

Supporting Young People: Post-16 Tutor's Guide to Options and Choices

Section One: Information

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Choices and Decisions for Post-16 Students
- 3 The National Qualifications Framework
- 4 Useful Websites

Section Two: 17+ Options

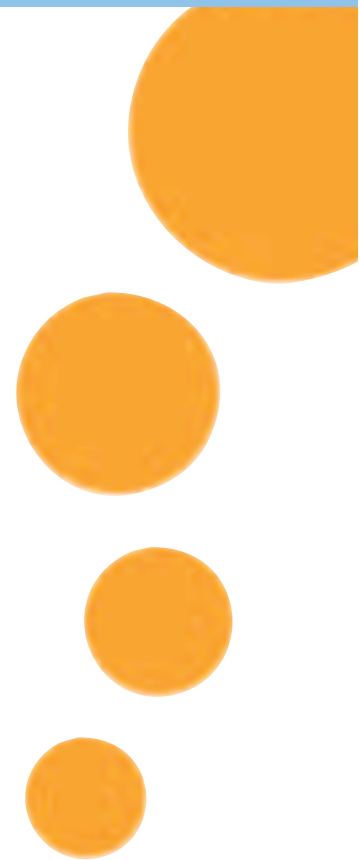
- 5 17+ Options
- 7 Keeping Students on Track

Section Three: 18+ Options

- 8 18+ Options
- 9 To Do Checklist
- 10 Post-18 Applications Calendar

Section Four: Wider Issues

- 11 Finance
- 14 Transport
- 15 Personal and Career Development



Supporting Choices at 17/18+

– Introduction

Who is this pack for?

The pack is for you, a tutor or mentor supporting students in Post-16 education. It is intended to help you do your job more easily. It will provide you with:

- Information and advice about the options and choices faced by young people at 17+ and 18+.
- Suggestions for practical activities that you can do with your students to help them make informed choices.

How should I use this pack?

As a reference resource – it is not meant to be read as a book. You will find a mixture of sheets and checklists with suggested activities – the activities are in boxes next to the 'To do' icon.

What you need to know

You are a facilitator – you are not expected to be an expert on courses and careers available at 17/18+. However, you already support students with personal and academic issues and helping them to plan for the future is another important part of your role.

You can help students make choices by:

- Spending time with each student to listen to their ideas and talk through their thoughts and plans for the future.
- Informing students of their options and sources of information, advice and guidance.
- Teaching careers education, citizenship or enrichment lessons using resources from the careers department.

- Referring students to the careers co-ordinator, Head of 6th Form/ Student Services or Connexions Personal Adviser.
- Following up action plans from Connexions Personal Advisers.
- Supporting individuals in carrying out their career plans.
- Reminding students of deadlines, dates and interviews.
- Encouraging them to use the careers and Connexions information in the school/college and elsewhere.
- Challenging inappropriate ideas the students might hold regarding their ability, stereotypes, finance or aspirations.

