

CAREERS FACTSHEET POST 18 – UNIVERSITY

Are you considering going to university?

University remains a popular route into a job for many young people, as it provides you with the opportunity to study a subject of your choice in greater detail and gains you a degree. During your studies you will boost your skills and expertise in your subject area, and this will make you more attractive to a future employer.

- A university course can help you to develop the skills employers want such as research and analytical skills, motivation, independent working as well as team working.
- It can be difficult to decide on what degree or higher education course to choose. It is essential you pick something you enjoy and want to learn more about. This may not be the same as your friends!
- When people think of higher education, they usually think of studying for a degree, but there are many more options available: Foundation degrees, higher and degree apprenticeships and higher national diplomas (HND).
- Some courses require you to have top grades in your level 3 qualifications and there are other courses where the entry grades are more flexible and not so high. Find out more about these courses:
<https://careerpilot.org.uk/information/higher-education-at-18/types-of-he-level-courses-level-4>
- All university applications are made through UCAS. You will be asked to write a personal statement, in this you will need to talk about your career aspirations, reasons for choosing the course and your experience. The Sixth Form team will talk to you about how to apply and what you else you need to do. To have a look at university courses please click on the following link:
UCAS - <https://www.ucas.com/>
- Before making any final decisions on a course, make sure you talk to people about what you are considering. If you have a family member working in the profession you are considering you should take the opportunity to talk to them about what they do and what it is like to work in that job. Also speaking to your subject teachers about your predicted grades and suitability for courses will help you with your decision making.

Things you should consider before making your degree/university course choice:

- Are you going to studying in London or in a university elsewhere in the UK?
- Have you considered how your university studies will be funded? University can be expensive, advice on funding and student loans can be found with the money advice service
<https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en>
- Have you considered the type of course you will apply for? Think about what whether you'd like to undertake a placement/sandwich year (a one-year, paid work experience placement you complete as part of your degree).
- Find out when university open days are, try to visit the ones you are considering so you get an idea what it will be like to live and study there.



Also speak to students who are already doing or have completed the course.

In this climate many Universities are offering virtual tours

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/what-and-where-study/open-days-and-events/virtual-tours>

- Look into attending career fairs to speak to employers, apprenticeship providers and get further careers support – What University Live <https://www.whatcareerlive.co.uk/london>. In this climate you will need to do your research online and contact them via email or phone.
- Have you looked at what you'll be studying? Ensure you look at the course modules and assessment methods. Do they suit your learning style?
- Consider what options are available to you once you have completed your degree. For example, what support is available through the universities. What job are you hoping to go into once you've completed the course?
- Prepare for your university interview - <https://www.allaboutcareers.com/careers-advice/university-interviews/how-to-prepare-for-a-university-interview/>

Useful websites

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2019/jun/07/university-league-tables-2020>

<https://www.allaboutcareers.com/careers-advice/choosing-a-university/what-degree-should-i-do>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree>

Key actions:

- Research your course, look at modules and course content – refer to the UCAS website.
- If you are considering a career in law, dentistry or medicine you need to look at when the prerequisite exams are. Speak to your careers advisor or school teachers about this and have a look at our school website <https://www.uhs.org.uk/page/?title=Oxbridge+Programme&pid=206>
- Talk to your teachers about your predicted grades and about your career choices.
- Visit universities on their open days, speak to students already doing the course, speak to course leaders, look at facilities and make a note of how you feel about studying there. (Virtual tours, websites, webinars, email and phone)
- Attend a Careers Fair. (Do your research via internet)
- Consider the types of jobs you hope to apply for once you have completed a course.



CAREERS FACTSHEET POST 18 – FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT

When you've finished your A-levels or vocational training you may be considering going into employment. Government legislation states that young people must stay in full time education until the age of 18.

