - A Modern Foreign language, English Language (and Literature), Psychology.

- Sports Science/Physical Education:  
Essential A Levels – Many courses want to see one from Biology/Chemistry/Physics/Maths (some courses will treat Physical Education as a science equivalent).  
Useful Levels – Physical Education, Psychology
- Surveying:  
Essential A Levels – None  
Useful A Levels – For some types of surveying i.e. Building Surveying, Maths and Physics could be helpful. For Estate Management (General Practice Surveying) most A Level combinations will be considered.
- Teacher Training (Primary and/or Secondary):  
Essential A Levels – Art, Biology, CACHE, Chemistry, Design Technology, Drama (Theatre Studies), *English*, French, *Geography*, German, *History*, ICT, Italian, *Maths*, Music, *Physics*, *Physical Education*, *Religious Studies (Theology)*, Spanish.  
(Subjects best for Primary in italics).  
Useful A Levels – Another of the subjects above.
- Veterinary Science:  
Essential A Levels – You should do Chemistry and Biology and one from Maths/Physics so that you have all universities open to you.  
Useful A Level – Further Maths

Please note: The majority of the information seen above is from the May 2011 Russell Group report, 'Informed Choices'.

If you have any questions regarding Russell Group Option choices please email Mrs Metson (G&T Co-ordinator).  
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