



**Sheldon School**  
A high performing school

# Post -18 Pathways



A guide to making informed post Sixth Form decisions  
for students, parents & carers.



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## About this booklet

The aim of this guide is to help support our students in making informed decisions about what to do after Sixth Form.

It can be used by family members, carers and other support givers by discussing the many options mentioned within its content and helping pupils to plan for their futures.

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# Post -18 Study Pathways

When I leave Sheldon School  
I want to...

## Start working

(Apprenticeship pathways)



A good starting point is considering which field you would like to have a career in.

Take the quizzes provided through both uniFrog and your UCAS hub account to get an idea of which areas you may be suited to.

You can also use the internet to research apprenticeships, school leaver programmes, traineeships and explore other career opportunities.

The Sixth Form team and careers advisor are here to support you in this journey so be sure to make an appointment to discuss your aspirations and begin paving the way.

## Continue my studies

(Academic/ Work-based Pathways)



### Attend University

The University and course you choose will have a huge impact on your future. Be sure to do plenty of research.

You can use your UniFrog/UCAS hub account to begin exploring potential options as well as the deferral route should you wish to wait a year.

Be sure to discuss ideas with your family, friends, teachers and the Sheldon School Sixth Form Team.

### Gain a degree through work

Many workplaces offer the opportunity for you to gain a degree or equivalent qualification whilst getting practical work experience.

Learn more about degree apprenticeships by exploring UniFrog, visiting the UCAS website or making an appointment with a member of the Sixth Form Team.

## I'm not sure

(Still deciding on a pathway)



That's ok! It's a big decision to make.

Use your UCAS hub account to explore the many options available to you.

We will cover a variety of options during your PDC tutor sessions.

There will also be updates throughout the year on your relevant year group page via Teams so keep an eye out!

Remember, you can always make an appointment with a member of the Sixth Form Team or our careers advisor to discuss your thoughts and feelings.



## Why go to university?

Deciding whether or not to attend university can be quite difficult; especially when you consider the time and financial costs. Read on to discover the main reasons why school leavers often choose to complete a degree at

### 1. The course

Studying at university allows you to dedicate yourself to deepening your understanding of a subject you love with like-minded individuals, enhancing your chances of achieving excellent results.

Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to network with experts in the field. With thousands of higher education courses on offer there really is something for everyone.

### 2. The experience

A huge part of the university experience is the social life. At university you will be able to join extracurricular activities, make new friends and enjoy the nightlife that university towns have to offer. You may also be living away from home, making it a fantastic opportunity to develop your independence.

Universities also offer you the opportunity to join certain clubs and societies so you can meet like-minded people whilst also boosting your CV and getting ahead when it comes to securing a graduate job.

### 3. Travel

Many university courses offer the option to study for a year abroad. This is a fantastic opportunity to experience a new culture, improve your foreign language skills and develop a global network of friends. Different universities and courses will have different rules regarding who can complete a year abroad so be sure to do your research if this is one of your goals.

Funding for your year abroad is covered by Student Finance but you need to apply for it. You may also be able to receive grants to complete this.

### 4. Earning potential

Having a degree makes you more attractive to employers so you will have a greater choice of jobs once you graduate. On average, graduates will earn 20% more over their working life than those who did not attend Higher Education. Bear in mind, your choice of university and course have a significant impact on your potential future earnings. If Earning potential is a driving factor for you then be sure to research this in more detail when applying for a university course.



## How to choose a university /course

When deciding which university you'd like to go to there are many factors to consider. Continue reading to get an idea of what research you need to do and which options you are most suited to. Remember to also check university websites for information on open days. These are a really useful way to experience universities first-hand and get more details on courses, facilities and the university as a whole. Many places now offer virtual Open Days which can be useful if you live far away.



