

CAREERS

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS



CONTENTS...

- 4 INTRODUCING CAREERS EDUCATION AT BISHOP STOPFORD SCHOOL
- 5 BISHOP STOPFORD SCHOOL: OUR CAREERS CHARTER
- 6 WHAT DOES CAREERS EDUCATION INVOLVE?
- 7 WHAT ARE THE CAREER MILESTONES DURING MY TIME AT SCHOOL?
- 8 WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS AT AGE 16 AND 18?
- 9 WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT QUALIFICATION LEVELS IN THE UK?
- 10 WHO ARE OUR LOCAL COLLEGES AND PROVIDERS?
- 11 WHAT ARE A-LEVELS?
- 12 WHAT ARE T-LEVELS?
- 13 WHAT ARE BTEC DIPLOMAS?
- 14 WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?
- 15 HOW DO I FIND AND APPLY FOR APPRENTICESHIPS?

CONTENTS...

- 16 OUR CAREERS FAMILY: WHO CAN I TALK TO ABOUT CAREERS?
- 17 WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT A CAREERS GUIDANCE MEETING?
- 18 WHAT IS LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION?
- 19 LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION: EAST MIDLANDS
- 20 LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION: ENGLAND
- 21 WHAT IS UNIVERSITY?
- 22 HOW DO I APPLY TO UNIVERSITY?
- 23 WHAT IS A GAP YEAR?
- 24 HOW DO PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES HELP MY CAREER?
- 25 WHAT WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES CAN I EXPECT?
- 26 HELPFUL LINKS AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

INTRODUCING CAREERS EDUCATION AT BISHOP STOPFORD SCHOOL

“Birds born in a cage believe flying is an illness.”

Careers Education plays an important role in broadening students' horizons and preparing them to live fulfilled lives.

Students learn about careers in every year group. The Careers Curriculum is planned to stimulate students' interests in the world of work, prepare them for their future opportunities and responsibilities, and inspire them to reach their full potential.



The Careers Curriculum has three main aims:

- **Self-Development** - enabling students to understand themselves, their strengths and the influences on them, acquiring the core competencies and skills necessary to enable them to access a range of opportunities
- **Career Exploration** - investigation of opportunities in learning and work, understanding the changing world of work and labour market information
- **Career Management** - developing skills enabling themselves to make and adjust plans and to manage change and transitions.

Our Careers Curriculum is delivered by PSHE teachers, subject teachers, form tutors, heads of year and our careers leader. Individual advice is also on offer to students as they consider careers and future options.

We work in partnership with an independent Advice and Guidance company - The Mallows Company - who provide a designated Careers Lead and Adviser to provide objective and impartial advice.



Careers Lead and Adviser - Mrs Glynis Castle

Assistant Headteacher - Mr Simon Smith

BISHOP STOPFORD SCHOOL: OUR CAREERS CHARTER

Career education helps turn dreams into actionable goals, providing a clear roadmap for success.

As a student at Bishop Stopford School we want you to aim high and be successful in your future life and career, whatever that might be.



We will help you:

- Learn about how your skills, strengths, interests and qualities link to the world of work
- Understand the learning and employment pathways available to you
- Learn about education after you leave school
- Explore training and employment opportunities
- Make applications and understand what entry requirements mean
- Learn about the World of Work and what makes someone employable
- Develop your research skills and use a variety of information sources
- Make decisions at key points, such as choosing your GCSE options and what you might do at 16 & 18

We will do this will through:

- Subjects, tutorials, PSHE lessons and registration time activities.
- Assemblies and talks.
- Enterprise and focus days (for example: Take a Child To Work, STEM, International days, 6th form conferences, careers trips and visits).
- Providing you with opportunities to meet apprenticeship and technical training providers, local college staff, employer ambassadors and former students
- Providing a careers library and careers information

We will also offer you an individual careers meeting with an Independent Careers Adviser where you can explore your ideas and get help with your next steps



WHAT DOES CAREERS EDUCATION INVOLVE?

"The only limit to our realisation of tomorrow is our doubts of today."

