

POST-18
OPTIONS:

WHAT ARE MY CHOICES?



E-ACT



Ousedale School wants students to pursue the best destination they can. Each pathway must be considered carefully by students to ensure that they can make the right choice for them. This booklet will help you explore some of the options available to you post-18 and signpost resources that will help you research the options further, such as;

- University
- Degree Apprenticeships
- Gap year
- Further Education College
- Employment

How can the Careers Team help?

The school Careers Advisers are available daily for drop in sessions or email careers@ousedale.org.uk with any questions or to schedule an appointment.

It is not easy for people to decide what career they want, especially when they have had minimal or no experience of the working world. Each student has different requirements and criteria which are important to them in making a career decision. Careers guidance helps to identify areas of interest that can be further explored and investigated.

Think about...

What do you enjoy?

Do you know what field you want to work in?

Do you have long term aspirations?

Can parents or Guardians help?

Parents/Guardians can have a key role to play in your decision-making and the general career you choose to pursue. It is important to talk to your parents/guardians about your aspirations and goals to ensure you have the support you need.

Top Tip! – Use the quizzes on Unifrog to start the journey of exploring your career aspirations. We regularly send information about careers, local and national opportunities, Apprenticeships and Open days for Colleges and University via Edulink, emails and the schools FB page.

University

It's important you choose a subject you enjoy and will help you reach your goals. Here are some things to help you choose the right subject for you:

Think about what you enjoy day-to-day – maybe this could be part of a future job role?

Think about your career goals and the qualifications required as part of a person specification

Visit universities to see if you like the location, set-up, feel of it. Talk to everyone you can on the open days to give you as much knowledge about the university as you can get enabling you to make an informed decision about applications.

UK degree courses tend to be very specialised from day one, allowing students to focus on their chosen subject. However, there are others that allow you more flexibility in what you study. Make sure you read the course descriptions carefully, and look through university websites for further information to make sure it is what you want to study.

Another helpful exercise when considering if university is right for you is to weigh up the pro's and con's.

Pros:

- Broaden your knowledge of a subject
- Meet lots of new people
- Increase your earning potential
- Gain independence
- Access job opportunities not available to those without a degree

Cons:

- It can be expensive to live while you're not earning a wage
- Can take a long time
- Doesn't guarantee higher earnings
- You may lack employment skills
- You may have tuition fee debt, and potentially debt from living costs

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are becoming increasingly popular and can be an ideal option if you have a clear idea of the career path you want to follow, they can offer a more practical and work-related approach to learning.

Apprenticeships allow you to combine work and study by mixing on-the-job training with classroom learning. You'll be employed to do a real job while studying for a formal qualification, usually for one day a week either at a college or a training centre. There are no student fees – your training costs are funded by the government and by your employer. By the end of your apprenticeship, you'll have gained the skills and knowledge needed to either succeed in your chosen career or progress onto the next apprenticeship level.

Degree apprenticeships provide an alternative to university, offering the chance to gain a high-quality degree without the cost of tuition fees, earn a salary, and get on-the-job experience. Apprentices are employed throughout the programme, and spend part of their time at university working towards a bachelor's or master's degree, and the rest with their employer. They are a relatively new type of programme and it is anticipated that the number of vacancies will grow over the next few years.

There are many different apprenticeships available across a wide range of industries, from childcare to construction, from hospitality to law, and banking. There are opportunities available in both small and large companies, from local organisations to large national brands, such as Network Rail and Santander.

Apprenticeships are available to anyone over the age of 16 living in England and have no upper age limit. They can take between one and six years to complete, depending on which apprenticeship you choose and what level it's at.

Useful Apprenticeship Resources & Links



The Amazing Apprenticeships website is fantastic and provides lots of information and resources including a parent information pack:

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com>

The following apprenticeship sites are also very useful when trying to research and explore Apprenticeship opportunities;

<https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>

<http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk/>

<https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>

www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk

<https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/apprenticeships>

<https://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships-in-england>

<https://careermap.co.uk/careermag/>

Higher and degree apprenticeships:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-and-degree-apprenticeships> - Provides a guide on Higher and Degree apprenticeship as well as a list of current vacancies.

