

**UNIVERSITY COMPASS  
FOR THE UK  
AND IRELAND**



UNIVERSITY COMPASS

By Mirjana Power

*University Compass for the UK*

*University Compass for Ireland*

*University Compass for the UK  
and Ireland*

*Hochschulkompass für Österreich*

*Hochschulkompass für Deutschland*

*Hochschulkompass für die Schweiz*

*Hochschulkompass für Deutschland,  
Österreich und die Schweiz*

[www.simplypowering.org](http://www.simplypowering.org)

## UNIVERSITY COMPASS

UNIVERSITY COMPASS

Mirjana Power

**UNIVERSITY COMPASS  
FOR THE UK  
AND IRELAND**

**How to apply to universities and  
choose a fulfilling course**

Simply Mpowering® is a registered trademark [www.simplympowering.org](http://www.simplympowering.org)

© 2024 Mirjana Power, Simply Mpowering®

First published in 2024, Wädenswil, Zürich, Switzerland

Editor: Lisa Joyce

Cover picture: © Andrew Tan, [andrew\\_t8 / pixabay.com](https://www.pixabay.com)

Printed and distributed on behalf of the author by Tredition GmbH.

Contact for legal notices: Tredition GmbH Abteilung "Impressumservice", Heinz-Beusen-Stieg 5, 22926 Ahrensburg, Deutschland.

All rights reserved.

No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

The automated analysis of the work in order to obtain information, in particular about patterns, trends and correlations ('text and data mining') is prohibited.

Although the author has made every effort to ensure that the information in this book was correct at press time and while this publication is designed to provide accurate information in regard to the subject matter covered, the publisher and the author assume no responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, omissions, or any other inconsistencies herein and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss, damage, or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident, or any other cause.

This publication is meant as a source of valuable information for the reader, however it is not meant as a substitute for direct expert assistance. If such a level of assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

ISBN 978-3-384-34614-8

## About the author

Mirjana Power is a dedicated mother, author, visionary and an experienced human potential coach. A global citizen, she has lived on three different continents and in seven different countries.

Mirjana holds a master's degree in translation and interpreting from the Institute for Theoretical and Applied Translation Studies (KFU) in Graz.

Her curiosity to constantly acquire new knowledge has led her to continue to train in various fields. She has gained professional experience in areas such as fund management as well as in coaching, art expression therapy, mindfulness, deep meditation and energy healing.

Mirjana is passionate about working with people around the world to unlock their full potential and create a fulfilling life. She loves to write blogs and books. As a mother she has done a lot of voluntary work in her children's schools, be it as a board member of the parents' association or helping with the career's forum, theatre performances, organising events or numerous other activities. She finds working with young people inspiring, creative and fulfilling.

## UNIVERSITY COMPASS



## Thank you

I am deeply grateful to my children for the path we have travelled together so far. This handbook is the result of our university research and application journey.

Thank you also to all the students who have shown me how much they enjoy learning, when we create an open and safe space for it.

A heartfelt thank you to my friend Anh Nga who read my first draft of the book. Her feedback encouraged me to publish this handbook and share it with families.

A big thank you also goes out to my editor Lisa Joyce.

## UNIVERSITY COMPASS

UNIVERSITY COMPASS

Dedicated to all the young people  
who have the courage  
to follow their “inner compass”

*The path that I am walking on  
does not exist yet.  
I am creating it  
with every step  
I take.  
(M. Power)*

## CONTENT

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	15
SOME PRACTICAL THOUGHTS	18
HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK?	22
<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	25
1.1. THE PROCESS OF DECISION-MAKING	25
1.1.1. PROCRASTINATION	27
1.2. HOW TO DECIDE WHAT TO STUDY -	28
SOME PRACTICAL TIPS	28
1.3. ARE YOU AN ENTREPRENEUR AT HEART?	40
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	45
2.1. LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND NEURODIVERSITY	45
2.2. UNIVERSITY CHOICE AND LIMITING BELIEF SYSTEMS	47
2.2.1. WHAT IF...	48
2.3. BE OPEN TO ALL UNIVERSITIES	51
2.4. REALISING POTENTIAL AND MARKETING	52
2.5. UNIVERSITY FAIRS	54
2.6. UNIVERSITY FEES AND ACCOMMODATION COSTS	59
2.7. DECIDING FROM A PLACE OF INNER CONNECTION	62
2.8. UNIVERSITY VISITS – IN PERSON AND VIRTUALLY	63
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	65
3.1. GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY	68
3.1.1. SAMPLE QUESTIONS	69
3.1.2. NEURODIVERSITY	73
3.2. SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FOR YOURSELF	75
3.2.1. INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES AND DEGREES	80
3.3. ACCOMMODATION - ON-CAMPUS OR OFF-CAMPUS	85
3.4. NUMBER OF UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS	87

