

Life After Sixth Form

Leaving Sixth Form and going out into the big wide world is an exciting but scary prospect. There are various options, and we do our best to support and advise students no matter what they want to do. The process of decision making and applying will be done in college with lots of guidance, but here there is a little information on the choices available.

University

Despite the increased cost and the daunting prospect of student loans, getting a degree at university remains one of the best ways to gain valuable qualifications and maximise earning potential. Not to mention have a great time living life as a university student! The first things to think about are what subjects you might want to study and where you might want to do it. Good websites to look at are below.

- www.ucas.co.uk
- www.opendays.com
- <https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings>

Apprenticeships

More and more young people are opting to learn on the job, gaining a qualification while also joining the workforce, with a new style apprenticeship. These are available in a huge range of businesses and suit students who know what they want to do but want to gain experience and qualifications without full time study. Visit the website below for more information or to sign up for alerts.

- <https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships>
- <https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk>

Employment

If you feel like education and training is not for you right now you could go straight into the world of work. If you know what you want to do, then you can contact companies directly to see if they have vacancies or check through adverts online or in local newspapers. You could also get in touch with local recruitment agencies. You will need an up-to-date CV with details of your qualifications and experience as well as an application letter tailored to the job – a bit like the UCAS personal statement we will work on in school. For your CV there are templates on the career's hub. There are some excellent large employers in Harwich, who have some great workplace opportunities for school leavers.

- <https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/employment-training-231>
- <https://www.allaboutschooleavers.co.uk/>
- <http://www.aimhighernorthamptonshire.co.uk/resources/features/top-10-tips-to-job-searching/>
- <https://www.monster.co.uk/career-advice/article/how-to-create-the-perfect-cv>

Gap Year

A gap year is just that – a year to gain more experience, figure out what you want to do, enjoy doing something different and exciting while you're young – before you go back to study, training or work. It is important that you make this year count and plan it carefully to make sure you get the most out of it. Worthwhile things to do on your gap year include work experience, volunteering, internships, charity work, saving money and travelling. If you know what you want to do as a career, use the year to gain some experience. If not, use the time to try some different things to help you decide. If you're going to take a gap year, it should be a life changing year, either through unforgettable experience, making a difference to others or having a realisation about your future. There are some excellent companies that help students organise gap years, especially if you're going to travel. Think about combining working at a children's camp or doing charity work with your travels. Remember, keeping safe has to be your priority. Do your research, plan ahead and ensure people know where you are.

- <https://www.gap-year.com/>
- <https://www.gapyear.com/>
- <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/alternatives-higher-education/gap-years-ideas-and-things-think-about>
- <https://www.gooverseas.com/blog/what-to-do-on-gap-year>

Gaining Experience

Whatever you want to do after sixth form, the more experience you have the better. You will already have more to talk about than you realise, with community service, tutor support and enrichment activities, but there is a lot more. Massive Open Online Courses – MOOCs – are a great way to learn more about specific topics and are completely free! Look at the list below. Identify what you have already done then look for two or three more ideas that you can do and give yourself a deadline for doing each one. The more experience you have, the more of an edge you give yourself over other applicants, whether for university, apprenticeships or a job.

- Sixth Form Leadership role.
- Being on a committee.
- Regular sports or fitness activities / teams.
- Part time job.
- Volunteering.
- Work Experience.
- Babysitting / Caring for others.
- EPQ.
- Guides / Scouts or similar.
- Competitive participation at local, national or international level.
- Blogs or vlogs – your own or those you subscribe to regularly.
- Subscription to a magazine or journal in your chosen area, for example The Economist or The Stage.
- Books and articles within your chosen subject.
- Visits to places like council office, law courts, theatres, museums.
- MOOCs – <http://mooc.org/>
- TED talks – <https://www.ted.com/>
- Open University courses – <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/> (These are free!)
- University lectures online – <http://www.openculture.com/freeonlinecourses>
- Documentaries