Franklin D. Roosevelt.

CEIAG – or Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance – involves learning about your own aptitudes, interests and skills, and how these can lead to successful careers.

As part of CEIAG, you will explore your options and possible future plans, and create action plans to help you to achieve your goals.



Nobody expects you to know what you want to do and how to get there. Instead, CEIAG is exploratory and equips you with a range of tools to help guide your decisions.

WHAT ARE THE CAREER MILESTONES DURING MY TIME AT SCHOOL?

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

Chinese proverb.

YEAR 7

This is an important transitional year. You move from primary school into secondary school and begin learning about careers. You will explore your aptitudes, interests and possible career paths.

YEAR 9

In Year 9, you will make your options choices – this means you will learn about the different GCSEs you can take, and how they might help you with your future aspirations.

YEAR 11

This is a significant milestone in your careers journey. You will be supported to consider your 'post-16' choices, for example A-Levels, BTECs, T-Levels or Apprenticeships. You will also receive at least one appointment with a qualified, impartial careers advisor.

YEARS 12 & 13

During your Key Stage 5 studies, you will need to think carefully about your next steps. For some this will be employment, for others it could be further training, university, degree apprenticeships and more. The careers curriculum is planned to give you the opportunity to explore all these options and decide what is right for you. Again, a qualified, impartial careers advisor and school staff are on hand to help.

WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS AT AGE 16 AND 18?

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela

Age 16 (Post-16 Education)

College (e.g. Tresham)	Sixth Form (e.g. Bishop Stopford)	Apprenticeship	Employment with training
BTEC, T-Levels	A-Levels, EPQ	Industry specific	Industry specific

Age 18 (“Post-18 Education”)

University	Further Education	Apprenticeship	Employment	Gap Year
E.g. Undergraduate Degree	E.g. Foundation Degree	Various levels including degree level	A range of industries	Some people volunteer, other might travel the world

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT QUALIFICATION LEVELS IN THE UK?

"Your qualifications are a reflection of your commitment to growth, not just your ability to memorize facts."

HIGHER EDUCATION	LEVEL 8	Doctorate (e.g. PhD)			
	LEVEL 7	Masters Degree	Degree Apprenticeship		Chartered professional qualifications
	LEVEL 6	Undergraduate degree (e.g. BA, BSc)	Foundation Degree	HND	Higher Apprenticeship
	LEVEL 5				
	LEVEL 4				
				HNC	
	FURTHER EDUCATION	LEVEL 3	A-Levels	BTEC National Level 3	T-Levels
LEVEL 2		GCSE Grades 4-9	BTEC Level 2	Intermediate Apprenticeship / NVQ Level 2	
LEVEL 1		GCSE Grades 1-3	BTEC Level 1	NVQ Level 1	

WHO ARE OUR LOCAL COLLEGES AND PROVIDERS?







“Learning is the treasure that will follow its owner everywhere.”

Chinese proverb.

After their GCSEs, students from Bishop Stopford School go on to a range of Sixth Forms (including Bishop Stopford Sixth Form) and Colleges.

It is always important that you research the providers you are interested in. Look at their website, speak to their admissions tutors and visit for open evenings.

Below are the details of some of the colleges and providers you might be interested in. Scan the QR codes for more details.

Moulton College	Northampton College	Tresham College	The Corby Sixth Form
			
Bishop Stopford School	Brooke Weston Academy	Kettering Buccleuch Academy	The Latimer Arts College
			

Remember, these are just a selection of possible providers, which are some of the most popular with our students. You should start by researching the courses or programmes that are offered by our local providers or a provider near you.

You will find schools and colleges are very happy to answer your questions – so if you are not sure, just get in touch with them.

WHAT ARE A-LEVELS?

A-Levels are advanced qualifications that enable you to specialise in a subject. They are one of your options after GCSE.

A-Levels (Advanced Levels) are qualifications that are typically undertaken by students between the ages of 16-18, usually in the final two years of secondary school or college.

A-Levels are highly regarded by universities, employers, and other institutions due to the level of depth, rigour and specialisation they represent. Good A-Level results can open doors to top universities, though they are not the only route to university.