Key to Symbols Used



Supporting Choices



What you can do

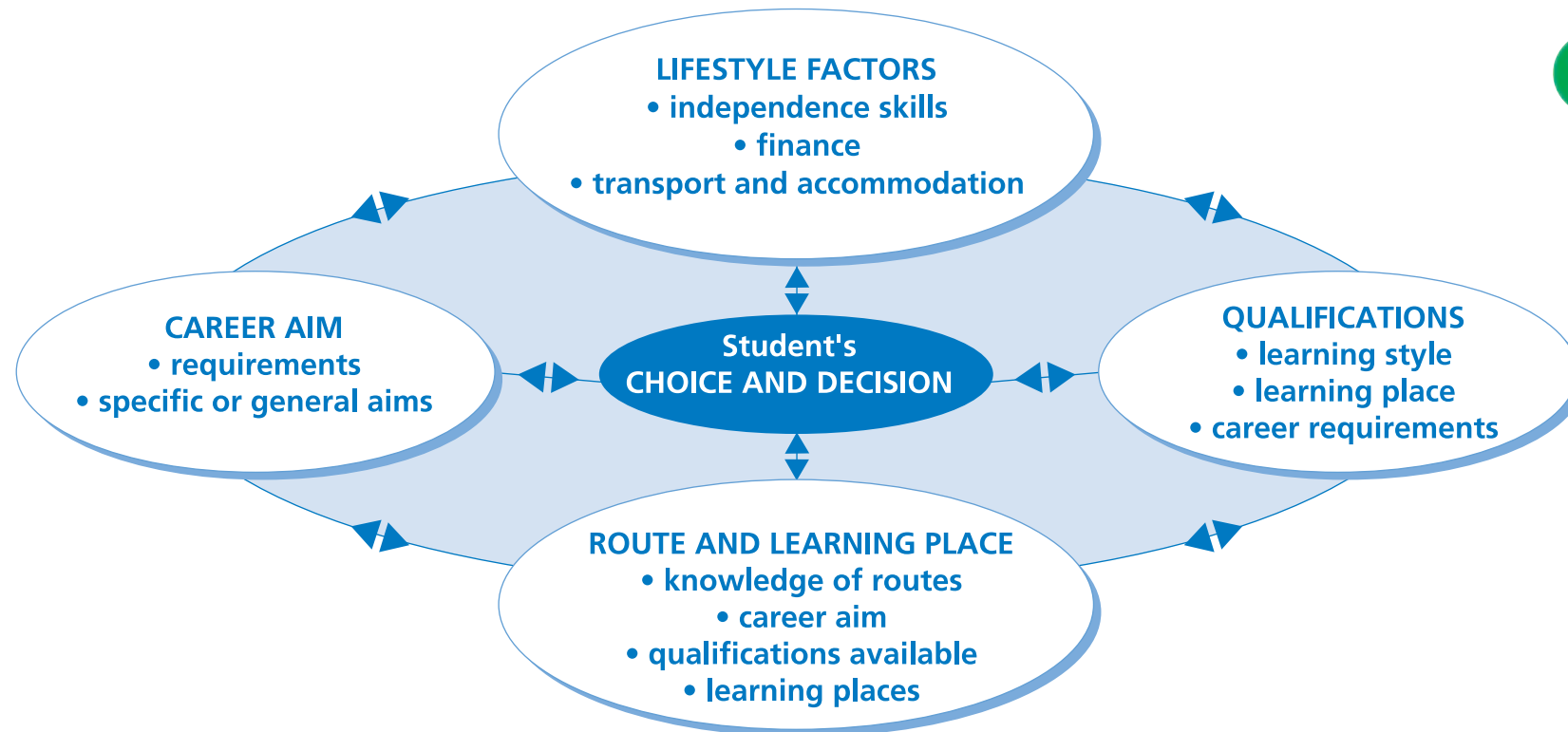
The following checklist is intended to encourage you to 'self assess' the work you currently do with your students and to provide you with a few new ideas.

As a tutor, do you or could you...

1. Talk to your students about their future career or education plans?
2. Ask open questions?
3. Listen to their ideas and encourage them to plan for the future?
4. Try to be impartial?
5. Suggest where your students can find information but don't tell them what you think they should do?
6. Encourage individual students to refer themselves to their Personal Adviser for guidance if they are unclear or unsure about what to do next?

Choices and Decisions for Post-16 Students

This diagram shows the factors that need to be taken into account for 16-19 decisions. It is not always a linear pathway!



The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)



What you need to know

What does the Framework do?

As you well know, qualifications help people get to their choice of career or goal. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF):

- Sets out the main groups of qualifications and shows how they relate to each other;
- Can show your students the opportunities and pathways open to them in education and work.

How are qualifications arranged?

1. There are 8 levels. The higher the level the greater the knowledge, skills and understanding required to achieve.
2. There are three types – general, vocationally related and occupational. Courses vary in learning and teaching style, content and assessment method.
3. It is possible (but not always easy) to move between qualification types as well as from one level to another.

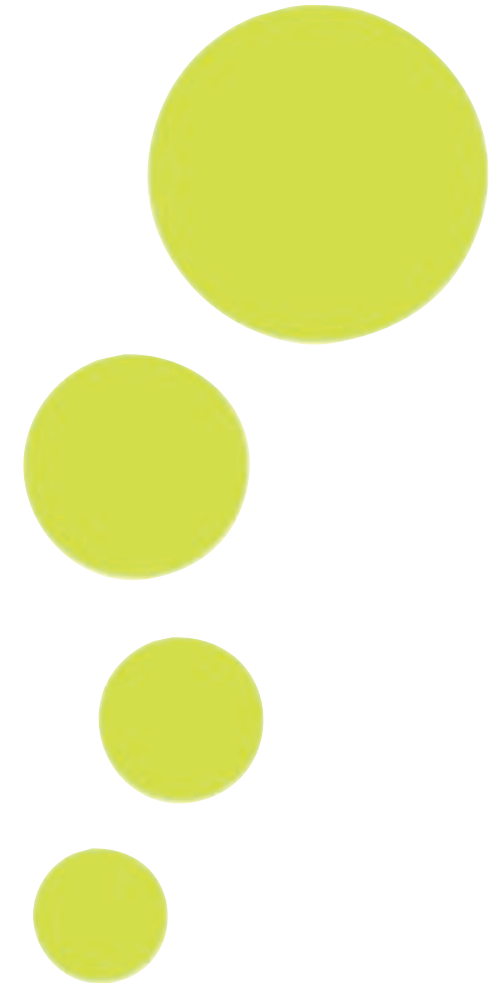
How can I use this information?

