

# RESEARCHING UNIVERSITY OPTIONS - RUSSELL GROUP WEBINAR

4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2022

## Note

RG refers to the Russell group

The people below, who were at the webinar, are staff representatives of RG universities

## Abi – University of Exeter

How do you decide between RG universities?

- One key message is do they align with your own values? Go on the website landing page (home screen) and check for their mission statements/key themes – such as relating to issues such as social change, equality, the environment and so on. See what they are about – do you agree with them?
- Check with their research – what has been done? What are they celebrating? This may not be related to your subject of interest but could still interest you. Who's involved in the research? Could they be teaching you? Does it inspire you?
- Check the facilities – sport and so on – check out the social scene
- Check the course modules

Look at your predicted grades/Personal Statement/any volunteering /work experience/reference

Looking for evidence of your commitment to the course – showing your motivation is important

Any extenuating circumstances (such as illness that affected your studies, bereavements and so on) should be put in your school reference – check on website or contact the university for advice - Exeter have an online form for this

## Anam – Queen Mary University London

Which is the best RG university?

The question should be what is best for YOU! One size does NOT fit all here – they are all different.

Decide on the important factors for YOU – decide what factors are negotiable and non-negotiable

Abi mentioned the course modules – agree but courses can also be taught very differently across the RG universities – there is no agreed framework

Check the location for YOU – do you want a city or campus university? Small or large? Is diversity important to you?

Prioritise – focus on the subject / may have a career in mind which will help but bear in mind around 80% of professions do not care what you have studied

Visit [www.informedchoices.ac.uk](http://www.informedchoices.ac.uk) as well as [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) for their Careers Quiz, [www.whatuni.com](http://www.whatuni.com) for their degree courses page (can add in filters such as only RG – can compare), [www.discoveruni.gov.uk](http://www.discoveruni.gov.uk) and [www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk)

Check out League Tables too as well as The National Student Survey – [www.thestudentsurvey.com](http://www.thestudentsurvey.com)

Are earlier applications better? – No! Equal consideration is standard. Getting your application in early may help in terms of revision/exams, giving you more time to focus on them, BUT it is NOT an advantage.

Indeed, giving more time to your application can be a benefit – take your time and do not rush it

EPQ – this CAN make your application stronger – but has to really be relevant to the subject you are applying for – think how it links to the course – useful if you are not doing the subject at A level but it links to the degree you are going for

Some universities can lower their requirements by a grade if you offer the EPQ along with your A levels

## Samar – University of Nottingham

If you are torn between 2 universities, need to check out the modules – could well be different things – and check out the additional opportunities such as if they have any guest lecturers, offer field trips, research opportunities etc

Check out their scholarships/bursaries – all different, again – many become live in the spring in the year of entry

Look at the extracurriculars – you could pick up a new hobby/interest as well as keep up with current ones you have

Go to an offer holder day – you can then experience the course in more depth – think which one do I feel more at home??

Firm/insurance choices – try and make sure your insurance offer is asking for less than your firm choice – or could be a waste of time

Firm choices – most of the universities can guarantee university approved accommodation if you put them down as your firm place

Insurance choices – universities will not invite you to apply for accommodation and though you may be able to get it arranged with them, it is not guaranteed – so check the accommodation policies too

What do RG universities especially look for?

- Higher grades than others – may be certain grade for a certain subject – eg GCSE grade in Maths and English
- May look for specific A level grades as opposed to UCAS points
- Need to see your SKILLS – what research you have done/what enhanced subject knowledge you have gained – re course you are applying for – think about what the university is looking for – eg creativity, leadership, presentation skills and so on – research skills are PARAMOUNT – show WHEN you have used these skills – give specific examples – eg projects, lab work, essays, can be EPQ and so on
- Independent learners – research again – show ways you have engaged in the subject out of school
- Show engagement – within your Personal Statement – eg reading journals, industry magazines and so on
- Apply for engagement programmes/taster days – at Nottingham, we have an “Ambition Programme” – aimed at Year 12s – consists of taster lectures/can meet academics – will get great insight into the course/university life

#### Kirsty – University of Glasgow

There are offer holder days / applicant days as well as ongoing campus tours – if cannot get to the main open events

Virtual events still ongoing – called different things across the universities - Information sessions/taster days/taster sessions etc

Can see online chats with staff and students on websites too – academic/admissions based in most cases – lots out there!

Make sure you register in advance for events, if appropriate – they need to know numbers attending etc

Understand the entry requirements – lots of advice on the university websites

3 A levels is main requirement – check for any specific grades asked for

Minimum offer – this means they are looking for anything ABOVE

Typical offer – as it literally means – usual offer

Look for any admissions tests too – such as the UCAT, LNAT

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OCTOBER 2022