

Preparing for the next steps.....



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Students need to have a plan A and a plan B

Employment

Many young people choose to go into employment with organisations that have structured career progression pathways.

Some examples include the South West Water, the civil service, the Ministry of Defence, the NHS, and the armed forces.

Some industries such as financial services and law have industry qualifications that you are able to progress through as you become more experienced.

Things to do now.....

- Students who have **no idea** what they want to do- complete the SPARTAN Test https://sacu-student.com/?page_id=2850 . This is a very good idea generator.
- Use the **Unifrog** <https://www.unifrog.org/> careers platform to record all their Activities and Skills developed during their studies. This will help when completing applications.
- Preparing a **CV and cover letter**- (they need both). This is useful for applying for jobs, apprenticeships, and part-time jobs when you get to university. Unifrog has a template and there is significant information on the following websites:
<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/cvs/cv-templates/>
<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/cover-letters/>
- Research organisations in the area they would like to live in. There is a lot of labour market information that can really help to understand and target local companies: **Plymouth** www.dataplymouth.co.uk
Nationally
http://www.cegnet.co.uk/uploads/resources/The_ten_best_LMI_resources_national.pdf
- Register for job vacancy updates with larger organisations such as NHS, Babcock, etc

GAP Year

Offers the opportunity to gain skills and experiences, while giving students time to reflect and focus on what they want to do next. This could be full-time work, volunteering, traveling, or working abroad.

A productive gap year can be valuable on their CV – many employers value the experiences students have gained if they've actively managed their time, set themselves goals, and stretched themselves.

A gap year can also enhance their higher education studies – if they decide to apply for university, they could tailor their gap year to relate it to the subject area they plan to study.

Admissions tutors at universities know that some students may take a little time to adjust to studying again, but many former gap-year students are generally more focused and responsible.

It is always a good idea to have applied to university already and to have a deferred place to come back for.

Things to do now.....

- **Secure** a university place and **defer entry** for a year, that way they have something to focus on at the end of their GAP year.
- **UCAS** has a great guide that contains both pros and cons and some suggestions of what to do:
<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/student-life/gap-year/gap-years-ideas-and-things-think-about>
- Preparing a **CV and cover letter**- (they need both). This is useful for applying for jobs, apprenticeships, and also part-time jobs when you get to university. Unifrog has a template and there is significant information on the following websites:
<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/cvs/cv-templates/>
<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/cover-letters/>

Higher Education Colleges

The thought of committing to three years of study at university can be daunting. There are alternatives that allow students to continue their studies locally and not at a university.

Several local further education establishments offer higher education courses. Courses can be a Higher National Certificate (HNC), Higher National Diploma (HND), or Foundation Degrees.

There are different funding options depending on the course. The local colleges such as City College Plymouth, and Duchy College.

Things to do now.....

- Research funding
- Go to the open days
- Make applications

Art based Degrees Art Foundation courses

Many art and design degree courses require applicants to have taken a one-year **art foundation course** after A levels. This helps students to explore a range of art and design experiences such as sculpture or fine art which they may not have been able to explore in school. It also gives students time to build on their art portfolio.

Applications for these courses are made directly to the college and most students tend to stay local to home rather than move away. Students will need a portfolio of their artwork as part of the application process.

Things to do now.....

- Research funding opportunities as a foundation year may be **FREE**, education establishments will be able to help with what is available. In addition, <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/> has further information.
- Go to the **open days**, and speak to the tutors about the courses.
- Make application (s) that will include a portfolio of their artwork.

Apprenticeships- Advanced and Higher/ Degree Level

An apprenticeship is where students work with an employer as an employee. They have a contract of employment and are paid a training allowance. They spend 80% of their time with the employer and 20% of their time with a training provider or University. Some businesses structure the training so that for a block of weeks they work in the business and this is then followed by a week at College or University.

There are different levels of apprenticeship and all apprenticeships include elements of on-the-job and off-the-job training, leading to industry recognised standards or qualifications.

The advantage of following this pathway is that apprentices are employed and are paid a training allowance.

As an example, Babcock recently advertised a level 3 Aircraft Engineering Technician Apprenticeship based in Gloucestershire for £23, 796.

Apprentices gain valuable work experience and can apply the learning from their off-the-job training to the workplace.

Apprentices **DO NOT** have to pay for the training.

Degree-level apprenticeships include **attending university** as the off-the-job training where students work towards their degree. Once completed, apprentices graduate with full-time university students and receive the **SAME** Degree qualification.

Things to do now.....