This is a visual map for you to use when discussing next steps with your students.

NB It is essential that students know the qualification level they are currently at before looking at future plans.

Moving around the NQF – remember that:

- Students may not necessarily be able to move up a level when they move on e.g. even though someone may have achieved more than 4 GCSEs at grade C (equivalent to NVQ level 2 on the NQF), they will not be able to jump to an Advanced Apprenticeship at level 3 until the NVQ in their chosen job has been achieved at level 2.
- Entry requirements may vary from those given in the NQF due to local arrangements.
- You should refer any detailed queries about qualifications and entry requirements to your careers and Connexions staff.





What you can do with the National Qualifications Framework

The following checklist is intended to encourage you to 'self-assess' your current practice and provide you with a few new ideas. Could you or do you...

1. Copy the NQF table to discuss with your students?
2. Show students individually the level they are at now and help them work out where they could move next?
3. Ask students to draw a line of possibilities for progression, perhaps with dotted lines to show uncertainties. Illustrate with an example of your own pathway or that of previous students?
4. Ask students to go through the whole framework and use symbols such as ✓ and ✗ and ? over every cell. This will make them see the range of possibilities and ensure that they start thinking about what is of interest to them. It will help to show the best level for them for their next steps as well as showing them long term goals?
5. Encourage students to use careers higher education information and to talk to the Connexions Personal Adviser to deepen their understanding of career, course and job requirements?
6. Check which of the qualifications are provided in your school, local college(s) or higher education institutions in discussion with careers and sixth form student services staff?

The National Qualifications Framework

LEVEL	QUALIFICATION	WHERE AVAILABLE	ABOUT WHAT	LEARNING STYLE	LEADING TO...
5 - 8 MANAGERIAL/CHARTERED/ POST GRADUATE	NVQ 5	Work based training, at university or college	Job related. Subjects are either traditional, vocational, combined or job-related eg. medicine, engineering	Practical and on the job. Assessed by observation and portfolio. Job specific	Advanced status employment
	Degree Post-Graduate Qualifications etc			Assignments and research according to the field	
4 PROFESSIONAL/MANAGERIAL	NVQ 4	Work based training, at work or college	Job related e.g. guidance, retail, hotel management	Practical and on the job. Assessed by observation and portfolio. Job specific	Advanced status employment Research
	Foundation degree, BTEC Higher National Diploma (certificate)	University or college (work based)	Job specific e.g. art and design, legal executive, engineering, teaching assistant	Mix of assignments and projects with practical work and job placement. Assessment through test and portfolio	Post-graduate education
	First degree	University or college	Subjects are either 'traditional', 'vocational' or 'combined'	Course work, assignments and exams. 'Sandwich' courses include work placements	
3 HIGHER/ADVANCED/ SKILLED/ TECHNICIAN/ SUPERVISORY	NVQ 3	Work based training, at work, or college Advanced Apprenticeship	Job related e.g. carpentry and joinery, accounting, retail	Practical and on the job. Assessed by observation and portfolio. Job specific	Employment NVQ 4
	BTEC and OCR National diplomas and certificates Vocationally related 'Applied' AS and A levels	School or college	Subjects related to broad areas of work e.g. business, child care, engineering, leisure and tourism, art and design	Mix of assignments and projects with practical work. Assessment through test and portfolio	Advanced Apprenticeship Higher education and Level 4 courses
	AS and A level GCE	School or college	Standard subjects and new options e.g. sociology, law, economics	Course work, assignments and exams	
2 INTERMEDIATE/ SEMI-SKILLED	NVQ 2	Work based training, at work or college Apprenticeship Programme Led Pathway to Apprenticeship (PLP) Young Apprenticeship	Job related e.g. administration, brickwork, food preparation	Practical and on the job. Assessed by observation and portfolio. Job specific	Employment NVQ 3
	BTEC 1st or other vocationally relevant qualification level 2 OCR National certificate Vocational GCSE (A* – C double award) – typically taken alongside NVQ and technical certificate	School or college	Subjects related to broad areas of work e.g. business, health and social care, engineering	Mix of assignments and projects with practical work. Assessment through test and portfolio	Apprenticeship – can then fast track to Advanced Apprenticeship Level 3 and advanced courses like A/AS levels, BTEC ND
	GCSE (A*– C)	School or college	Standard subjects	Course work, assignments, exams	
1 FOUNDATION	NVQ 1	Work based training, at work or college	Job related e.g. administration, brickwork, food preparation	Practical and on the job. Assessed by observation and portfolio. Job specific	Employment NVQ2
	Vocationally relevant School or college qualification level 1 Vocational GCSE (D – G double award) – typically taken alongside NVQ and technical certificate	School or college	Subjects related to broad areas of work e.g. business, health and social care, engineering	Mix of assignments and projects with practical work. Assessment through test and portfolio	Apprenticeship Entry to employment (e2e)
	GCSE (D – G)	School or college	Standard subjects	Course work, assignments, exams.	
ENTRY LEVEL	Key skills Basic skills	School or college	Work skills, personal development, basic skills and key skills	Practical assessments, portfolio evidence	Pre-e2e or other work based learning programmes
	Certificates of education and /or achievement (3 levels)	School or college	General education and vocational education options	External tests, assignments and portfolios	

