

UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE SERIES 30 (2023)
APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Dear *University Challenge* Team Liaison,

Applications are now open for student teams to compete in Series 29 of *University Challenge*¹.

These Application Guidelines set out our eligibility requirements for the Programme and provide information about our application process and subsequent selection process. They are also intended to help your university or university college build a successful team, so please do read them through carefully before getting started and circulate them to prospective team members and other students/staff involved in the process.

1. Minimum Requirements for Entry

Every university or university college in the UK that offers courses at Bachelor's Degree/equivalent or higher is eligible to enter a team (please see Eligibility Requirement 6 on page 6 of these Application Guidelines for more details). Each university or university college may enter more than one team, although only one team from a university or university college may appear on the Programme.

Each team taking part in the Programme consists of **four team members and one reserve team member**. One team member must be nominated as Team Captain **before** the team makes its application. Note that as well as leading the team during match play, the Team Captain will become the main contact for the Programme's production team, so they will need good organisational skills!

All team members, including the reserve, must meet our Eligibility Requirements for the programme, which are set out in Section 10 of these Application Guidelines. Please ensure that all prospective team members read the Eligibility Requirements carefully before applying.

If you have any queries about the eligibility of a prospective team member, contact the Programme's production team on 0161 952 0609 / university.challenge@itv.com, and we will be happy to advise.

Final applications must be made as a fully formed team of four team members and one reserve team member; we do not accept individual applications. If we do receive individual expressions of interest, we will aim to direct them to the organisers of the relevant university or university college, if possible, or support them in starting a selection process themselves.

2. Forming a Team

It is up to universities/university colleges how they choose to recruit and assess team members from their student bodies and universities/university colleges must select their final four team members and one reserve team member themselves.

However, the Programme's production team is happy to provide broad advice on organising the selection of a team and would also encourage all team organisers to bear in mind the following:

¹ (the "**Programme**") which ITV Studios Limited trading as Lifted Entertainment, a company registered in England and Wales with registered number 03106525 of 2 Waterhouse Square, 140 Holborn, London, United Kingdom, EC1N 2AE, England ("**we**", "**us**", "**our**") intends, but does not undertake, to produce for initial transmission by the BBC (the "**Broadcaster**").

- (i) You are encouraged to reach out to as wide a pool of students as possible (see Section 4 (Widening Participation) of these Application Guidelines for further advice on this).
- (ii) The Programme involves a mixture of individual buzzer quizzing and team conferring. You may therefore wish to consider including these elements in your tryouts in addition to written tests, for example.
- (iii) We have supplied you with some Sample Questions from recent series of the Programme. You are welcome to use some or all of these in selecting your team, but by no means required!

When forming a team, applicants and team organisers should also keep in mind that as a high-profile programme, University Challenge often attracts media attention. Such attention is usually positive, and reflects the esteem in which the Programme is held. However, it is possible that during and after the broadcast of their episodes, contestants may be the subject of negative or hostile comment either on social media or in the mainstream press. This may be accompanied by increased interest in and scrutiny of any information about them that is in the public domain, including content posted on their personal social media accounts.

It is of paramount importance to us that all contestants enjoy the experience of taking part in the Programme, and feel respected at all times. All contestants who take part in the Programme will have access to support from the Programme production team during and after recording and transmission, which will include advice on managing media attention. However, we believe it is important that prospective team members are made aware of these potential pressures prior to application, and encourage team organisers to keep them in mind. Team organisers and/or prospective team members are very welcome to contact the Programme production team in advance of making an application to discuss any concerns they have in this regard.

3. What is the Programme Looking For?

We typically receive applications from over 100 teams for each series of the Programme, of which, 28 will be selected to appear on the Programme.

We will be looking for teams that, among other things:

- (i) Demonstrate a wide range of knowledge and interests, both in terms of the subjects they study and extracurricular enthusiasms.
- (ii) Work well together, led by their Team Captain.
- (iii) Will engage our audience while they play.

In addition, our aim is for each year's final cohort of teams to represent a broad cross-section of higher education in the UK. We look to feature a range of higher education institutions, from ancient to modern, large to small, and representing different areas of the country. We enjoy showcasing the wide variety of subjects that can be studied and the different learning paths students can take.