<p><b>What are your predicted grades?</b></p>	<p>Aim high in order to increase your options. In Sheldon School, your UCAS predicted grade will be based on your FFT data, your year 12 internal assessments and ongoing assessments throughout the year as well as your general attitude to learning throughout year 12 so start as you mean to go on. Remember that your A level grades will go on your CV throughout your careers so it's important to work hard in Sixth Form no matter what the entry requirements for your course are.</p>
<p><b>What living style would suit you best?</b></p>	<p>It is wise to consider what type of living arrangements you would prefer in order to apply for the most suitable universities. For example, you may want to attend a university which offers catered accommodation or if you'd rather self-catered halls. You may prefer to live on a campus rather than within a city. Or you might want to be near the beach. All of these are important factors to consider when choosing your university.</p>
<p><b>Is the course right for you?</b></p>	<p>When considering courses at university it is worth researching the individual modules in order to ensure you are applying for something which interests you. Think about what makes you enthusiastic and eager to learn then go from there.</p>
<p><b>What graduate jobs do students typically go on to do?</b></p>	<p>The university you choose to attend can sometimes affect your success in job applications more than your degree classification. Stretching yourself to apply for the best university, within your potential, can really pay off in the long term.</p>
<p><b>What resources are there to help you decide?</b></p>	<p>A really useful tool to help you decide which university/course to attend is UniFrog. Log in to your account and start researching and comparing universities today. Your UCAS hub account also allows you to explore a range of options and create a favourites list which you can then compare and discuss with teachers, peers &amp; parents/guardians.</p>



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## What is UniFrog?

Unifrog is a one-stop-shop where students can easily explore their interests, then find and successfully apply for their next best step after college. Unifrog will help you to explore your key interests and what career paths you can take to reach your goals!

*“ The benefits for students are far-reaching: boosting their CVs, discovering their interests, and putting them on track for their ideal college. ”*



**Casey Nolen Jackson**  
Head of University & Career Counseling

## What can I do in UniFrog?

### Explore a range of pathways

Use the tools in the Exploring pathways section to research the career pathways and subject fields that lie beyond school or college, and understand how to access them

### Search for opportunities

Use the tools in the Searching for opportunities section to compare universities, degree options, apprenticeships and college courses.

### Record your activities

Use the tools provided to Record what you do, using guidance and examples to prepare yourself for making applications.

### Build applications

Build successful applications and get fast feedback from your teachers. This feature helps you manage the key parts of your application materials in one area.

## What can I do in UniFrog?

### Find the most suitable courses for you

Compare courses, apprenticeships and Further Education courses until you find the ones that suit you best.

### Rank and filter as you search

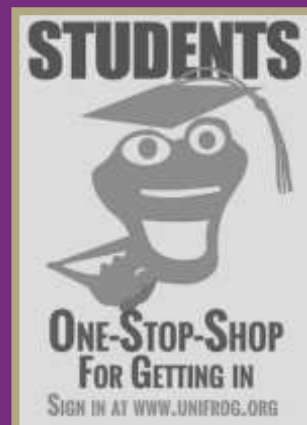
UniFrog allows you to rank each course as you research it and save your rankings so that you end up with a tailor-made list of what appeals to you.

### Find apprenticeships

Updated every 24 hours, use Unifrog to find apprenticeships which interest you. Choose the level that works for you with the qualifications you already have and what you want your next step to be.

### Connect with tutors and teachers

Students can inform their teachers and tutors of any important information they would like to include in their UCAS references via UniFrog. It is also a really effective way of teachers and tutors tracking the progress of pupil activity.





## UCAS

All students make their applications to university or college via the 'UCAS' system. You can choose up to five courses for most subjects. These can be to five different universities or to the same university on a different course.

When you press 'send' on your application, it is first sent to the school not directly to UCAS. There are several sections for the school to complete, such as references, so it is important not to leave applications to the last minute.

Students interested in applying for performance-based courses such as drama, music or production can also apply through UCAS conservatoires.

