

Post-18 Options #1



What are my options?

1. Employment
2. Apprenticeship
3. University
4. Gap Year

Employment

Every year, approximately 10% of Year 13 go straight into a job after their final exams.

This is a good route, if you know exactly what you want to do for work and do not want to continue studying.

Be careful if you decide to get a job to fill in time until you work out what you want to do next - there is a danger you will get too used to earning money to want to give it up and do something else for less or no money.

Remember that employment without training can sometimes limit your long-term earning power.

Apprenticeship

Every year, approximately 40% of Year 13 begin an apprenticeship after their final exams.

An apprenticeship is employment with training that leads to further qualifications, which can be at level 3 (equivalent to A levels) or level 4 (Higher Apprenticeships, equivalent to the first year of a degree). Most of these apprenticeships take between one and two years to complete.

In addition, degree-level apprenticeships last four or five years and give you a university degree (ie up to level 6).

For a September start, most apprenticeships are advertised in the spring of your final year at school.

University

Every year, approximately 45% of Year 13 begin a university degree after their final exams.

There are about 400 degree-providers in the UK, offering about 50,000 courses, so there is plenty of choice!

Degrees usually take three years to complete but can take four years, if the university is in Scotland or if students chose to take a sandwich year (a year in employment related to their course, between the second and final years) or a year abroad, studying in an overseas university.

It costs money to take a degree but you never pay the full amount of your loan back and your lifetime earnings are typically £300k more!

Gap Year

Every year, approximately 5% of Year 13 begin a gap year, after their final exams, planning to start a university degree the following autumn.

Typical ways to spend a gap year include:

- Employment
- Voluntary work, in the UK or overseas
- Travelling

If you choose to take a gap year, make it count - do something worthwhile and extraordinary, while you have the chance!

Next Step: Personal Statement

Whatever you decide to do, you will need to apply and explain something about yourself and why you want to take that next step. This is called your personal statement.

You should aim to have a draft personal statement written by the May half-term holiday - your tutor will help you to write it in Tutor Time and have examples to share.

- Section 1 - what you are applying to do, why you want to do it, what your interest in it is, examples of the key skills you possess that suit you to it
- Section 2 - the subject knowledge, practical and/or academic skills and experience you have acquired that has prepared you for your intended next step
- Section 3 - other stuff about you that reveals what you are like as a person eg hobbies, interests, passions, work experience, NCS etc
- Section 4 - why they should choose you, rather than equally-qualified people

What does a good personal statement look like? 1

I have always been interested in how and why people act the way that they do. From my earliest memories, I appreciated how my family's rich cultural background (German, Italian and British) impacted on our family dynamic and this has led me to be fascinated in studying how people of different cultures and social groups act and interact and why theorists believe this occurs in all of the subjects I currently take. I take a keen interest in global political events that have been unfolding in recent years but what interests me most in these situations is the societal context of what has been occurring and what has caused such events to occur, rather than a political analysis of what is happening. This has been particularly true with Brexit, minority rights in Trump's America and LGBT rights in the developing world.

What does a good personal statement look like? 2

I have a strong interest in social justice and bringing more equality to different groups: I always strive to develop this and I try to make a difference in society. My active participation in this was sparked when I attended the Free Periods Protest in 2017, which made me more driven to try to bring about social change. In addition to this, I help to lead my school's LGBT group and am organising a fundraising effort for an orphanage in South Africa for children whose families are victims of AIDS. In developing this interest in how and why society operates the way it does and how society can be made more equitable, I am reading books such as 'The Second Sex' by Simone de Beauvoir and 'Why I'm No Longer Talking To White People About Race' by Reni Eddo-Lodge. I have found such an interest in social sciences and I enjoy learning about how specific societal conditions have caused events to occur and the theories and thinking behind why this has occurred that I would like to now study Sociology at university, so that I can further my understanding of human and social behaviour.

What does a good personal statement look like? 3

Whilst I have been in sixth form, I have had opportunities to read with disadvantaged students in a primary school, be a Prefect and be a member of the Student Leadership Team, leading Student Voice. All of these things have made me go out of my comfort zone and communicate much more effectively, with both my peers and staff at the school. My Global Politics lessons have included debates around issues such as nationalism and globalisation and their societal impacts. Discussions about Marx and other influential theorists and theories have been pursued through both my Global Politics lessons and my Social and Cultural Anthropology lessons. Throughout my Anthropology lessons, my interest in people and how they act has deepened greatly, which has led to me becoming more and more interested in how people act and what it is in societies that causes people to act how they do. My History lessons have deepened my understanding of societal situations and how these have caused different events to happen, looking at things with hindsight and being able to analyse the full extent of this. All of these have worked together to make me passionate about studying Sociology at university.

What does a good personal statement look like? 4

In Year 12, I chose to take part in the New College of the Humanities' international essay writing competition, for which I wrote an essay answering the question 'What measures can be taken to increase voter turnout at elections?' This earned me the prize of Commended Finalist. In addition to this, whilst in Post-16, I have been enrolled in the IB Careers-related Programme, which has not only required me to write a university standard essay in the Reflective Project but has also required me to learn how to balance doing four subjects whilst maintaining my other commitments and doing large amounts of work without direct supervision from teachers. The IBCP is making sure that I will be ready for the demands of independent study at university.

On the 'Post-18 Options' site:

- All of the Post-18 Options videos (these can also be found by searching 'Lee Forcella-Burton' on YouTube) and slideshows
- Examples of excellent personal statements
- Parents' Guides to: Post-18 Options, University, University Applications, Apprenticeships, Degree Apprenticeships & Results Day
- Advice and guidance on taking a gap year
- Advice and guidance on creating a CV and writing application letters
- Links to www.ucas.com - advice and guidance on applying to university, finding an apprenticeship, choosing a career and taking a gap year