Key to shading

Vocational/occupational qualification – learning style typically practical and on the job

Vocationally related qualifications (VRQ) – learning style typically a mixture of assignments and practical work

Academic qualification – learning style typically coursework, assignments and examinations



FIND OUT about the range of courses at your school by asking for course booklets and discussing with curriculum leaders.

Useful Websites



CAREERS IDEAS and INFORMATION

- www.connexions.gov.uk/jobs4u – careers information and simple matching tool.
- www.connexions-direct.com – links to advice for young people; financial incentives. www.dfes.gov.uk/financialhelp – financial advice.
- www.fasttomato.com – career suggestions and matching program used by many schools and Connexions services with localised information on options.
- www.support4learning.org.uk – careers and education links.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- www.mvonline.gov.uk – Millennium Volunteers site.
- www.csv.org.uk – Community Service Volunteers site.
- www.yearoutgroup.org – year out information and links.

QUALIFICATIONS and OPTIONS

- www.qca.org.uk – information on curriculum requirements, guidance, case studies, key skills.
- www.apprenticeships.org.uk – apprenticeship information.
- www.dfes.gov.uk/tfst – information on paid time off for study and training for 16 and 17 year olds.
- www.shell-livewire.org and www.princes-trust.org.uk for self employment information and case studies.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- www.ucas.com – UCAS site for course and entry profile information; links to universities.
- www.foundationdegree.org.uk for foundation degree info.
- www.uni4me.com for student's eye view on HE.

- www.aimhigher.ac.uk – Aimhigher site with introduction and links to HE information.
- www.prospects.ac.uk – graduate destinations and jobs.

SPECIAL NEEDS

- www.disability.gov.uk – how to cope with disabilities in school and college.
- www.ace-ed.org.uk – for guidance on organisations providing support for students with special needs.
- www.disability.gov.uk – Disability Rights Commission site.

LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

- <http://eastofenglandobservatory.org.uk> – gateway to research and data about the East of England.
- www.ssda.org.uk – Sector Skills Development Agency, providing useful information on labour market trends.

FINANCE

- www.aimhigher.ac.uk – Aimhigher site with introduction and links to HE information and financial guidance.
- www.ema.dfes.gov.uk – information about the Education Maintenance Allowance.
- www.dfes.gov.uk/financialhelp www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport – government supplied information about finance for students of all ages.

Routes at 17+ : What You Need to Know



Many students are ready to move on to their next step at age 17. Students may wish to leave full-time education and seek employment or go into an Apprenticeship once they have a clearer idea of the work they want to do. For others they may wish to continue further study in FE.

There are many options open to young people aged 17. However, their opportunities will depend very much on the level of the course they are currently studying. For students studying courses at level 1 and 2, the choices offered to them will be similar to those offered at 16. These choices are:

- Going on to another course at a school, Sixth Form College or FE College.
- Starting work or work based training.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER EDUCATION:

- If students decide to stay on for further education this should be to progress to the next level of learning, ie: if they are likely to achieve a level 2 course (GCSEs) or BTEC First Diploma they should be considering courses at level 3 (AS/A levels, BTEC Nationals).
- There are many further education opportunities available. Information will be available in school/college prospectuses or can be accessed through the on-line 14-19 Area-wide prospectus.
- Students who go to a further education or sixth form college can expect a different lifestyle from that which they were used to at school. They are more likely to have to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Most schools/colleges have enrichment activities that include careers education, citizenship, debates, volunteering and trips.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORK:

A job without training

- Some employers recruit young people into jobs with limited training or qualifications. Whilst some of these jobs may be good quality, young people need to consider the longer term implications of taking a job without training.
- Administration, retail, hotel and catering are all areas that might recruit 17 year olds.
- Progression opportunities may be limited although with experience it may be possible for some people to move up to supervisory work.