See the timeline for the UCAS application process in the infographic below. There is also useful information for parents/carers at [UCAS.com/parents](http://UCAS.com/parents)

Offers will either be **unconditional**, meaning you have been offered a place regardless of your grades or they will be **conditional** meaning you must meet certain criteria (usually grade related) before your place is fully confirmed.

Once your offers start to come in you will need to select a '**FIRM**' choice and an '**INSURANCE**' choice. Firm is the one you would like to go to most and insurance is the one you would go to as a safety net, in case you don't get the required grades.

If you have been accepted for a course but decide you want to travel/work/rest for a year you can '**DEFER**' your offer, on agreement with the university. You can also '**DEFER**' directly on your initial application if you already know you want a year out but want to complete the UCAS process through school.

## How to apply to university

At Sheldon School you will be guided with the application process, every step of the way. It is important that you begin researching options so that when it comes to applications you are ready to input your choices and send your application off in time. See the timeline below to get an idea of what is required of you.

### The application process

You will be guided through the application process during PM tutor time, assemblies and other full cohort sessions. It is useful to discuss potential universities/courses and go through drafts of your personal statements with your parents/guardians.

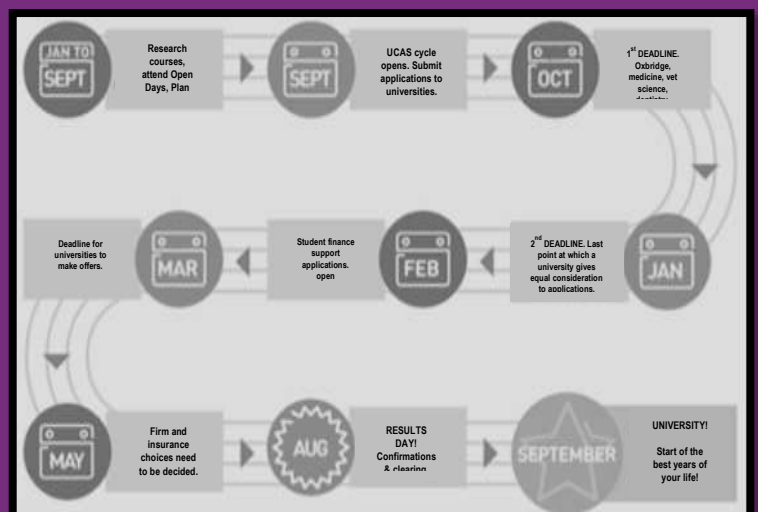
Remember that there is an early deadline for pupils applying for medicine, dentistry and veterinary sciences as well as any application to Oxbridge. Pupils applying for these courses may also be required to complete a pre-admissions test prior to their application. Be sure to research or talk to a member of the Sixth Form Team for more information.

UCAS charge a fee of £27.50 for your application. If you are eligible for the school bursary or will struggle to pay this in anyway be sure to talk to the Sixth Form Team as there is funding available to help you.

### Personal statements

A personal statement is your chance to show the university or college who you are as a person and write in your own style. It is the most time-consuming part of the application and there are many people who can help you with this. Such as your tutors or a member of the Sixth Form Team.

You will be completing this through UniFrog which is accessible by your tutors and the Sixth Form Team who will help you redraft your work so that your statement is as effective as can be.





## Conservatoires

You may be planning on applying for a performance-based course which can be done via both the UCAS undergraduate scheme or the UCAS conservatoire scheme. Conservatoires provide performance-based higher education including music, drama, screen and production courses – both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Each conservatoire has its own strengths and specialisms, so it's important to research all of them to find the right fit for you.

### The different conservatoires

The conservatoires in the UCAS Conservatoires scheme are:

- Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
- Bristol Old Vic Theatre School
- Leeds Conservatoire
- Royal Academy of Music
- Royal College of Music
- Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
- Royal Northern College of Music
- Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
- Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

Other conservatoires may operate outside the UCAS Conservatoire scheme and you may have to apply to them direct or through the UCAS Undergraduate scheme. If the conservatoire is not listed above, check with them to find out more about their admissions process.