- It is important that you carefully think about where you would like to work and take time to consider what your longer-term career plans are.
- Writing some goals about what you'd like to achieve will help you plan your next steps. Your school teacher and careers advisor can help you with this. The following website may also help you get started:
<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/personal-development-plan-template/>
<https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-to-build-my-confidence-and-be-more-assertive/school/5-ways-to-stay-motivated-and-get-more-done>
- You may not know exactly what you want to do at this stage. To start with you could think about the things you enjoy, your hobbies and what jobs might be linked to your current studies.
- If you already have an idea of what you'd like to do its important you start to research opportunities. This can start with conversations with your school careers adviser, class teachers, friends and family (this is your professional network). You can look at job profiles online and advertised vacancies on recruitment websites, in local newspapers and by talking to your network.
<https://www.indeed.co.uk/>
<https://www.monster.co.uk/>
<https://www.fish4.co.uk/>

CV, Application Forms & Covering Letters:

- **Create a CV:** One key task you will need to undertake is to create a CV. A CV is a document that outlines all your key skills, educational achievements and work experience. This is what some employer's will look at when considering your suitability for the job they are advertising. Further tips on writing a CV can be found on the following webpage:
<https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/help-for-young-people/tools-resources/finding-job/cv-tips>
- An employer may also ask you to complete an **online application form** and **covering letter**. An **application form** is designed to gather information that an employer needs from you to make a recruitment decision. The form will ask for your personal details, grades and a personal statement. This will give you a chance to write how you feel you are suitable for the job.
- For some jobs you may be asked to write a **covering letter**. This allows you to introduce yourself to an employer on paper. For more information on how to write a cover letter please have a look at the following website:
<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/school-leaver-cover-letter-template/>
- The most popular method of looking for jobs is using recruitment websites. It is important you carefully read the job description and look for the desired skills an employer is looking for. If you would like further support with learning how to do this, please speak to your careers advisor or a school teacher.



Interview Skills

- If you have been successful in your application, you will be asked to attend a job interview. It is important you prepare for this by researching the company to make sure you know what their business is about. You should think about some questions you might be asked and prepare for these. It is also important you prepare some questions to ask the employer. This could be about training you might receive or about the job you will be doing. The following website provides some useful tips: <https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/help-for-young-people/tools-resources/finding-job/interview-tips>

Other useful websites

<https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/employment-help-young-people/choices/getting-a-job/>

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/get-a-job>

<https://www.indeed.co.uk/>

<https://www.reed.co.uk/jobs/young-people-jobs>

<https://targetcareers.co.uk/careers-advice/work-v-uni>

<https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-help-applying-for-jobs/sixth-form/cv-builder>

Key actions:

- If you know what job you would like to apply for, speak to friends or family already doing this job to gain an insight into what is involved.
- Create a CV & covering letter
- Look at online recruitment websites for jobs, look for the skills and qualifications they are looking for. Try to match this to skill your set.
- Register on recruitment websites.
- Look at examples personal statements and how to complete an application form online.
- If you don't have any relevant work experience, try to think of examples at school where you have had to use certain skills. For example, team working in a group project.
- Ensure you prepare for an interview, research the company online and have questions prepared to ask the employer. Take a copy of your CV with you to the Interview.



CAREERS FACTSHEET POST 18 HIGHER LEVEL APPRENTICESHIPS – LEVELS 4 & 5

Higher apprenticeships are especially suited to those who have done well in their GCSEs and A-levels. They are also suited to those who have completed an Advanced Apprenticeship but want to progress without taking the university route. Typically, applicants are required to have a minimum of two A-levels or equivalent, or an Advanced Apprenticeship.

- They are a great option for school and college leavers who are looking for an alternative to university.
- As a guide they take between 12-18 months to complete, for certain subjects they can last longer than this.
- You may spend most of your time working for an employer and learning on the job but you will also spend some time at a training institution, college or university. Typically, you may spend one/two days in the office/workplace and the remainder of the week at college.
- You will study towards vocational or academic qualifications that are relevant to your job, such as the ATT (Association of Tax Technicians) or the CTA (Chartered Tax Adviser) qualifications -if completing a Higher Apprenticeship with a tax and accountancy firm, for example.
- Often at the end of a Higher Apprenticeship, you will be at the same level as employees who took the university route and then a graduate scheme. There is a high chance (but not guaranteed) that you may be offered a job with your employer.
- Opportunities are available in wide range of industries and roles from tax and accountancy to construction management, mechanical engineering, web development and even space engineering!
- Applications for higher apprenticeships can be made directly through employer web pages, recruitment sites and via the government apprenticeship websites.