Work Based Learning – a job with training

Opportunities for work based learning at 17 include:

Apprenticeships

Apprentices learn on the job, building up skills and knowledge and earning money all at the same time. The main features of Apprenticeships are:

- Across the country Apprenticeships are available in over 180 career areas with thousands of companies.
- Usually organised by 'training providers' including colleges.
- Young people are usually employed in a local company and paid the wage for the job.
- A combination of training and work.
- Training can last between 1-3 years.
- Working towards a relevant NVQ and other qualifications.
- Developing key skills used in most jobs.
- Getting hands on experience of work.

Apprenticeships cont.

- Available at two levels in a range of career frameworks such as agriculture, administration, construction, engineering, hospitality, manufacturing, media and printing, recreation and travel.
- Appropriate for young people with GCSEs at grades A-E or equivalent and/or with the potential to achieve to a minimum of level 2 on the National Qualifications Framework.
- Advanced Apprenticeships are for those with GCSEs at grade A* to C, NVQ2 or equivalent.
- Advanced Apprenticeships can lead on to advanced level qualifications including NVQ3.
- Progression from an Advanced Apprenticeship into work or Higher Education Foundation Degree.
- For further information:
www.apprenticeships.org.uk.

Pathway Led Apprenticeships

- Designed to prepare young people for an Apprenticeship.
- Young people should have the potential to move on to an Apprenticeship as an employee and achieve to NVQ level 2.
- Young people are not employed, but may be eligible for an Education Maintenance Allowance.

E2e – Entry to employment

- Work based learning provision for young people who currently do not have the potential to start an Apprenticeship but nevertheless can train for particular jobs and work towards level 1 qualifications and basic skills.
- e2e programme can prepare young people for an Apprenticeship, employment, training or for further education by developing personal skills and work experience.
- Young people are not employed but may be eligible for an Education Maintenance Allowance.

Keeping Students on Track



What can you do? Could you or do you...

1. Invite the Connexions Personal Adviser to speak to your tutor group about the options open to them?
2. Use local newspapers and ask students to analyse the job vacancies and organise them into job sectors to see where there are most?
3. Ask students to analyse the vacancies for skills that are 'transferable' to see those that are most commonly required?
4. When talking about future choices explain the potential benefits of all routes including work based learning, Further and Higher Education?
5. Reassure students when things don't seem to be working out. There are usually fall back options.
6. Talk to the careers co-ordinator or Connexions Personal Adviser? They are key sources of help for you as a tutor.
7. Encourage your students to use the Careers Department / Student Services and Connexions service?
8. Remind students that they can get good Careers information from Connexions Direct and the local Connexions websites?
9. Encourage students to go to the Connexions centre for guidance and vacancies in holidays if needed?

Options at 18+



All the options open to 17 year olds also apply to 18 year olds, plus, for students who are studying advanced level courses, Higher Education. There is also the option of taking time out for a 'Gap Year'.

1. Work and Training

Approximately a quarter of young people who study A levels will go straight into work at 18+. They go into everything from accountancy to yacht broking. A lot of young people go into finance, hospitality and catering, retail and surveying amongst others.

Choices for work and training can be summarised as:

- 1 A job with training and part-time study for a professional or technical qualification.
- 2 An Advanced Apprenticeship leading to NVQ3 or better.
- 3 An Apprenticeship leading to NVQ2.
- 4 A job with sophisticated in-house on the job training.
- 5 A job with little or no training.

If possible, students should be encouraged to look for jobs where they get training leading to recognised occupational qualifications. It will pay in the long run.

Looking for jobs and Apprenticeships

Many vacancies for young people are now under the Apprenticeships banner. Apprenticeship vacancies with companies or Training Providers will be advertised through schools/colleges, Connexions Centres or newspapers or young people can contact the Training Providers direct.

Job vacancies can also be found in the following places:

- Job Centres.
- Local and national newspapers and magazines – available in local libraries and Connexions Centres.
- Private employment agencies – many allow students to register for work.
- Websites – many companies have their own websites where they list job and training vacancies.

- Speculative applications – encourage students to send covering letters and CVs to companies that might be of interest to them.
- Hobson's 'Job Book' for information on companies who recruit nationally and regionally. There should be a copy in your school or college.

2. Higher Education

There are over 50,000 Higher Education courses offered at universities, colleges and institutes of Higher Education in the UK. Most courses lead to degrees although there are many other types of courses available including foundation degrees and HND/HNCs. Information about these courses can be found in HE prospectuses or can be accessed through the UCAS website www.ucas.com

What are Foundation degrees?

- Work related courses giving students skills and knowledge needed for associate professional and higher-level technician jobs.