### Studying at a conservatoire

All courses at conservatoires have a strong vocational, performance orientation, and course structures are reflective of the industry. This means graduates from conservatoires will be accustomed to the ways of working, hours, and expectations of the industry they are going to work in, as they will have practised this throughout their course.

Instead of a limited number of contact hours per week at a university, conservatoire students often work a 09:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday routine.

Performances and workshops are mostly held in the evenings and at weekends. On top of this, students are expected to practise extensively in their own time.

As conservatoire study is performance-centred, the year is broken down into a block of academic weeks, followed by a block of performance weeks.

### How to apply for a UCAS conservatoire

Conservatoires only open on the UCAS application on July 15<sup>th</sup> of each year so you will not be able to apply before then.

1. Register with UCAS hub
2. Complete your profile
3. Add your previous education
4. Add your previous qualifications
5. Select your course choices
6. Write a personal statement
7. Get two references
8. Read the declaration
9. Pay application & assessment fees

Find more information here:

<https://www.ucas.com/conservatoires/how-apply-through-ucas-conservatoires>

### Not sure which courses you're qualified for?

It's a good idea to contact the conservatoire to check which course they think you should apply for. If there's uncertainty over which will be the most suitable, just apply for the highest-level course you're interested in, then the conservatoire will be able to make a final decision at the audition or interview stage.







# Student Finance

If you are concerned about the cost of attending higher education, be sure to research the potential options for finance.

## Tuition fee loan

For UK students a tuition fee loan covers the full cost of tuition and goes straight to the university so you will never see the money. Universities and colleges can charge a full-time student up to £9,250 a year for courses.

## Maintenance loan

Students can apply for a maintenance loan to help with living costs, such as accommodation, food, travel, going out etc. The amount you can borrow depends on where you will be studying and your family's household income.

This means students from lower income families receive more financial support.

Student Finance will let you know how much you can borrow once your application is complete. This is calculated on household income and the amount each student will get is different.

## Paying it back

When you start repaying your loan and how much you repay per month will depend on your repayment plan. Most of you will be on repayment plan 5 however, if you are not sure which repayment plan you are on you can find out by signing in to your online repayment account once it is set up.

On repayment plan 5, you will only start paying back your student loan from the tax year after you graduate and once you are earning above £25,000

- You will repay 9% on income above £25,000
- The repayment is automatically deducted from pay cheques in the same way as taxes, so there's no need to worry about missing payments.
- If your earnings drop below £25,000 (or the weekly or monthly equivalent), payments won't be deducted.
- After 40 years any balance is written off

## Additional support

On top of student loans, you might be able to claim extra financial help through a scholarship or bursary, a fee waiver or hardship funds. These are awarded on merit and some are based on household income.

Search and apply for UK scholarships on

<https://www.thescholarshipub.org.uk/>

Find more information at:

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/student-life/getting-student-support/undergraduate-student-support>

If you are an English citizen, your student loan is provided by student finance England.

<https://www.gov.uk/student-finance-register-login>



The Disabled Students' Allowance is a grant to cover additional costs incurred by a student as a result of their disability. To apply, students will need to complete an application form available through:

<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa>



## What if my application is unsuccessful?

Once you have applied to university you need to keep checking the status of your application by logging in to your UCAS hub. If you do not receive an offer from any of your five options, you will become eligible for UCAS **extra**. This is an opportunity to apply for a Sixth option. If this is unsuccessful you will become eligible for UCAS **clearing** which is the process by which unis and colleges fill any places they still have on their courses.

### Who can use Extra?

If you included five choices on your application, have received decisions from all five, and weren't accepted, or if you declined the offers you received, you will be able to use Extra.

If you did not use all your choices in your initial application, you can just sign in to your application and add another choice, as long as it's **before the 30<sup>th</sup> June**, and you've not accepted or declined any offers. Remember, if you originally only applied to one choice and want to add more, you'll be asked to pay the extra £6 application fee.