It is also a good idea to use Job search sites like Indeed to research opportunities and look directly on employer websites linked to your sector of interest. Social media and LinkedIn are increasingly being used to recruit new apprentices and staff members. The Institute of Apprenticeship standards list all the apprenticeship standards available, including Apprenticeships which are currently in development.

Further Education College

Colleges offer an extremely broad range of qualifications, both academic and vocational:

Academic qualifications allow you to study a small range of subjects to a high level, and include A Levels, International Baccalaureate (IB) and Cambridge Pre-U.

Vocational qualifications offer practical, hands-on learning that prepares you for a specific job or industry, and include BTEC, Cambridge Technical and NVQ.

Consider the pro's and con's:

Pros:

- Meet lots of new people from varied backgrounds
- Feels more like being at university compared with a Sixth Form
- Study a range of qualifications

Cons:

- Can be large and impersonal; very different to being at school
- Courses provided can depend on what else is available in the area

Top tip!

Remember to attend college open days to ensure you chose the right college and the right course for you. You will get an opportunity to view the facilities, speak to tutors and even current students which will all help you make your decision.



Gap Year

Deciding to go on a Gap Year before or after university is a big decision, but remember that as well as having a great year you need to make sure you take something back from it. Whatever your destination is when you get back home, ensure that you've created a Gap Year experience that is worth talking about - and hopefully that has helped you to build some new skills too.

Things to consider for a successful gap year:

- Destination - Many backpackers will venture across multiple countries within a continent, so make sure you do your research into a continent that you would like to spend more time discovering.
- How long? - The name may sound like a stretch, but in reality many Gap Years don't last an entire year. This can be either because it's difficult to fund a full year abroad and also because it can be a long time away from home.
- Money - This can depend on a variety of factors, mainly what you're planning on doing. If you plan on working whilst you're abroad this can help future travels, but if you just want to travel then make sure you have enough money for food, drink, accommodation and trips saved up before you leave.
- Working abroad - This is a popular option for travellers, but you need to be in the know about which visas you need if you're planning on getting a job.
- Volunteering - Do be aware that volunteering does come with a cost, but you are not expected to completely foot the bill from your own savings. It is common for many organisations abroad to ask you to fundraise to fund your volunteering placement before you leave home.
- Language barriers - Some may be easier than others, but it's important everywhere you go to be able to communicate with the locals. In many countries you will find English is spoken, but if you go to more remote areas then communication will be more challenging.

Getting a Job

You may feel that the right option for you is to get out there into the big, wide world and see what it's all about!

You could get a job in the industry you want to be in, or just get a job to gain experience, build transferable skills and see if you can find out what areas of employment do interest you.

Lots of employers offer education and training opportunities that don't fall into the category of 'university' or 'apprenticeship'.

Consider the pro's and con's:

Pros:

- Work experience to put on your CV
- Learn and develop new skills
- Earn a wage
- Take advantage of training and professional qualifications that employers offer, that don't fall under the categories of university or apprenticeship

Cons:

- Starting work is very different to being at school or university
- Your wage in an entry level job may not be very high to begin with
- Without further education, you may feel limited in where you can progress to



Writing a CV

Your CV is often the first thing about you that an employer will see. First impressions really do count; it's essential you present a clear and professional CV so your application isn't simply thrown onto the 'no' pile. Here are 5 tips to help make your CV successful.

- Be professional - Remember you're trying to convince an employer that you will be an asset to their organisation. An email address like masterflamez@hotmail.com is not going to achieve this - create a new email address for your applications if needed.
- In general, your CV should include contact information, work history and experience, education, hobbies and interests and references. Your CV should not include your age or a photo.
- Keep it brief - A good CV is clear, concise and makes all the necessary points without waffling. You don't need to give pages of detail; if an employer is interested they will ask for further explanation at an interview. Consider using bullet points to streamline information. Keep your CV to two sides of A4 maximum.
- Be assertive - This is your chance to sell yourself to an employer so don't be afraid to highlight your achievements. Use assertive and positive language such as "developed", "organised" or "achieved" and remember to claim your achievements as your own, using 'I' rather than 'we'.
- Be interesting - The 'hobbies and interests' section of your CV is not simply something to fill up space - it's another valuable chance to sell yourself. Avoid including passive interests like watching TV or playing video games. Instead, mention activities which have helped you develop skills or learn something new.