Subjects

- Students can choose from a wide range of subjects, including sciences (e.g., Biology, Chemistry, Physics), humanities (e.g., History, Geography, English Literature), and social sciences (e.g., Psychology, Sociology, Politics).
- Most students take 3 subjects, some take 4.



Assessment

- A-Level exams are usually taken at the end of the two-year course (often referred to as "Year 13"). We call this 'linear' assessment.
- In many subjects, the assessment is exam-based, although there can be coursework or practical assessments, especially in subjects like Art, Drama, or Science.

A+

Grading

- A-Levels are graded from A* (highest) to E (minimum passing grade), with U meaning ungraded (fail).



Career Pathways

- A-Levels are one of the main routes for university entrance in the UK. UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) uses A-Level grades as a key factor in university admissions.
- Many universities set conditional offers based on specific A-Level grades (e.g., AAA, BCC, etc.) for their courses.

WHAT ARE T-LEVELS?

T-Levels are vocational qualifications that equip students with skills for a specific career. They are equivalent to 3 A-Levels.

T-levels are vocational qualifications that provide students with practical, industry-focused learning that equips them with the skills needed for specific careers or further study.

They are designed to be a high-quality alternative to A-levels and are equivalent to 3 A-Levels.



Subjects

T-levels are available in various sectors, each designed to meet the skills needs of industries. Some of the main subject areas include:

- **Digital** – e.g. Digital Support Services, Software Development, Cyber Security
- **Education and Childcare** – e.g. Education, Early Years Education
- **Engineering and Manufacturing** – e.g. Mechanical Engineering, Design and Development
- **Health and Social Care** – e.g. Adult Care, Healthcare Science
- **Construction** – e.g., Building Services, Civil Engineering
- **Business and Administration** – e.g. Management, Marketing



Assessment

Depending on the course, T-Level are assessed through a combination of:

Exams	Coursework	Industry Placements	Practical skills
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Grading

- T-Levels are graded as a Pass, Merit or Distinction.



Career Pathways

T-levels can open doors to a range of opportunities, both in higher education and in the workforce:

- Higher Education and University
- Apprenticeships
- Employment
- Further training

WHAT ARE BTEC DIPLOMAS?

BTEC qualifications are vocationally focused courses that offer practical, hands-on learning in a variety of subjects.

BTECs (Business and Technology Education Council qualifications) are vocational qualifications that focus on practical learning and skills. They give students a more hands-on approach to education compared to traditional academic qualifications like A-Levels. BTECs are available in a variety of subjects and are often seen as more career-focused, preparing students for employment or further study.



Subjects

BTECs are available in various sectors, each designed to meet the skills needs of industries. Some of the main subject areas include:

- **Business**
- **Health and Social Care**
- **IT/Computing**
- **Engineering**
- **Sport**
- **Creative Media**
- **Science**
- **Travel and Tourism**



Assessment

BTECs are typically assessed through a combination of:

Projects

Coursework

Practical Assessments

A+

Grading

- BTECs are graded as a Pass, Merit or Distinction.



Career Pathways

BTECs can lead to a range of further study and employment options, including:

- Higher Education and University
- Apprenticeships (higher and degree apprenticeships)
- Employment
- Further training

WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?

Apprenticeships provide an opportunity to gain on-the-job experience, qualifications and a salary.

Find out more: <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>

Apprenticeships often combine work with training and study. You'll use the skills you learn on-the-job whilst also gaining experience and a salary.

Apprentices are employees. As such, apprenticeships can be highly competitive. Applications need to be made directly to the employer. School staff and our Careers Advisor can support you with this process.



Subjects / Occupations

Apprenticeships are available in a huge range of areas including Business, Customer Service, the Police, Retail, the legal profession, IT / Cybersecurity and much more.



Levels of Apprenticeship

There are several entry points to apprenticeships, each with different entry criteria. Check with employers for their specific entry requirements.