### How do you add more choices in Extra?

- Find a course you want to apply to.
- Use the filter 'Show courses with vacancies' in the UCAS search tool.
- Contact the universities and colleges to check if they'll consider you.
- Apply for the new course.
- Add the details to your application.
- If you're applying to a new subject, you may want to add a new personal statement to strengthen your application.
- The university or college will consider your application – if after 21 days you don't hear, you can choose to either continue to wait or add a new choice.
- If you receive an offer, reply immediately and, subject to meeting entry requirements, you're in!
- If you receive an offer but don't want to accept it you can decline it.
- If you're not offered a place you can search for other courses and add another Extra choice.

Visit: <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/types-offer/extra-choices> for more information.

### Who can use clearing?

From 5 July – 19 October, you can apply for a course using Clearing if you're not already holding an offer from a university or college, and the course still has places.

#### You can use Clearing if:

- You're applying after 30 June
- You didn't receive any offers (or none you wanted to accept)
- You didn't meet the conditions of your offers
- You've paid the multiple-choice application fee of £27.50
- You've declined your firm place using the 'decline my place' button in Track

### How do I apply using Clearing?

1. Ask for advice.
2. See what courses are available.
3. Keep checking.
4. Check the course details.
5. Talk to any unis or colleges you're interested in.
6. Ask if they'd accept you.
7. Get informal offers over the phone.
8. Ask about accommodation options.
9. Take a look around the campus.
10. Add your Clearing choice in Track.

**NB: Only add a Clearing choice once you have permission from the university or college.**

Visit: <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/results-confirmation-and-clearing/what-clearing> for more information



There are many ways to get involved in the world of work and many careers do not require you to have a degree. Read on to see some of these alternative pathways.

## Higher Education Colleges

Many people think of college as an alternative to Sixth Form but did you know you can opt to attend college after Sixth Form?

This is a good option if you are looking to enhance your employability and prepare yourself for the workplace.

### **Reasons to attend a Higher education College after Sixth Form:**

- Gain further qualifications in vocational subjects (although many of these are available at Sheldon School).
- Take more practical vocational courses such as hairdressing, plumbing or engineering.
- Prepare for Higher Education (University) by taking access courses or foundation courses.

### School Leavers Programmes

You may also be interested in researching 'School Leavers Programmes'. These are programmes designed to give you hands-on work experience in your chosen field. They are opportunities created by companies in order to train and develop students, allowing them to work their way up to more senior positions. Most companies will pay for your education during this process, in return to you working for them (whilst also receiving a salary.)

There are plenty of examples to research or you could talk to a member of the Sixth Form Team for more information.

### Qualifications explained

#### **Higher National Certificate (HNC)**

- Takes a year to complete
- Equivalent to the first year of an Undergraduate Degree.
- Leads to a Higher National Diploma

#### **Higher National Diploma (HND)**

- Takes two years to complete (or one with a Higher National Certificate)
- Roughly equivalent to second year of undergraduate degree course
- Work-place based style of learning
- A route to university (can be the first two years of a degree)

#### **Foundation degrees**

- Degree level qualifications that combine academic study with work place learning.
- Designed in association with employers increase the professional and technical skills of current or potential staff within a profession, or intending to go into that profession.
- Focus on a particular job or profession.
- Equivalent of two thirds of a full honours degree and a fully flexible qualification allowing students to study part time or full-time to fit their lifestyle.

#### **Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)**

- Stand-alone qualification that focuses on a particular profession or academic subject.
- Academic rather than vocational.
- Demonstrates your capability of studying at university level.
- Raises confidence, supports career change, or progression.
- Can be used as the first step of several degree levels to go on to achieve a foundation degree, diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) or a full honours degree through additional study.
- Can be used as a stepping stone to a full degree

#### **Professional qualifications**

- Linked to certain career choices and recognised by relevant professional bodies (such as the CMI, CIM, CIPD).
- Professional certification proves a recognised level of competence.
- Helps obtain entry into a chosen career area, promotion or an increase in salary.



## Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships have long been a popular alternative to university. They vary hugely but typically come in 3 different levels: Intermediate (Level 2), Advanced Level (Level 3), and Higher (Levels 4-7).

An Intermediate Apprenticeship provides you with the equivalent of five GCSE's, while an Advanced Apprenticeship is equal to two A levels. Higher Apprenticeships are more like School Leaver Programmes and often include the completion of a degree, foundation degree or HND.

There is currently far more choice in Apprenticeships than there is for School Leaver Programmes.

## Degree Apprenticeships

This is the highest level of Apprenticeship and it allows you to complete an undergraduate degree **whilst working for a company**. The tuition fee will be covered by the employer & government and will be a carefully designed course which allows you to access the government standards and frameworks whilst learning key skills specific to your role. Degree Apprenticeships are unique in that they allow you to gain work experience immediately whilst also continuing your studies.

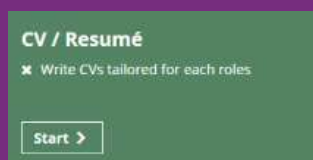
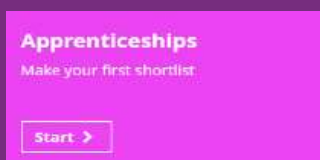
To research the Degree Apprenticeships available to you visit:

[www.findapprenticeship.service.ov.uk/](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.ov.uk/) and filter by 'Degree Apprenticeship'

## Other useful apprenticeship advice

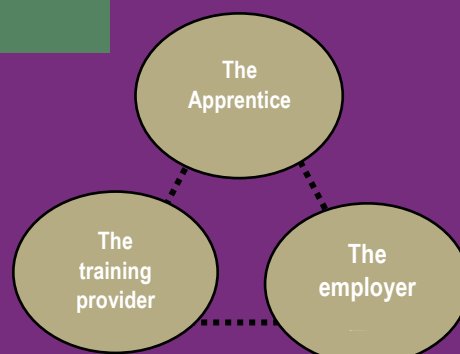
If you are interested in doing an apprenticeship you must ensure you check the weekly notes and the Careers newsletter regularly for opportunities.

It is recommended you follow the companies you are interested in working for on social media and check their websites regularly. You can also Search for apprenticeships in UniFrog and draft your CV on the system.



It is also advisable to sign up for alerts on some/all of the following:

- <https://amazingapprenticeships.com/vacancies/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>
- <https://pathwayctm.com/student-register/>
- <https://uptree.co/opportunities/> -
- <https://www.springpod.com/apprenticeships/opportunities>





You may decide that after your studies in Sixth Form you want to go directly into the world of work. It may be that you don't want to continue studying through an apprenticeship but rather just apply for a job. There are plenty of people in school who can help you with this process. It could be helpful to talk to the careers advisor, the Sixth Form Team, your tutors, your teachers and your parents/guardians.

## Looking for a job

There are many ways to find different job vacancies. From using internet search engines to handing your CV directly to employers. The way in which you search, and apply, for a job is dependent on the type of job you are looking for.

Some useful websites to consider include:

- <https://jobs.wiltshire.gov.uk/https://uk.indeed.com/>
- <https://www.reed.co.uk/>

There are many other useful websites you can use or recruitment agencies you can contact. A simple internet search can give you more information on these. If you are unsure, ask a member of the Sixth Form Team for some guidance with this process.

## Interview tips & tricks

It is always a good idea to consider what types of questions they might ask you in an interview so that you can prepare your answers.

**How might you answer the following:**

- Tell us about yourself
- Why have you decided to apply for this role?
- What can you bring to this role?
- What are your biggest strengths/weaknesses?
- Can you tell me about a time you worked as part of a team?