## UNIVERSITY COMPASS

3.5. THE SYSTEMIC AND PLAYFUL APPROACH –	88
A BIRD'S EYE VIEW	88
3.5.1. EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS IN THEIR FINAL YEAR	88
3.5.2. SYSTEMIC EXERCISE – TRUST THE IDEA	94
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	101
4.1. FULFILLING GENERAL ADMISSION CRITERIA	102
4.2. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS – ENTRY EXAMS	106
4.2.1. NEURODIVERSITY AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES –	106
DO NOT FORGET	106
4.2.2. EXAM PREPARATION	107
4.2.3. EXAM ANXIETY	107
4.2.4. ONLINE ENTRY EXAMS	109
4.3. ENTRY REQUIREMENT – LANGUAGE SKILLS	111
4.4. ENTRY REQUIREMENT GRADES AND	112
INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMAS	112
4.5. ACCEPTANCE WITHOUT STANDARDISED TESTING	115
AND LOWER GRADES	115
4.6. OTHER DOCUMENTS / PERSONAL STATEMENT	116
4.7. DOCUMENT YOUR RESEARCH	119
4.8. CHECKLIST	121
<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	125
5.1. APPLYING TO UK UNIVERSITIES	125
5.1.1. IB APPLICATIONS	128
5.1.2. AP APPLICATIONS (ADVANCED PLACEMENT)	131
5.1.3. IRISH LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLICATIONS - UK	135
5.1.4. APPLYING WITH PREDICTED GRADES	136
5.1.5. A CONDITIONAL OFFER	138
5.1.6. ACCEPTING AN OFFER	140

## UNIVERSITY COMPASS

5.2. UCAS STEP-BY-STEP	142
5.2.1. HOW TO REGISTER ON UCAS	146
5.2.2. RECEIVING AND ACCEPTING AN OFFER	148
5.2.3. THE CLEARING PROCESS IN UCAS	150
<b>CHAPTER 6</b>	153
6.1. UNIVERSITY FEES UK	153
6.2. SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS AND BURSARIES	154
<b>CHAPTER 7</b>	163
7.1. APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND	163
7.1.1. IB APPLICATIONS IRELAND	166
7.1.2. AP APPLICATIONS IRELAND	168
7.1.3. A-LEVEL APPLICATIONS IRELAND	173
7.1.4. APPLYING WITH EU/EFTA QUALIFICATIONS	177
7.2. CAO APPLICATION STEP-BY-STEP	179
<b>CHAPTER 8</b>	181
8.1. UNIVERSITY FEES IRELAND	181
8.2. SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS AND BURSARIES	182
EPILOGUE	191
UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN THE UK	192
UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN IRELAND	198

## INTRODUCTION

I am delighted that your path has led you to my handbook, and I hope that it will serve you as a source of inspiration and information for your choice of study programme or university.

As a human potential coach, I have worked with a very wide range of people around the world, at different stages of their lives.

My clients include CEOs of international companies, army commanders, successful entrepreneurs as well as pupils, students, stay-at-home parents, unemployed and homeless people, and numerous other professional groups.

No matter where we are in life, it is not always possible for us to live our potential. Even CEOs don't always fulfil their true potential despite making it to the top and earning an above-average income.

In this handbook, I would like to share my experience and expertise with you to help you find and follow your own university path and reach your potential in the best possible way.

You are the one in charge of the direction in which your life or your studies will take you, and you are equally in control of changing that direction if the need arises.

You should also trust your "inner compass", as this is the basis for developing your potential.

Having travelled the path of choosing a university with my own children, I know how important support can be throughout that process.