Level 2	Equivalent to GCSE Suitable for beginners and those with no experience
Level 3	Equivalent to A-Level. Some qualifications may be required.
Levels 4&5	Equivalent to Higher National Certificate/ Diploma (HNC/HND). You'll need qualifications and experience.
Levels 6&7	Degree and Master's level. Entry requirements vary but often include A-level or equivalent.



Assessment

Assessment methods vary but often includes on-the-job observations, a portfolio of evidence, written exams, an end-point assessment and progress reviews.

Career Pathways

Apprenticeships can lead to a range of further pathways, including:

- Higher education and higher-level apprenticeships
- Employment
- Industry-specific qualifications

HOW DO I FIND AND APPLY FOR APPRENTICESHIPS?

Apprenticeships provide an opportunity to gain on-the-job experience, qualifications and a salary.

Find out more: <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>

The process for applying for apprenticeships can vary, but often involves making an application, an assessment and interview and then the formal offer of employment.

It is important to remember that the offer of an apprenticeship is made by employers, and applications are usually made to employers directly.

A typical application process might look something like this:



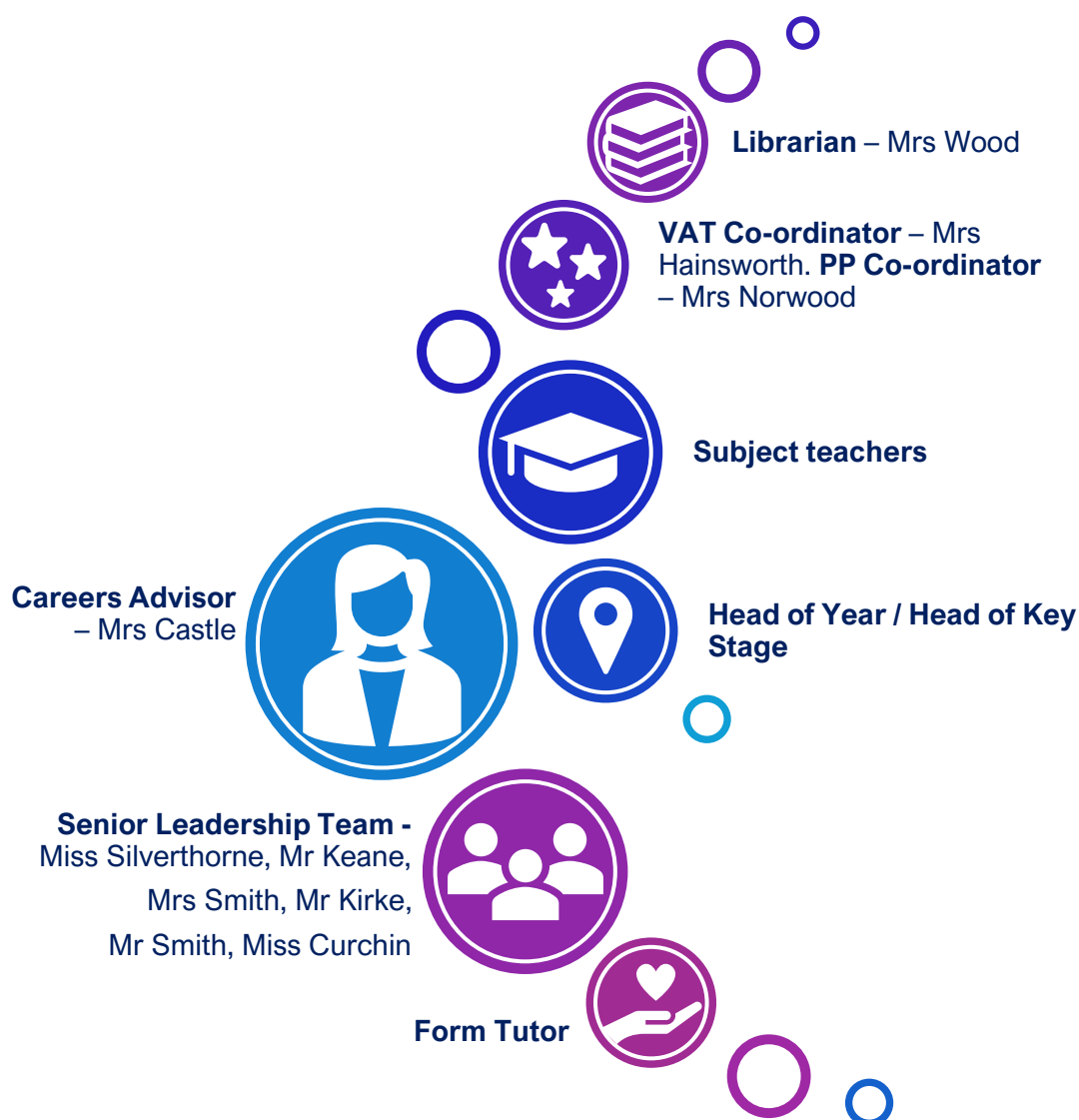
There are a number of ways you might find an apprenticeship:

- Look at the websites of employers you are interested in. Often these will have a careers website and a range of 'school / college leaver' programmes.
- Look at the opportunities available with large employers, such as BT, HSBC, PwC, Google, Rolls-Royce, The BBC, Unilever, Tesco etc.
- Search for apprenticeships on the Government website: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>
- Learn more and browse apprenticeships on the Apprenticeships website: <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/apprentices>

OUR CAREERS FAMILY: WHO CAN I TALK TO ABOUT CAREERS?

**"Don't wait for opportunities to come to you.
Go out and create them."**

At school, there is always help on offer with plenty of people who can guide you and offer advice about your career options.



Find out more about careers at:
www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AT A CAREERS GUIDANCE MEETING?

“The only way to do great work is to love what you do.”

Steve Jobs

A careers guidance meeting is an opportunity for you to consider your future plans – for example, study plans and career aspirations – with a qualified and impartial careers professional.

You do not need to know what you want to do and have your future mapped out to get the most from careers guidance. A careers advisor can explore your ideas with you and signpost you to further information.

What good careers guidance appointments look like:



You should expect to leave a careers guidance meeting with further things to consider and ideas to explore.

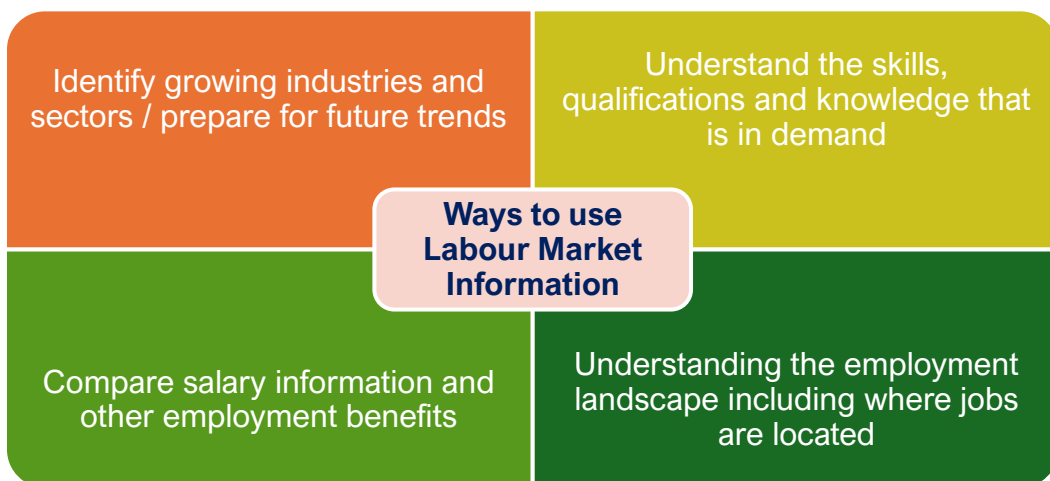
WHAT IS LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION?

LMI is information that can help you to identify high-demand sectors and the qualifications needed for specific jobs.

Labour Market Information (LMI) refers to data about work. It can provide useful information about different sectors and give valuable insights into how the world of work is changing.