- Designed and developed with employers.
- Full-time, part-time, distance learning and through work based study.
- Can be upgraded to an honours degree with approximately 15 months extra study.
- No nationally set entry requirements – students need to check entrance requirements with individual institutions.

What are Higher National Diplomas (HND)?

- Vocational qualifications offered by universities, colleges of Higher Education and many further education colleges.
- Full-time (2 or 3 years for a sandwich course with a year in industry) or part-time.
- Part-time qualification is a Higher National Certificate (HNC).
- May be possible to transfer to a degree course if successful in first year.
- Entry requirements differ between institutions and courses, usually a National Diploma or the equivalent of one A level pass with another subject studied to A level standard.

What are Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE)?

- Normally lasts for 2 years.
- Full-time or part-time.
- Sometimes combined with professional or vocational qualifications.
- Can be topped up to a degree.

What are First degrees?

- Usually require 3/4 years full time study but may also be studied on a part-time or distance learning basis for up to 6 years.
- The great majority of courses lead to honours degrees.
- Traditionally offered as single honours (study of a single subject), joint honours (study of two subjects) or combined honours (two or three subjects studied).
- Minimum entry requirements are 2 A levels or equivalent although more popular courses and institutions may set higher requirements.

Encourage your students to research the options when they are in their first year of their Advanced course.

3. Gap Year

Many young people may wish to take time out after A levels before progressing into Higher Education or simply to take time to gain experiences or to decide what they want to do next.

There are many opportunities for young people wishing to take time out. The main ones are:

- Voluntary work.
- Work to earn some money and gain experience.
- Travel.
- Develop new skills.

For more information, encourage your students to research the options. The following websites give a good starting point:

www.gap.org.uk
(Gap Activity Projects)

www.bunac.org.uk
(BUNAC)

www.csv.org.uk
(Community Service Volunteers)

www.gapyeardirectory.co.uk
(Gap Year Directory)

www.gap-year.com
(Gap-Year.Com)



'To do checklist'

What can you do? Could you or do you...

1. Ask your Connexions Personal Adviser to speak to your students about the options available to them at 18+?
2. Ask students to consider if they would prefer to study a subject for its own worth rather than train for a particular job?
3. Check out the destinations of graduates in a particular subject – you can find these in the AGCAS publication, What Graduates Do?
4. Encourage students to start researching their ideas and preferences for Higher Education courses and institutions early in Year 12?
5. Organise sessions for students to use the UCAS website including the Stamford test to research HE opportunities www.ucas.com ?
6. Encourage students to check out the quality of the courses they are looking at?
 - www.tqi.ac.uk – The Teaching Quality information website lets you compare courses and institutions
 - www.qaa.ac.uk – The Quality Assurance Agency publish a range of independent review reports
7. Look at factors of location and student population? Urban versus rural, campus versus home, small versus large?
8. Encourage students to refer to the Head of 6th/Student Services staff or the Connexions Personal Adviser if they need guidance to sort out their plans?

Critical Dates and Deadlines



Use this calendar to keep your students on track with processes and dates. Make sure your students:

Spring Term in Year 12

- Begin researching their options.
- Use sources of information about jobs, training and higher education provided in school/college careers libraries.
- Use careers software packages provided on school/college networks to generate ideas about courses and jobs that they might be interested in.
- Start investigating companies or Higher Education institutions.

Summer Term in Year 12 – Research & Decide

- Attend Higher Education Fairs.
- Attend HE Open Days or any taster courses that are running.
- Arrange some work experience or voluntary work to back up job or course applications.
- Research sponsorship of scholarships for University – check application dates.
- Narrow down courses.
- Use books, programs and websites particularly www.ucas.com (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) to draw up a long list of courses.
- Get prospectuses to find out more about preferred institutions.
- If applying to Oxford or Cambridge, get the appropriate application forms.
- If interested in Medicine, Dentistry or Law check details of any entrance tests that may need to be taken.
- If interested in nursing get information from NMAS.
- Check out gap year possibilities.

Autumn Term in Year 12 – Begin Applying

- Main period for making applications to university.
- Complete personal statements.
- Closing date for applications for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science and to Oxford or Cambridge is 15th October. Any admission tests will need to be completed earlier (where appropriate).
- CUKAS applications to be in before October 1st.
- Complete standard UCAS application online using Apply. Apply for 6 courses. For medicine, dentistry or veterinary science/medicine only 4 applications can be for chosen course and 2 choices for a different course.
- NMAS applications need to be returned by December 15th.

- Standard UCAS and Route A applications for Art & Design begin in September and need to be made by 15th January.
- Applications for Art Foundation courses usually made this term or early in the Spring Term.
- Apply for sponsorships if appropriate.
- Apply for nursing.
- For jobs, larger national companies begin to recruit.