You have access to a C.V builder on UNIFROG, if you need support with this please come and see the Careers Team.

Labour Market Information (LMI)

At Ousedale School the Careers Department uses Labour Market Information to help students plan their career path.

What is Labour Market information (LMI)?

Labour market information is information relating to the world of work, employment trends, job roles and job availability. It includes a wide variety of data and analysis related to employment and the workforce.

How can Labour Market Information (LMI) be used?

You can use this information to find out about different job roles and the sectors that these roles are in. It will allow you to identify the skills and qualifications that are required for particular job roles, so you can plan your career path.

Why is it important?

Looking at LMI is an important way for you to develop your knowledge of different job roles that are available and the career paths that can be taken. From this information you will develop an awareness of the local and national job growth sectors, allowing you to make informed decisions about your future aspirations. By using LMI you will be able to plan realistic goals relating to your choice of career and aspirations.

Where you can find Labour Market Information

There is a wide variety of resources where you can find Labour Market Information, such as:-

- Websites such as LMI for All, National Careers Service, Careers Pilot and ICould.com
- South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) provide a detailed report on the local area.
- Unifrog - Ousedale School Student Career Portal that all students are registered on.
- Ousedale School website Careers page and Facebook page.
- Careers office at Newport Pagnell and Olney campus.
- Local and National news shows and newspapers highlight developments and job opportunities.
- Ousedale Facebook page and Sharepoint Careers page

Results Day

In the summer you will receive your exam results, don't panic if things don't go to plan. This isn't the end of the world, even if it feels like it. You have a number of options and paths open to you:

Exam resits

If a couple of mistakes has dragged your mark down consider re-sitting your exam. However you can no longer retake specific modules therefore you will have to re- take the whole exam for the year as a private candidate. You don't attend classes; you just take the exam at a local, approved school or college. Remember, as well as the fees to pay, you'll have to keep yourself motivated to study for these.

Appealing a grade

If you want to query a grade – perhaps one is unusually low compared with others and you weren't expecting this, or you've narrowly missed a grade boundary – speak to your teacher in the subject or your head of year. They can contact the necessary exam body on your behalf and an EAR (Enquiry About Results) can be made.

Repeat a year

You can retake a whole year – including actually going to classes, doing the classwork etc – if you stumbled in several areas but you're still determined to stick to the same path. This can be done at another local college or sixth form if preferred.

How do universities view retakes?

In most cases, retakes will be acceptable. If something significant affected your original performance, be upfront about this; especially if you're applying to a very competitive course like medicine and law, or universities like Oxbridge, where retakes may not be typically considered.

Enter Clearing

If you don't get the grades you need for your university course, you can find an alternative with lower entry requirements through Clearing. While Clearing kicks off properly in August when you get your results, universities begin publicising courses with empty spots in July.

Results Day (continued)

Enter Clearing

If you think you may need to use this option, start work on your back-up plan and begin looking at alternatives straight away. Start with courses that were in your top five UCAS choices or ones you shortlisted previously. This way if you do have to enter Clearing, you'll be prepared.

On results day The Careers team and many other staff will be available to support you should you need it.

UCAS Points

A Level UCAS tariff chart:

BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma*	UCAS Point	A Level Grades
D* D* D*	168	A* A* A*
D* D* D	160	A* A* A
D* D D	152	A* A A
D D D	144	A A A
D D M	128	A A C
D M M	112	A C C
M M M	96	C C C
M M P	80	C C E
M P P	64	C E E
P P P	48	E E E

To find out more visit <https://www.ucas.com/applying/you-apply/what-and-where-study/entry-requirements/ucas-tariff-points>