

Students from armed forces families: Your UCAS application

If you have grown up with a parent or carer serving in the armed forces or reserves, you may have developed unique experiences and strengths which HE institutions would like to understand.

Your personal statement

Use your experiences to show universities you have the independence, time management, communication skills, drive and commitment to thrive in higher education. Use the UCAS [personal statement tool](#) to help you think through the skills you have developed and how to present them. For example, has starting at several new schools given you an ability to adapt, persevere and build new relationships?

- The Naval Families Federation guidance cites some useful examples <https://nff.org.uk/telling-your-story-to-ucas/>. Ensure you tailor it to your chosen degree so that it is cohesive and support your application
- Help admissions tutors understand your motivations, commitment and outlook; for example, if you are proud of your background in a military family or your experiences, say so.
- Have a look at university students talking about the experiences which have helped them: <https://www.scipalliance.org/resources/university-students-talk-about-skills-attributes-and-experiences>

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The application form

Whether or not your parent is still serving, you could refer in your personal statement to any strengths or challenges the Service lifestyle has brought. Fill in application fields in full, such as identifying the armed forces as your parental occupation.

- Talk to the teacher or tutor who will be writing the reference on your UCAS application. Make sure your referee is aware of anything which has impacted on your results, such as curriculum mis-alignment if you moved schools frequently or the stress of parental deployment or additional caring responsibilities you've taken on at home (if this is you, take a look at the [UCAS support pages](#)), so that they can give an institution the context it needs to make a decision on your potential suitability for the course you have chosen.
- If you're unsure about questions such as fees and support entitlements, for example if you've been living abroad, give your chosen university admissions team a ring. Make sure the person you speak to is aware of the Student Loans Company guidance that if a family member of Armed Forces personnel was overseas during the 3 years before the start of the academic year then this may be classed as Temporary Employment Outside of the UK.

Helpful resources

- [Mapping skills to what universities are looking for](#)
- The [UCAS mindmap](#)
- The [UCAS personal statement tool](#)