

Progression – what to do after you leave college

2023

You have 3 options

- Apply to continue in education
- Apply for a job or Apprenticeship (or continue in a job you have now)
- Take a planned year out volunteering

Education

Why continue in education?

- I need certain qualifications for my future job role,
- I want to learn about another subject that I couldn't study at college,
- I want to learn more about a subject,
- a degree will help in the future to show I am able to study for further qualifications or for greater promotion and earning potential.

Types of Education

- **Further Education** – this is for further study after college but will not be for a degree. Industry recognised qualifications and BTEC qualifications and foundation degrees.

Local colleges are Colchester Institute (Colchester and Braintree campuses) Writtle college and Chelmsford College. Courses for under 19's are normally free to join but most will not enable you to gain student finance for living costs.

- **Higher Education** – this is for Degree courses.

Some degrees are required for specific career roles: Nursing degrees, Law degrees, Medicine degrees, engineering degrees, policing degrees. It is quicker to do the relevant degree first. (There are normally career routes if you do not do a relevant degree first but take longer to achieve and are therefore more costly, but not impossible – see a careers adviser or [National Careers Service](#)).

Where to look for information

- Our local Universities are: [The University of Essex](#), [University of Suffolk](#) (Ipswich), [ARU](#) -Anglian Ruskin University (Chelmsford and Cambridge), [UEA](#) – University of East Anglia (Norwich), [Writtle University College](#), [UCC](#) – University Centre Colchester (Colchester Institute)
- Everything you need to know about the application process and to find information can be found on the UCAS website. [UCAS](#) is the central place in the UK to apply to university – you can only make 1 application which will be sent to 5 options (universities) via your UCAS HUB. To [sign up to the HUB](#) – our centre is The Sixth Form College, Colchester.
- In tutorials and via emails from the careersoffice we will provide you with further information about the UCAS application process.

Higher Education – concerns

“It’s expensive/ what about the money involved/ I cannot afford a loan” –

- If you are a UK national and have been living in the UK for the last 3 years you will qualify for the government [student Finance](#) ([see here for other qualifying criteria](#)). This means the **UK government will provide the finance for the university fees as a loan** to the student. They will also provide a **minimum in student finance to cover some of your living costs – this can then increase depending on your household income** (based on the income of any parent/guardian that you live with – not including your part time work). There is an [online calculator](#) from Student Finance England that can give you a rough idea of how much you will get a year.
- It is a loan BUT not a normal loan – you only start to repay after you have finished your university course and then you are only liable to pay 6.9% anything you earn above £27295 each year. It will be a bit like a phone bill each month and if you do not earn above £27295 in any month you don’t repay the loan that month. Martin Lewis can explain this really well [watch the short video](#).

Can I get money from other sources?

- All Universities will have bursaries/Scholarships that they might give you – some you will need to apply for so check out the university website. This is money that will not have to be repaid.
- There is [bursary and scholarship](#) information on the UCAS website – some charities, local people, organisations will give money to students who meet certain criteria.

I'm not sure about the grades I will get?

- Every university will have different criteria for their degree courses – so check on the UCAS website, you should find that there are a range of entry criteria for courses (normally grades or [UCAS points](#)) Use the filters on the course search
- [Contextual offers](#) – some universities will offer slightly lower grades than their normal entry criteria if you meet certain criteria – unhelpfully it does depend on the university and course – and not all universities/courses offer them. One of the common criteria is your school/college - The Sixth Form College is on the list of qualifying centres -you normally have to meet 2 of their criteria – certain postcodes, first to go to university in household, in care etc. Some contextual offers are based on additional subjects you take like EPQ. Most universities will check for you and offer you the lower grades, some you need to apply and complete an application form. The only way to find out is by looking at the university website.

I have no idea what to study

- Is there a subject you love studying or part of that subject? Is there a new course you would like to study – this would be a good starting point. All degrees are different they all have different modules so no two courses are the same - use the [UCAS search tool](#) to help you find courses in the subject/topic you would like
- Is there a future career/job role you would like – use the search tool for that role or use [National careers service explore careers](#) to help you
- Have a careers interview at college to talk to someone who might be able to help you make a decision.

What is studying at a University like?

- All university websites have virtual tours and most have recordings of subject talks. All will have a link so you can talk to students who currently study at that university. The best way is to attend an **Open Day at the university** to see for yourself what the university is like – these start in June and run until November but they are not open all the time so see the [open day website](#) and then sign up to attend on the individual university website. Another excellent way is to apply to attend a summer school or taster days at a university – we advertise these in the Careers Bulletin or look on university websites.

I want to go to the “Best” university – how do I find it?

- There is really no best university – it has to be what is best for you and your learning environment that you prefer. Try to always visit the university to get a feel for the place and if its an open day you can talk to lecturers and students.
- There are Universities that are banded as “[Russell Group](#)” universities – these are selecting universities. (However non Russell group universities are still excellent and might be better for more practical courses)
- There good university guides – [The complete university guide](#), [The Times university guide](#) ([world university ranking](#)) and [The Guardian University guide](#) which also allows you to search by subject.

Why choose Employment/Apprenticeships?

- Some careers require you to complete Industry Qualifications to be qualified in that job role. Starting an apprenticeship or employment with training prospects can allow you to progress quicker than if you have a degree first. (However some job roles require a degree first so do check – National Careers service Job roles)
- Some students will not want to complete any more qualifications and will just want to earn money – this does not prevent you from returning to education at a later time in your life.
- Some students will think this is the only option as a degree will be too expensive – please read about Student Finance on the education sheet emailed to you today.