Spring Term in Year 13

– More Applications and Decisions

- Offers of places, or rejections, from the six UCAS choices.
- Offers are usually 'conditional' and can be in points (eg. 300), grades (eg. BBB) or a mixture of both.
- Students choose one offer as their 'firm' choice and another as their 'insurance'.
- If they have no offers, or reject all offers, they can make additional applications, one at a time, via UCAS Extra.
- Route B Art & Design applications need to be made by 24th March. Up to 3 choices in Route B and a maximum of 6 in A and B combined.
- Obtain information on finance and apply for financial support from the Local Authority (student loans for fees/living costs and grants).
- Local companies recruit more actively.
- Make speculative applications for jobs.
- If taking a gap year, continue with plans.

Summer Term in Year 13

- By May all UCAS offers/rejections will be received. Decide which offer to accept and which to hold as an insurance offer – if no offers, apply through UCAS Extra.
- Continue applying for jobs.

Summer break after Year 13 – Exam results

- Be available on results day.
- If students' results meet their conditional offer, their place will be confirmed.
- If they are not successful they can apply for courses with vacancies through 'Clearing'.
- Take advice from school/college and Connexions Personal Adviser.

Money Matters



What you need to know

Finance affects career decisions and this will probably be an area you are asked about. Most of the information in this section is explained in greater detail on the websites www.dfes.gov.uk/financialhelp and www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport

Financial support for 16-19 year olds in education

Education Maintenance Allowance is a weekly allowance paid directly to any student with a household income below £30,000 if taking 12 or more hours of tuition. This is paid into the student's bank account on a sliding scale from £10 to £30 according to household income. Students sign and have to keep a learning agreement – money may be stopped for non-attendance. Bonuses are payable for certain achievements.

Child benefit is paid while a student is under 19 and in full time education leading to a qualification.

Education is free for 16–19 year olds in full time courses.

Learner Support Funds – those in financial difficulty can apply to the Local Authority – for funding in addition to EMA. It can be used for books, equipment and other course related costs like visits and trips as well as domestic emergencies.

Free/Subsidised transport – may be available to pay for fares from the Local Authority, school, college or Learner Support Funds.

Residential Bursary Scheme – for those applying to one of the 51 specialist colleges e.g. for agriculture, horticulture, art and design where they have to move away from home. Details held at the college to which they are applying.

Disabled students – may be able to claim benefits or funds whilst studying – www.skill.org.uk can help.

Dance and drama awards

The awards are for students aged 16+ and are available at some of England's leading private performing arts institutions. Auditions are usually part of the criteria.

Financial support in work based learning:

Apprenticeships – Most employers pay the going wage for the job. Non-employed trainees may be paid an Educational Maintenance Allowance plus expenses. Many employers top this up.

Apprentices who cannot live at home can claim Housing Benefit.

e2e – trainees may be eligible for an Educational Maintenance Allowance whilst on the programme.

Higher Education Finance

The situation regarding HE finance is constantly changing so it is important that your students keep up to date with the details.

Loans for Tuition Fees

- For students entering Higher Education in September 2006 or later there will be tuition fee charges of £3,000 per year. The amount will vary between courses and universities/colleges. Each university will publish its fee tariff in its prospectus or on its website.
- Students can apply for a student loan for tuition fees – this is paid directly to the university. Students do not have to pay their tuition fees before they start or during study.
- This loan is repayable after graduation – students start to repay when in a job earning more than £15,000 a year.

Money to live on

Loans

- Student loans are available to help with living costs including accommodation, food, clothes, books and travel.
- A portion of the loan is available to all students and a proportion depends on household income.

- The amount students can borrow depends on where they live and study, the amount of maintenance grant they may get and partly on household income.
- Local Authorities handle the first stage of the loan application. Applications take place in the Spring of Year 13.

Maintenance Grants

- A maintenance grant of up to £2,700 is available to eligible students entering Higher Education in 2006. Around half of new students are expected to be eligible for a full or partial grant – this will depend on household income.

Bursaries and other financial help

- Many Universities and Colleges offer additional help and support to students in hardship. Students need to check the websites and prospectuses of individual Universities and Colleges to find out what financial help they may be eligible for.

More on money

Health Service Bursaries

Means tested – covers degrees in nursing and midwifery, occupational therapy, radiography, dental hygiene/therapy, chiropody/podiatry, dietetics, speech and language therapy, prosthetics, orthotics and orthoptics.

For more information go to www.nhsstudentgrants.co.uk

HE Dance and Drama Awards

If any of your students wish to apply for courses at private Dance and Drama colleges they will need to check the situation regarding grants and loans with the Student Finance Department of the Local Authority.