Most importantly, the Programme is currently the only one on British television to showcase the UK's student population and we believe it should reflect the diversity of this population in terms of race, gender identity, sexuality, disability, faith, socioeconomic background, and more.

Across the 28 teams selected for each series, the Programme aims to improve representation, year on year, of groups that are typically underrepresented among our contestants.

4. Widening Participation

Team organisers may find the tips below helpful when considering how to attract a wide and diverse range of applicants. These suggestions are informed by conversations with students during their application interviews with the Programme's production team.

In addition, during the application period, a member of the Programme's production team will aim to arrange phone/video meetings with all prospective team organisers to discuss outreach strategies further.

Advertising

- (i) Centralised adverts for tryouts may not reach some sections of your student body - for example, part-time or distance-learning students may not see posters in a Student Union. We encourage you to contact and work with campus organisations or sabbatical officers that represent particular groups of students, who may be able to help promote the opportunity to people who would not normally be aware of it.
- (ii) Students who are considering applying may find it useful to speak to past contestants about their experiences of filming. If possible, it may be helpful to offer (virtual or in-person) 'drop-in' sessions, or similar, with previous contestants. Alternatively, the Programme's production team is always happy to speak to potential applicants who are unsure about any aspect of the application and recording process; please do pass on the production team's contact details where necessary.
- (iii) Similarly, students who are interested in taking part but do not have personal experience of quizzing may benefit from (virtual or in person) 'taster' sessions prior to tryouts, such as informal buzzer quizzes, or organised play-alongs with the show. Such sessions may be most effective if they are aimed explicitly at newcomers, rather than groups with mixed levels of quiz experience.
- (iv) Contestants from the 2021/22 series of the Programme have shared some of their experiences in a short film, which can be viewed on the Programme's web page here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/1ZJfGN1DkLmtZcpfDmSqK7z/how-to-apply>. We encourage you to circulate this film to your student body as part of your recruitment campaign.

Tryouts

- (i) When planning tryouts, we recommend that team organisers engage with disability officers/associations or staff members responsible for accessibility at their university, to ensure tests or other forms of assessment can be made available in a range of formats to suit different needs. Team organisers are also welcome to contact the Programme's production team for advice on accessibility.
- (ii) Generally, multiple small tryout sessions may feel more welcoming to students who have less experience of engaging with the Programme, as compared to large, busy public trials.

- (iii) Similarly, less confident quizzers may be more likely to engage in the first instance with trials that are streamed by subject or faculty, with broader tests of general knowledge or buzzer speed held later on.
- (iv) Under-represented groups may feel more welcome at tryouts or practice sessions that are run by students / staff / sabbatical officers who represent a broad cross-section of the university.
- (v) If you are writing or compiling a test for prospective applicants, try to involve multiple writers / editors from different backgrounds, and encourage those involved to think critically about what they assume to be 'common' or 'general' knowledge.
- (vi) Less experienced quizzers may be more reluctant to offer their best guesses in a test situation, even though they will often be right. We have found it helpful in our assessment process to remind applicants that we do not practice negative marking on our application test, and actively encourage guessing even if you are not 100% sure of the answer - we would encourage team organisers to give a similar preface to their tests.

5. How to Apply

Information for the Team Captain

Once your university/university college has finalised its team, **the following information and link to the Registration Form must be sent to the Team Captain:**

The below section must be read and understood by the Team Captain.

In your capacity as Team Captain, please read the following information very carefully before clicking the link below to take your team through to the next stage of the application process.

*In order to begin your team's application for the Programme, you, as Team Captain, must first submit the names and email addresses of all four team members plus the reserve team member via the **Registration Form** hosted at the link below.*

Prior to entering any personal information into the Registration Form, as Team Captain it is your responsibility to obtain the agreement of each team member and the reserve team member to share their personal information with us. If they do not agree, please do not provide us with any of their personal information. It is also your responsibility to direct team members to our privacy notice, which gives detailed information about how and why we use personal information, and your and their related rights and options. Our privacy notice can be found here:

<https://mfx-public-artifacts.s3.amazonaws.com/itvstudios/programme-applicants-participants-contributors-audience.pdf>

Hard copies are available on request.