When you answer questions try to remember the acronym 'STAR'.

**Situation** (what was happening)

**Task** (what was required of you)

**Action** (what did you do)

**Result** (Was it a success? What skills did you learn?)

## Applying for a job

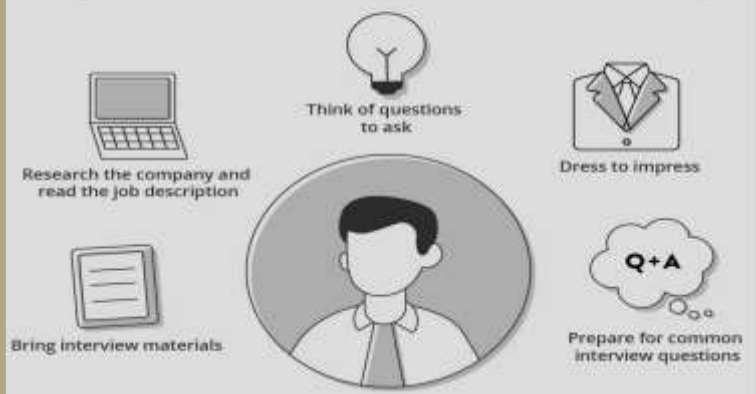
Once you have found a job you would like to apply for, you may need to fill in an application form or compose a Curriculum Vitae (CV) and a cover letter.

The purpose of a CV is to describe your experience to recruiters, and give them a factual account of how you have gained the skills necessary for the role in question. In your CV you will be required to include a personal statement which is a summary detailing what you can bring to a company. It is your opportunity to highlight the relevant skills and experience you possess, demonstrate your strengths and share your career goals, making it a vital part of the application process.

A cover letter includes your motivations for applying to the specific role and company and is the first chance you get to intrigue your employers so that they read further.

All Students are required to prepare a personal statement for UCAS as these are often transferable to job applications and will provide you with these vital skills. Be sure to attend all tutor sessions and complete all work as these are invaluable opportunities to develop your skills and prepare you for the world of work, making you a strong and competitive candidate for any job you may wish to apply for.

## How to prepare for an interview





You may be feeling uncertain as to what you would like to do once you leave Sixth Form. This may be for many reasons. Maybe you want to travel or take a break before continuing with your studies. Perhaps you aren't sure which field to dedicate your time to so want to explore the possibilities further. Whatever your reason, it is worth thinking about how you would want to spend your free time and go from there. Here are a few things to consider.

## Taking a gap year

A gap year offers you the opportunity to gain skills and experiences, while giving you time to reflect and focus on what you want to do next.

- A productive gap year can be valuable on your 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 your higher education studies – if you decide to apply for uni, you could tailor your gap year to relate it to the subject area you plan to study.
- Admissions tutors 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.

## Why do you want to take a gap year?

It's really important to set goals to make your time productive, so you need to identify what you want to achieve.

- have a break from study
- gain new skills/experiences
- earn money
- spend time deciding what you want to do
- do a combination of the above

## Taking a gap year after Sixth Form



### WHAT IS A 'GAP YEAR'?

A gap year is a year-long break between major life stages. Many students take one immediately after high school graduation before starting college.

### PROS VS CONS

#### GAP YEAR PROS



**TIME TO THINK**  
You finally have some time to consider what's next.



**GAIN WORLD EXPERIENCE**  
Use this chance to travel.



**WORK EXPERIENCE**  
Find an entry-level job or internship.



**LEARN TO BE INDEPENDENT**  
Be on your own & learn how to survive.



**DEVELOP NEW SKILLS**  
Pursue a hobby/interest that wasn't possible before.

#### GAP YEAR CONS



**LACK OF SUPPORT**  
Not everyone will get your decision.



**ADDED COSTS**  
Postponing your education will make it more expensive.



**EASY TO GET LAZY**  
If you need outside motivation, then a gap year could solve some things up.



**PLANNING TO TAKE WORK**  
No one is going to plan out your year for you.



**TESTS YOUR MATURITY**  
Are you ready for this new responsibility?



## Alternative pathways

If you do decide to take a gap year, it is important to form a plan of what you will do for the year, no matter what your gap year idea is, and you need to start planning well in advance. Some voluntary work schemes are popular and have strict deadlines, and you need to consider when you need the money to pay for airfares or visas. Try to create opportunities to develop skills and experience in order to boost your CV.