LMI provides valuable information on employment trends, job opportunities, wages, qualifications needed, skill shortages, and other factors affecting the workforce.

Labour market information is useful in your career planning and can form a useful part of your careers discussions.



Reliable sources of information on careers and labour market information include:

- **National Careers Service:** www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk
- **Prospects:** www.prospects.ac.uk
- **Labour Market Information for All:** www.lmiforall.org.uk
- **Varbes:** www.varbes.com/economy/england-economy



LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION: EAST MIDLANDS

LMI is information that can help you to identify high-demand sectors and the qualifications needed for specific jobs.



East Midlands

Population	4.9 million
Average Salary	£31,634
Unemployment	3.5%
Average rent	£747

Major industries

- Retail
- Repair of motor vehicles
- Health and social work
- Admin
- Education

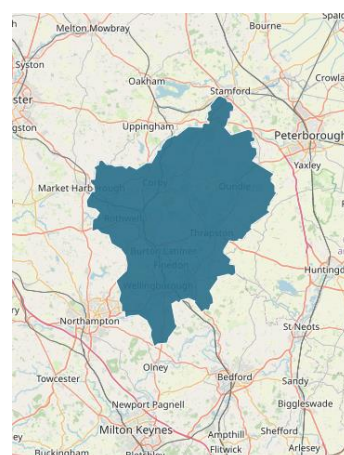
Growth sectors

- Water supply and waste management
- Mining and quarrying
- Construction
- Public administration



North Northamptonshire

Population	363,408
Average Salary	£30,913
Unemployment	32.2%
Average rent	£798



Major industries and growth sectors are the same as the East Midlands

LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION: ENGLAND

LMI is information that can help you to identify high-demand sectors and the qualifications needed for specific jobs.



England

Population	57.1 million
Average Salary	£35,106
Unemployment	3.9%
Average rent	£994



Major industries

- Trade / retail
- Health and social work
- Business, media and public service
- Professional, scientific and technical
- Administration services



Growth sectors

- Water supply and waste management
- Accommodation and food services
- Information and communications



Declining sectors

- Electricity and gas supply

Data supplied by www.varbes.com

Predicted future growth areas

Technology
and Digital
Industries

Health and
Social Care

Renewable
Energy

Financial
Services and
Financial
Technology

Education

Creative
Industries

WHAT IS UNIVERSITY?

Universities are higher education institutions. Students typically study for an 'undergraduate' degree lasting 3 or 4 years.



WHAT IS UNIVERSITY?

A university is a higher education institution that offers undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in a variety of subjects. Universities are places for advanced learning, research, and the development of specialised knowledge. After university, students are typically awarded a degree.

Students need to pay for their university education, though there are a range of loans in place to help students to afford this.



WHAT IS 'OXBRIDGE'?

'Oxbridge' is a word that refers collectively to the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge, two of the oldest and most prestigious universities in the UK.



WHAT ARE THE 'RUSSELL GROUP' UNIVERSITIES?

The Russell Group is a group of 24 public research universities in the UK, known for their high academic standards and significant research output. These universities are generally regarded as some of the best in the UK and include institutions like the University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, University College London (UCL), the University of Leeds, the University of Exeter and the University of Edinburgh, among others.



WHAT QUALIFICATIONS CAN I ACHIEVE?

There are a wide range of undergraduate degree qualifications that can be achieved at university. For example, BA (Bachelor of Arts), BSc (Bachelor of Science), BFA (Bachelor of Fine Art), LLB (Bachelor of Laws) and BEng (Bachelor of Engineering).

HOW DO I APPLY TO UNIVERSITY?

Applications for university are made through the University and College Admission Service (UCAS)

Find out more: <https://www.ucas.com/applying>

UCAS (University and College Admission Service) is the online portal used for students applying to University.

Create a UCAS Account

- Go to **UCAS website** (www.ucas.com)
- Click on “**Apply**” to start
- Provide personal details (name, contact info, etc.)