Click here to access the Registration Form and begin your application:

<https://itv.etribez.com/ag/itvuniversity/uc30/welcome.html>

The Application Forms

Once the Registration Form has been completed by the Team Captain, the Team Captain will be able to access their personal **Application Form** immediately.

Each of the remaining team members and the reserve team member will receive an email directly to the email address that has been supplied for them containing a link through which they can each access and complete an individual online **Application Form** for the Programme.

Each team member and the reserve member must complete their own Application Form. The application hosting service will automatically collate forms from the same team.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the Programme's production team if they have any problems or queries relating to the Application Form.

The closing date for completed Application Forms is **Friday 25 November 2022**. If you are unable to meet this deadline but still wish to enter a team, please contact the Programme's production team, who will be happy to advise you.

6. Interviews

After submitting a complete set of Application Forms for the team, your team may be invited for an interview with members of the Programme's production team. Interview slots will be available throughout the period **9 January 2023 to 3 February 2023** at a series of locations around the UK. The Programme's production team will liaise with Team Captains to arrange these interviews.

It is very important to us that, wherever possible, all team members, including the reserve team member, attend the same interview slot in person. We ask all applicants to make best efforts to enable this. If exceptional circumstances mean this may not be possible, please let the Programme's production team know as soon as possible and we can discuss alternative arrangements.

The interview itself will last around an hour, and has two parts: (i) a general knowledge test; and (ii) an informal chat in which applicants will be able to tell us more about themselves and their team.

Final selections will be made on the basis of teams' performance in **both** parts of the interview. The criteria on which teams are assessed will be explained further by the Programme's production team at the beginning of the interview.

7. Student Consent Form

We require the Registrar (or equivalent) of the university or university college of all selected team members and the reserve team member to confirm the eligibility of the team members and the reserve team member to take part in the Programme. A **Student Consent Form** will be emailed to all selected team members and the reserve team member to obtain the consent needed to enable the Registrar to pass on to us information relating to each individual to satisfy our Eligibility Requirements.

8. Selection

Once teams have been selected, we will inform you by telephone if your team has been successful and this will be confirmed in writing. Unsuccessful teams will be informed by email.

Prior to recording the Programme, a **Contestant Agreement** incorporating the Programme's Eligibility Requirements and Rules must be read and signed by each team member plus the reserve team member.

9. Recordings

It is presently intended that the Programme will be recorded at Dock 10, The Studios, MediaCityUK, Salford, M50 2HQ, over three filming periods:

24 February 2023 to 27 February 2023 (inclusive)
24 March 2023 to 26 March 2023 (inclusive); and
21 April 2023 to 23 April 2023 (inclusive).

As the Programme is a tournament through which winning teams progress, teams may be required for multiple days of filming. All applicants will therefore be asked on their Application Form to confirm availability for **all** the above dates.

If prospective team members foresee any issues relating to availability on these dates, they may contact the Programme's production team in advance of applying to discuss this. However, we cannot guarantee that accommodations can be made with respect to dates of recording, and draw your attention to Eligibility Requirement 4.

Reasonable expenses properly incurred by team members and the reserve team member in the course of taking part in the recordings of the Programme to which we have given our prior approval will be met by the production and we will arrange and pay for hotel accommodation for the recordings should it be required. The areas of expenditure which may be claimed back will be discussed with each team before they come to the studio.

10. Eligibility Requirements

The Programme is a competition for teams of students. WE DRAW YOUR ATTENTION IN PARTICULAR TO ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 3 BELOW, WHICH SETS OUT THE DEFINITION OF "STUDENT" FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE PROGRAMME.

Please note, if the eligibility of any applicant changes then that applicant should immediately notify the Programme's producer as per the Eligibility Requirements.

These are the Eligibility Requirements for the Programme:

1. A team consists of four team members and one reserve member, subject to Eligibility Requirement 10 below.
2. Team members and the reserve member must not have appeared in the televised version of the Programme for any university or university college on any previous occasion.
3. The Programme is a competition for teams of students. For the purposes of the Programme, we are defining a "student" as a person:
 - (a) who has enrolled with a UK university or university college; and
 - (b) who is following a recognised course of study at that university or university college; and
 - (c) whose final award in respect of that course of study has not yet been communicated by that university or university college.