### Gap year ideas

**Volunteering** – support a worthwhile cause and gain valuable experience. You could take part in a wildlife conservation project, teach children, or help build a school in a third world country.

**Travel** – explore the world, discover new cultures, and develop your independent living skills at the same time! You could go backpacking across South East Asia, InterRail through Europe, or buy a round the world plane ticket!

**Paid employment** – earn money and gain new skills at home or aboard. You could work on an outback farm in Australia, as a ski lift operator in Canada, or at a backpacker hostel in New Zealand or teaching English abroad with a TEFL/CELTA qualification.

**Work experience** – if you want to gain relevant experience and skills for a particular career or subject you plan to study, you could consider a work placement or internship. These can last from a few weeks to a year. Depending on the type of contract on offer, you may or may not receive a salary. These are very popular and competition for places is high, so you will need to apply early.

**Part-time courses** – why not take the opportunity to try something new? You could take up a new language, learn how to programme, try a new sport or music instrument, or learn a new practical skill, such as mechanics, carpentry, or cookery.

### If you're planning a gap year, consider the following:

#### **How much time can you be away and when?**

What do you want to spend your time doing and where? Are you going to work, are there interests or hobbies you can take further, or do you want to help others by volunteering? What value will it add to your study, your CV, or career?

#### **What is available?**

Research the wide range of gap year and volunteering schemes available, or look into organising it yourself. If you're using an agency or scheme, check out how long they have been running, if they are financially sound, and are members of a reputable organisation such as ABTA or Year Out Group, where they agree to follow a code of conduct.

#### **How much money will you need?**

Unless you're planning to work or have some financial help, you are going to need money. Set yourself a realistic budget that you can afford to stick to. Costs vary considerably, so research carefully and don't forget to add things like flights, visas, accommodation, insurance, and vaccinations (you can check the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for information on vaccinations).

#### Useful Organisations

- Real Gap Experience
- BUNAC
- Volunteering England
- Volunteering Scotland
- Volunteering Wales
- Volunteer Now- Northern Ireland
- Youth social action volunteering
- International citizens service



Below are some tips on where to find useful resources detailing further information about pathways. Make sure to also ask your tutors, teachers, parents/guardians and the Sixth Form Team for any advice or guidance they have to offer.

### General advice

[Read the weekly notes, every week!](#)

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

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

<https://www.savesthestudent.org>

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/>

<https://pathwayctm.com/student-register/>

<https://uptree.co/students/>

### Exploring universities

<https://www.ucas.com/discover>

[www.discoveruni.org.uk](http://www.discoveruni.org.uk)

### Student advice

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

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

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/>

### Exploring career pathways

[www.thewayup.co.uk](http://www.thewayup.co.uk)

[www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

### Cambridge University shadowing scheme

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/visit/summer-accommodation/?rmsrc=1&gclid=EAlaIQobChMlr-2x>

### Conservatoires

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

<https://www.rcs.ac.uk/blog/top-tips-on-completing-your-ucas-conservatoires-application/>

### The Student Social Mobility awards

[www.ssma.org.uk](http://www.ssma.org.uk)





## References

Much of the information in this booklet has been sourced from the following guides/websites. Please use these resources for more comprehensive guidance. Remember, the Sixth Form Team are there to answer any questions and give guidance whenever needed.

### UCAS

Neaco parent booklet 'The low down'

'Aspire' guide by UpReach





# Notes

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# Notes

Dotted lines for writing notes.



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