By summarising valuable and relevant information in this book, I would like to try to help you choose your individual study path and enrol at a university.

Before I go into more detail on this topic, allow me to share with you what inspired me to write this handbook.

As a mother, I have always tried to support my children in finding their own unique pathways. In doing so, I have realised how much influence the whole environment has or can have, especially when we don't yet have clarity about our own path. I noticed that it can be challenging to choose a subject and a university, especially when your fellow classmates might choose more “typical” course subjects, such as medicine, law, business and similar. These subjects still tend to have a reputation for bringing success and prestige in life. However, hardly anyone talks about the many students who drop out of university because they have chosen a subject that fails to inspire or really interest them.

I have also observed the stress levels experienced by students and their parents during the final school year. Time is truly valuable, and the university search and application process certainly takes up a lot of it.

A handbook can be a great resource to take you through the application process step by step. I would like to encourage and empower you to take the next step in your life and decide which degree programme and which university to choose based on your desires, visions and needs.

My wish for parents and students is that this handbook will contribute towards a smoother decision-making and university application process.



If you are lucky, you will have a college counsellor in school or you might be hiring a private one. This handbook will serve as a valuable resource even in that case. If you have to rely on your own research, then I hope that this book can assist you with it.

Thank you for using my handbook as a resource in choosing your unique university pathway!

Mirjana Power

## SOME PRACTICAL THOUGHTS

As you read through this handbook, you will find practical tips and resources as well as subject matter information.

Every year, millions of students are preparing to leave school, while trying to decide the next step to take in their life and what to study. For many, the intensive research for courses and universities often begins as much as a year or two in advance.

Some students already know what type of degree they would like to pursue: medicine, architecture, law, art, engineering, science, languages, business etc. This can already make the university selection easier, as they can focus on the practical aspects such as location, entry requirements or fees.

There are many students, however, who require support and assistance to gain clarity on which subject they would like to explore more deeply.

Often, students are truly busy in their final year, whether that is with extra projects, rigorous diploma programmes, sitting mock exams or preparing for final exams.

This handbook was created with those busy students in mind, as well as their parents, who often assist with the research.

Whatever your family's situation is, the following content is aimed at making your life easier when it comes to choosing university pathways.

In this handbook, you will find many questions that you can use to find out for yourself what direction you would like to take, or what type of course you are interested in.

I have added many practical questions in Chapter three that can assist you in deciding what and where to study.

The questions can also assist you in choosing a specific course of interest and clarifying answers around university choices. You can also bring those questions along to discussions with a college counsellor.

From my own experience, and having coached many people from diverse backgrounds, I can assure you that one step at a time is often the most sensible approach.

**★ Tip – step by step**

It is beneficial to remember that university is a step on your life's path, and that many more steps will follow.

If we take one step after the other, then we can keep reassessing in which direction we want to turn our compass. That allows us to stay flexible and open to change in life.

Victoria Labalme explains it beautifully, highlighting that unless you have taken that one step, you might not know what is around the corner.

It is possible that you might decide to take a completely different direction after you have taken that one step.

If, however, you have planned the end goal and then work backwards, as many people do, there might be a much more “rigid” approach to taking steps, instead of allowing a more natural and often healthy flow to occur.

In addition, one step at a time may open up new horizons that you might not have seen if you had diligently planned all steps to the end.

In any case, everyone's choices and pathways are individual, and the most crucial point is to go with what you feel most comfortable with.

Many students and parents might view a university degree as a first step towards a specific career path, but that does not always have to be the case.

As you embark on this research journey, I can only invite you to approach it with an open, explorative and patient mind

There is no reason to become stressed. The more often we take a deep breath, the clearer the choice will become. Often the next step on the career path might only become obvious much later.

If we look at the current workforce, it is clear that increasing numbers of people have made or are in the process of making a career change. This will continue in the future, and I find this rather exciting, as it shows that there is still the option of choosing a different path after university.

This means that you can choose a course that you are interested in, with the knowledge that eventually you might learn something completely different and make a career change if you want to.

This might take some weight off your shoulders. There is no right or wrong choice. There is always the possibility to change if things do not quite work out the way you had imagined they would, no matter how thorough your research.