- Preparing a **CV and cover letter**- (they need both). This is useful for applying for jobs, apprenticeships, and also part-time jobs when you get to university. Unifrog has a template and there is significant information on the following websites:
<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/cvs/cv-templates/>
<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/cover-letters/>
- Register with **National Apprenticeship Service** to receive email alerts for new vacancies: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>
- **Get my first job** <https://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk/>
- **Amazing Apprenticeships** <https://amazingapprenticeships.com/>
- GetMyFirstJob
<https://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk/WhatsNext/Apprenticeships.aspx>

- Make applications alongside, applying for University
<https://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships>

University

A degree will not only give students the opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge of their chosen subject but also to develop transferable skills such as communication, presentation, and problem-solving skills while enhancing their ability to work as part of a team. It is an opportunity to become independent, possibly in a different city, but with support from the university.

Some careers such as medicine require a specific degree as part of the role. Students will apply for an **Undergraduate** degree.

UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service)

When students apply for a place at University they have 5 choices of courses that they can apply for and they complete their application through UCAS which becomes a central point of contact between students and the universities.

Things to do now.....

- UCAS has some great help pages:
<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/advice-parents-guardians-and-carers>
- Attend open days <https://www.ucas.com/explore/search/events?query=>
- Find out what funding is available:
<https://www.ucas.com/student-finance-england/student-finance-guidance-parents-and-partners>
- Find out how much parents are expected to contribute to financially supporting their young person
<https://www.savesthestudent.org/student-finance/maintenance-loans.html#amount>
- Compare how courses are taught, do they match the students' learning. Do they cope with exams, or prefer to have ongoing assessment?
- What is the campus like? Is it a City Campus, what are the transport links like? What do the destination statistics tell you? Will the course qualify them to do the job that they want to do?

University Entrance Exams

Some universities require students to sit an admissions test as part of the application process.

Many courses that require students to sit a test have a 15 October UCAS application deadline, but courses may be different, so it's important students [check key dates and deadlines](#).

Most admissions tests happen between August and November the year before they're due to start their studies – some even earlier, before they've sent their UCAS application!

Law

[LNAT – National Admissions Test for Law](#)

Mathematics

[Mathematics Admissions Test \(MAT\)](#)

[Sixth Term Examination Paper \(STEP\)](#)

[Test of Mathematics for University Admissions](#)

Medical courses

[BioMedical Admissions Test \(BMAT\)](#)

[Graduate Medical School Admissions Test \(GAMSAT\)](#)

[University Clinical Aptitude Test \(UCAT\)](#)

Thinking Skills Assessment

[Thinking Skills Assessment Oxford \(TSA Oxford\)](#)

Universities of Oxford and Cambridge

If they are considering applying to the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, there's a very high chance they will need to sit an admissions test. The majority of courses require them, but check the course description in the UCAS [search tool](#) to be sure.

Students need to register separately from their UCAS application to sit the exam. The deadlines for registrations are as follows

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/admissions-tests>

Things to do now.....

- To see if the courses they are interested in require them to sit an admissions test, check the course description in the UCAS [search tool](#).
- Book any entrance tests.

No Idea what to do????

It can be confusing to try and decide what to do at age 17/18.

We also have a careers adviser in school who is able to provide impartial career's advice, in addition there are these online resources:

Unifrog <https://www.unifrog.org/>

Unifrog is the universal destinations platform and is designed to support learners in making the most informed decisions about their futures and has a range of tools. Each student has an account where they can explore all the career and next-step options available to them and find information on everything from a careers library to writing a winning CV. Students have access to a wide variety of video and written content, and interactive quizzes and tests

SPARTAN Test https://sacu-student.com/?page_id=2850

UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service)

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/after-gcses/find-career-ideas/explore-jobs#js=on>

Students can use this to look at the subjects and entry requirements needed for various degrees.

NHS Careers <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/>

Students can use this to research what qualifications they need for different jobs within the NHS. There is also a career quiz to generate ideas and matches with careers within the NHS.

National Careers Service <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-careers>

This is a government-run website so the information is up to date and the site is comprehensive. You can use this to look at what you would be doing daytoday in different job roles.

On the **Prospects** website, they can look at where their degree could lead. There are jobs listed that are directly linked to the degree and jobs where their degree would be useful. There is also a quiz they can take.

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors>

Things to do now.....

- The most important thing for the students to do is focus on their studies
- Be supportive! There is **no** such thing as the wrong choice.....
- Encourage them to meet with the school's careers adviser