4. Team members and the reserve member must be available to attend all the recordings of the Programme on the dates notified to them by the Programme producer.
5. At the time of completing the Application Forms, and throughout all recording all team members and the reserve member must be students at the UK university or university college which is named on their Application Form and which will be named on the desk at which they sit to compete in the studio recordings of the Programme.
6. Both undergraduate and postgraduate students are eligible to participate in the Programme, subject to following a course of study at a level equivalent to a Bachelor's Degree or higher. This includes but is not limited to:
 - (a) Bachelor's Degrees;
 - (b) Graduate Certificates;
 - (c) Graduate Diplomas;
 - (d) Master's Degrees;
 - (e) Postgraduate Certificates;
 - (f) Postgraduate Diplomas;
 - (g) Doctoral Degrees,

and is further illustrated by the examples set out in Table 1 of the QAA's "The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies" as at October 2014 (http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf?sfvrsn=170af781_14, p. 17).

7. Students on both full-time and part-time courses are eligible to participate in the Programme.
8. If an overseas student is studying at a UK university or university college as part of their course, they will be eligible to participate in the Programme, but only if they are studying at that UK institution for the whole period of recording.
9. Students who are undertaking a sabbatical, whether paid or unpaid, are not eligible to participate in the Programme if the period during which they undertake their sabbatical coincides with any of the recording dates for the Programme.
10. All team members and the reserve member must be students at the UK university or university college which is named on their Application Form for each separate recording in which they appear during the series of the Programme.

If a team member ceases to be a student (as defined in Eligibility Requirement 3 above) prior to or during the recordings of the Programme, they must inform the Programme producer immediately when they cease to be eligible to take part.

If a team member becomes ineligible to participate prior to the commencement of recording, they may be replaced by an eligible reserve member who must be part of the initial team selection process.

If a team member becomes ineligible after the recording has commenced then the team may have to withdraw from the competition. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Programme producer consider a reserve member replacing a team member who is no longer eligible. Please note the Programme producer's decision is final in this regard.

11. Once the Application Forms have been submitted, if prior to or during the recording of the Programme a team member or the reserve member transfers from one university or university college to another, they must inform the Programme producer at the first opportunity. They will cease to be eligible to play for the university or university college under whose name they have applied or competed up to that point, and will not be eligible to play for the university or university college to which they transfer. This rule applies to transfers from one university to another. It also applies to transfers from one college to another within a collegiate university system.
12. If a reserve member takes over from a team member they do so for the full duration of the recordings in which the team participates and the replaced team member can no longer participate in any further recordings for this or any other university or university college.
13. Subject to Eligibility Requirement 9 above, being in employment as well as being a student does not preclude a team member or reserve member from entering or appearing on the Programme provided they satisfy Eligibility Requirement 3 above. However all employment details must be provided in the relevant section of the Application Form. If, after having completed the Application Form and whilst still participating in the Programme, a team member or the reserve member takes on employment, they must at their first opportunity inform the Programme producer of their change in circumstances. Provided they continue to satisfy Eligibility Requirement 3 above, they will still be eligible to participate in the Programme.
14. It is the team member's responsibility to ensure that the information given in the statement they make on screen at the beginning of each recording of the Programme, which may include but is not confined to their name, place of birth and course of study, is accurate and reflects their status as a student at the time of each recording.
15. There is no upper or lower age limit on contestants participating in the Programme; however, if a team member or reserve member is under the age of 16, their participation may be subject to: (i) the consent of their parent or legal guardian, and their parent or legal guardian may be required to accompany such contestant to the studio recording(s); and (ii) obtaining all necessary permissions and licences (including but not limited to permission from the local education authority).
16. We have the right at our sole discretion to add to, delete from, modify or amend these Eligibility Requirements and to select participants for the Programme. In all circumstances concerning the interpretation and application of these Eligibility Requirements, our decision will be final.

11. Contacting Us

If you would like any more information about taking part, please contact the Programme's production office by phone, email or letter and we will be happy to advise you.

GOOD LUCK!

Yours sincerely,

Clare Parody
Series Producer, University Challenge

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