Sponsorship

Some vocational courses attract sponsorship support from firms or other organisations. Details are available in the book Sponsorship and Funding Directory (Trotmans) or by visiting the website www.scholarship-search.org.uk

Access to Learning Fund

Funds available through individual Colleges and Universities to help students who are in serious financial difficulties.

Further information is available from:

- 'A Guide to Financial Support for Higher Education students in 2007/8'.
- Student Support website at www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport
- Student Finance Department of the Local Authority.
- Free information line on 0800 731 9133.

Other websites

www.directgov.uk/studentfinance

www.aimhigher.ac.uk

www.nusonline.co.uk



What you can do. Do you...

1. Discuss the pros and cons of getting part time work – income and experience versus time away from studying?
2. Brainstorm ways of managing and budgeting money with students?

e.g. bulk buying, charity shops, avoiding designer labels, cutting down sweets, cigarettes and socials, having people over rather than going out. Ask them to try out one of these activities over the coming week(s) and report back any savings made.
3. Discuss the pros and cons of keeping a record of all spending so that students can see where money goes?
4. Encourage students to research HE Finance through the Aim Higher website www.aimhigher.ac.uk or www.directgov/studentfinance
5. Ask students to research the student deals at the major banks and to report back on one of them?

Transport



What you need to know

- Many students are put off attending a course or job that would really suit them because of the travel implications of their journeys to school, college or work. This is particularly the case in the most rural parts of the region.
- Most Local Authorities publish a transport policy statement with information on the services, discounts and concessions which are available for those aged 16 – 19 and other students in the area. This information can be found easily on www.dfes.gov.uk/financialhelp.
- Some Connexions services also have travel advisers to provide information and advice to young people about how to access education or work opportunities.
- Students should check which college sites they will be studying at and/or any possible work placements.
- Daily or weekly transport costs may be reduced where local buses or trains operate reduced fare schemes.
- Students should check with the college or local transport authority for local schemes and reductions.
- Some colleges provide transport for their students. Students may be entitled to a travel pass or financial help if aged 16 – 19, are a disabled person or have learning difficulties.
- There is the residential bursary scheme that will help with attending specialist level 3 (and in some cases, level 2) courses that are beyond reasonable travelling distance. This means a return daily journey taking more than 2 hours, or a distance of more than 15 miles from college to the student's home or a journey that requires more than one change on public transport.
- If students need specialist transport they should discuss this with college staff who may be able to help with transport arrangements.



What you can do. Could you or do you...

1. Encourage students to look further than they first think they can get to?
2. Have the Local Authority transport policy available for information?
3. Have local bus and train timetables available, bookmark them on the internet, or ensure that students have the phone numbers to ask for them?
4. Discuss – and even copy – the top tips for personal safety?

Personal and Career Development



Volunteering and part-time work

Many employers and admissions tutors want to see young people with 'employability skills' such as dealing with the public or handling money. Two very good ways of developing such skills are through volunteering and through part time work.

Volunteering is available through projects like Millennium Volunteers which can be fitted around other commitments such as study or training. Projects are for 16-24 year olds, including activities such as helping elderly or disabled people, getting involved in environmental projects or even starting up their own. After 100 hours of volunteering

students are given an Award of Excellence by the Secretary of State. Other volunteering opportunities are available through local Community Service Volunteers and community groups.

Part time work not only provides young people with money but also gives them valuable experiences for example, working with the public or doing tedious jobs that show they can stick at something!



You may need to help your students see the range of skills they have developed through their part time work, even if it's showing they can get up early to do a paper round.



Remind your students that the skills and experience developed through volunteering will make them stand out in their applications as well as helping them develop their skills and maturity.

Gap year

One in three students takes a year out (or gap year) before going on to Higher Education. This time may be used to travel, work or learn different skills from those found in academic life. Although not common amongst 17 year olds it is still an option available before continuing studying or going on to employment.

PROS

1. gain maturity and confidence
2. time to clarify or confirm career ideas
3. save money – useful if you're going on to Higher Education
4. the chance to travel

CONS

1. might lose the discipline of study
2. a break may be seen as lack of motivation
3. some year out activities such as expeditions can be expensive
4. risk



What you can do. Could you or do you...

1. Ask students to think over the pros and cons of a gap year at 17 and at 18?
2. Ask students to list all the pros and cons of volunteering and part time work, write them down and then highlight those that are relevant for them?
3. Look up case studies on volunteering web sites to discuss?
4. Ask the students to identify and list the skills and qualities that they could develop through part-time work or volunteering.
5. Discuss with the students local employers that offer part-time jobs, the kinds of work that are offered and how to apply for work.