Useful websites

<https://successatschool.org/advisedetails/226/higher-level-apprenticeships/>

<https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship/>

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/higher-and-degree-apprenticeships/>



CAREERS FACTSHEET POST 18 DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

Degree apprenticeship (Level 6 qualification)

Degree apprenticeships are primarily targeted at 18 to 19-year-old school leavers as an alternative route to gaining a degree, especially those who are unsure about university due to high tuition fees and student debt.

As an apprentice you will split your time between University and the workplace. Typically, you may spend three days at work and two days at University, this will continue until you gain your degree. During this time, you will be paid and gain real on job work experience in your chosen profession.

- Degree apprenticeships may offer you the opportunity to gain experience and form working relationships with high profile, well respected companies.
- For students studying Level 3 qualifications or A-levels who are not sure whether they want to go to university or do an apprenticeship it is advised that you apply to a university through UCAS (you can decline any offers later). You should also look for an apprenticeship at the same time.
- A real alternative to full-time university study, you will build your career, gain professional skills, status and accreditation all whilst being in a job and earning a salary.
- An opportunity to gain a degree without debt. Apprentices do not need to pay for this opportunity as your employer and the government will fund the apprenticeship programme.
- Gain Degree Level 6 qualification (equivalent to a Bachelor's or Honour's degree)
- Apprenticeships are available in: Accountancy, Aerospace, Banking, Broadcasting, Civil Engineering, Cyber Security, Healthcare, Laboratory Science, Law, Management, Nursing, Policing, Solicitor, Surveying, Teaching and many more.
- Applications for higher apprenticeships can be made directly through employer web pages, recruitment sites and via the government apprenticeship website.

Useful websites:

<https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/higher-and-degree-apprenticeships/>

<https://successatschool.org/advisedetails/582/degree-apprenticeships/>



CAREERS FACTSHEET POST 18 – ASSESSMENT CENTRES

What is an assessment centre?

Many companies run a series of extended selection procedures, often called assessment centres. These centres allow organisations to assess you whether you have the necessary skills and abilities to join their organisation. Also referred to as selection centres, they present candidates with a mixture of ***online tests, group/individual exercises, case studies and presentation exercises.***

This type of process usually lasts a day or two. They take place following the first round of interviews and before the final selection. They are commonly held either on employers' premises or in a hotel and for many companies they prove a successful way of selecting the right graduates to join their schemes.

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips/assessment-centres/>

Psychometric tests:

Employers today are using psychometric tests more than ever in the graduate selection process. They can involve the following:

<https://www.practiceaptitudetests.com/psychometric-tests/>

Online aptitude tests:

Aptitude tests are a perfect way for an employer to assess your overall skills and knowledge through numerical, verbal and reasoning exercises. You will be required to answer a number of questions under exam conditions, usually within a thirty minute period.

The tests normally occur before the first interview as a way of measuring whether you can continue the application process.

<https://www.practiceaptitudetests.com/free-aptitude-tests/>

Personality tests:

These assess your personal qualities through your responses to a number of questions or statements. They can aid the employer in measuring your ability to handle situations, your emotions, motivations and allow them to gain an idea to your overall outlook to work.

You may be expected to prepare a small presentation on the day. Introduce yourself at the start of the presentation (even if you have already been introduced to your audience) and use notes as a prompt, not a script. Brushing up on PowerPoint skills prior to the assessment day is a must.

<https://www.assessmentday.co.uk/personality-questionnaire.htm>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/mind/surveys/personality/>

<https://www.practiceaptitudetests.com/personality-test/>



In-tray exercises:

With this kind of exercise, a candidate will be asked to handle a typical pile of papers that simulate what you might encounter in the role. These papers may include letters, internal memos or emails, reports, 'junk mail' and so on. It is up to the candidate to deal with and prioritise them accordingly.

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/assessment-centres/275463-what-are-in-tray-exercises/>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips/interview-tests-and-exercises>

<https://www.assessmentday.co.uk/in-tray-exercise.htm>

Group assessments:

These involve completing a task or activity within a small group of your fellow candidates. The way in which you perform individually and as part of the group is monitored by assessors.

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/assessment-centres/275425-group-exercises-what-to-expect>

<https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/young-prof-article/assessment-centre-tips-for-problem-solving-group-exercises/>

Source: <https://www.insidecareers.co.uk/career-advice/how-to-tackle-assessment-centres/>