Choose Your Courses

- Research universities and courses
- Select up to **5 courses** you want to apply for

Complete the UCAS Application Form

- Fill in personal details, education, course choices
- List your GCSEs, A-Levels and any other qualifications
- Upload personal statement and reference

Check and Pay Application Fee

- **Fee:** £22 for one choice, £26 for multiple choices
- Review your application before paying

Submit Your Application

- Double-check all details
- Submit your application through UCAS portal

Track Your Application

- Use **UCAS Track** to monitor offers from universities
- Check if you're invited for interviews or if you receive offers

Receive Offers

- **Conditional Offer:** Meet course requirements
- **Unconditional Offer:** No further conditions
- **Rejection:** No offer made

Reply to Offers

- Choose your **Firm** and **Insurance** choices
- Accept or decline offers by the deadline

Confirmation of Results

- In **August**, check if you met the conditions
- If not, use **Clearing** to find another place.
- In some cases you might choose to **defer** your place (delay for 1 year).

WHAT IS A GAP YEAR?

“Not all those who wander are lost.”

J R R Tolkien

A gap year is usually a break between college / sixth form and higher education. During this time, students take time off to explore different opportunities before continuing their formal education. It's an opportunity to step away from academic study and focus on personal growth, travel, work, or volunteer experiences.

Students taking a gap year typically get involved in a range of opportunities.



Travel

Internships / Work Experience

Employment

Volunteering

Skills Development

Creative projects



What are the benefits and risks of a gap year?

Benefits	Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal growth• New and improved skills• Focus and clarity about future plans• Global perspective• New networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of academic momentum• Financial costs• Risk of procrastination or loss of focus

Find out more about gap years:

<https://www.ucas.com/discover/gap-years>

HOW DO PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES HELP MY CAREER?

**"Don't wait for opportunities to come to you.
Go out and create them."**

Personal Development opportunities and extra-curricular activities are an important part of growth, and all contribute to your skills and employability.

Personal Development and extra-curricular activities enable you to develop a range of knowledge and skills, including:

- Team working
- Leadership
- Interpersonal and communication skills
- Problem solving and organisation



Below is just a sample of the Personal Development and Extra-Curricular opportunities that you can get involved in.



WHAT WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES CAN I EXPECT?

Research by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) found that 88% of employers consider work experience to be one of the most important factors when hiring a candidate.

7

Year 7s can expect an experience of the workplace when they spend time working with our reception and admin teams as the 'student runner'. In taking on this role, students learn to organise and prioritise work and how to interact with visitors and staff.

8

Students in Year 8 can take part in 'Take A Child to Work Day'. This has been one of the mainstays of our career education programmes for many years, proving hugely beneficial for our students in developing their awareness of the world of work.

10

Students in Year 10 have a second opportunity to take part in a 'Day in Industry'. During this day, students will have the opportunity to undertake work shadowing and participate in the workplace.

12-13

Students in Key Stage 5 can participate in a week of work experience. Students arrange these placements, supported by the Heads of Year, Form tutors, Head of Sixth Form and Careers Lead. Students in KS5 often undertake part-time work too – this can provide valuable skills, and we are always happy to help students to navigate the challenges of study with part-time work.

HELPFUL LINKS AND FURTHER GUIDANCE

Curated links for easy access to what you need

Below are a range of useful websites linked to Careers Education.

HESA: information about what graduates do after university

<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/13-06-2024/sb268-higher-education-graduate-outcomes-statistics>

National Careers Service: provides information about different careers

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk>

Apprenticeships: the government advice website for apprenticeships

www.apprenticeships.gov.uk

Amazing Apprenticeships: provides useful information and webinars

<https://www.amazingapprenticeships.com/>

Search for apprenticeships on the Government website

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

Prospects: careers exploration website

www.prospects.ac.uk

Labour Market Information for All

www.lmiforall.org.uk

UCAS: university and Colleges Admission Service

<https://wwwucas.com>

Find out more about gap years (via UCAS website)

<https://wwwucas.com/discover/gap-years>

Digital edition of *The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers*

<https://digital.top100graduateemployers.com/view/844684358/4/>

Information about the 'Loca offer' for students with SEND

<https://localoffer.northnorthants.gov.uk/>