What is the difference between employment and Apprenticeships?

- Employment means you will seek a vacancy and apply for a job, if successful you will work either full time or part time in that job role and get paid at least The National Minimum wage.
- An Apprenticeship/Trainee scheme means you will seek a vacancy and apply for a job with an apprenticeship or training, if successful you will work full time in that job role but will have time away from your work to complete a Nationally Recognised Qualification. You will get paid - however the apprenticeship part of The National Minimum wage is lower – so do ensure you know how much you will get paid – having said that some do pay above the minimum wage. Look at [Amazing apprenticeships](#) which explains all.

How?

- All employers will **advertise their vacancies** – but only when they want to recruit (this can be at any time of the year) this makes it harder to find the vacancies as you need to keep looking and they will not all be in one place on the internet.
- Where to find vacancies – the problem is there is not a handy list of them all
 - [Apprenticeships](#) – GOV.UK – a good site that has the vast majority and you can filter to local opportunities – you can also set up an account and an alert to email you when there are vacancies that come live
 - Company websites – if you know what businesses you would like to work for you can look at their jobs page – some allow you to set up an alert. This can be time consuming but the best way to get to work for a business you want to e.g. NHS roles,
 - There are other apprenticeship websites – these I have found are harder to use. [UCAS apprenticeships](#), [notgoingtouni](#) apprenticeships etc.
 - Another place to look can be on the big national job vacancy sites. [Indeed](#), [Monster](#), [Total Jobs](#), [CV Library](#), [Job Site](#). There are also specialist job sites: search for 'apprenticeships' [Government jobs](#), [Public Sector jobs](#), [NHS jobs](#)
- Employers will then have an **application process** for you to follow – the process they want you to follow will be part of the advert. (some companies websites are really good for hints and information on the selection process). Most will have an application form for you to complete – you need to ensure it is completed as thoroughly and accurately as possible as it will be the first impression you give to the company. Some companies will want a CV and covering letter – these will include a statement written by you about your skills you have and why you are suitable for the job role.

- **Selection process**

After the initial application if you are shortlisted you will be invited for the selection process. This might be an interview if you have applied for a job. If you are applying for an apprenticeship the selection process is likely to involve different stages (the company is going to pay for your training/qualifications).

These stages might include: face to face interview, on line interview, video questions, testing, assessment centre day, group work etc.

Look on the company's website or phone them and ask what their selection process is so you can prepare.

Concerns

Can I do an apprenticeship in my chosen job role?

It very much depends on the job role – not all job roles have apprenticeships. Look on The National Careers Service website – job profiles or come to ask a careers adviser in the careers department – book an appointment or look at [apprenticeships available](#)

I want to do a degree apprenticeship as I don't want to pay to go to university

- There are degree apprenticeships where an employer will pay for you to take your degree whilst you are working. It depends on the type of job role and if companies want to recruit. Places are few and so it will be competitive (but not impossible!)

I don't know how to write a CV or covering letter

- Look at our help pages on Moodle or make a careers appointment to get help. Parents/Guardians can also help with CV's and covering letters. CV's will be part of the Tutorial programme.

How can I prepare for the interviews/selection process?

- Look at our help pages on Moodle or make a careers appointment to get help. Parents/Guardians can also help with interviews.

I want to stay at home and get an apprenticeship

- The best place to look is the government apprenticeship website as you can filter the location. You can also set up an alert which will send you emails when a vacancy comes live. This will then limit the roles available as not all traineeships are advertised on this site e.g. accountancy ones.

I want to keep my options open and apply for education and employment/jobs

- There is nothing to stop you and we strongly recommend that you do both

What level apprenticeship should I apply for?

- For some apprenticeships everyone has to start at a Level 2 no matter what level of qualifications they already have - for example in hairdressing -everyone has to learn how to wash and dry hair before moving on to cutting. Or, for example, for the trades like plumbing, electrician, etc. - you will need to learn the basics before you can move on.
- Levels of apprenticeship are explained [here](#)

I have no idea what I want to do

- Don't panic
- Don't not do anything

Don't know what career path to take?

You can undertake some online activities which help match your skills/likes/dislikes to particular job profiles. They are computer programmes and will only react to the information you put in – remember they are NOT personality tests it is OK to say you don't want to work with babies or children it does not make you a bad person.

- Kudos: <https://kudos.cascaid.co.uk/#/> our licence code is helplist95.
- UCAS <https://www.ucas.com/careers/buzz-quiz>.
- National Careers Service <https://beta.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>
- Or you can decide what type of industry/employer you want and start looking there – all industries have websites and Professional Bodies. (do a google search)
- Come to see us in careers we can help you start

How does college help?

- **Personal Tutors** - will help you apply to courses and will check your Personal Statements and write references for you
- **Subject Tutors** – will help you write a Personal statement – see the Progression event information and will invite in speakers for the progression event and other times of the year and might organise trips. They will provide opportunities in the subject to develop skills.
- In **Tutorial** and via **emails from careersoffice** you will receive information to help you make decisions – you have already been emailed about signing up for the UCAS HUB to get information.
- University and Employment fair – for you to speak to universities and employers
- Information via the careers office – **Careers Bulletin** (covers university and employers updated weekly), **Moodle** (information and websites), individual **careers appointments** (to talk to an adviser)

Next Tutorial for Progression

- Introduction to the careers progression event 22nd /23rd June
- How to make an application to university via UCAS