



POST-18 OPTIONS

As a general rule, the options available will depend on two main things: a student's interests and their grades.

Once a student reaches the end of Year 13, they are no longer required to continue with formal learning. Of course many do, either at university or training as an apprentice, but even those going straight to work will continue to do training or "Continued Professional Development" which may include formal qualifications in the future.

Options beyond school might include:

- 🎓 Study at university
- 🎓 Further study at college – see links below
- 🎓 [Apprenticeships](#) – including Higher and Degree apprenticeships, but also includes options at lower levels too
- 🎓 Working without formal education
- 🎓 A Gap year – where a return to university is already arranged for the following year
- 🎓 Taking time out – this might include personal development, travel, work experience but doesn't have a fixed end date

In **ALL cases**, but particularly if there is uncertainty over whether the necessary grades will be achieved or where there is a long recruitment process, it is important to think about back up plans. This takes some of the stress away from Results Day. Examples could include:

- 🎓 If applying to university make sure the Insurance choice requires grades that are highly achievable
- 🎓 Consider back-up subject ideas if the first choice is highly competitive – e.g. medicine
- 🎓 If an apprenticeship/work is the preferred option, consider a college or university application, just in case a job offer isn't made or falls through

Things to consider

When considering course or career options:

- 🎓 Entrance requirements – are they achievable?
- 🎓 What the career/course actually involves – does this match with expectations? Organising work experience, even a day, might help test reality versus expectation

- 🗣️ Why it's appealing – again, it's important that the option offered meets with expectations
- 🗣️ Is it well suited to the student? – at some point they will need to 'sell' themselves in an application or at an interview. They will need to be confident in themselves first before they can convince others to give them the job or offer a place on the course
- 🗣️ Are there any negatives about this career? There are likely to be some negatives to any option – some are easier to live with than others! Skills and knowledge can be learned, but if a person is having to try too hard to be someone they're not, then it might not be the right choice
- 🗣️ Are there good alternative options which haven't been considered yet? It's always worth checking jobs or courses that are similar as you might find something with even more positives and less negatives!
- 🗣️ Potential salary is important but the option must suit the person first and foremost – it's a long time between pay days if you're unhappy!

Suggested Actions

- 🗣️ Use free time to access the websites below to do careers research and find out as much as possible about ideas and options – little and often is better than last-minute panicking. Some options, like medicine, are quite rigid about steps to follow – I need to know if my choices will keep my future options open
- 🗣️ Consider post 18 options carefully and plan a back-up, particularly if there is a possibility of not achieving the necessary grades or being offered the job of choice. It is ok to apply to more than one option – this just means final decisions can be made after the Results Day
- 🗣️ If there is any interest in an apprenticeship, register on www.apprenticeships.org.uk from Autumn of leaving year onwards. Big companies, like AWE, often start their recruitment process, including open days, before Christmas. This is also true of Degree apprenticeships.
- 🗣️ College applications open from October onwards. Prospectuses are available in school
- 🗣️ University applications have a 15th January deadline BUT the school will need draft applications before this to write references, check predicted grades etc. Some courses and universities have a 15th October deadline so please double-check!
- 🗣️ Time out and Gap years take time that is valuable and should be planned well. Work experience and experiences abroad need careful consideration and may require money or savings in advance. They also need an 'exit strategy' otherwise time might drift along and hoped-for outcomes may be missed

Useful Resources

A comprehensive set of resources can be found in the school's [Career Companion](#) or it can be accessed via the "Quicklinks" tab on the main page

For careers ideas and labour market information (LMI):

[Unifrog](#) – for information about careers, CVs, university options, apprenticeships, LMI – students should already have a log in for this. They can reset forgotten passwords using their school email address.

[eClips Online](#) – for information on different careers, job sectors and LMI. Use the school 23-24 password to log in: xiasti08

[Careerninja](#) – for a careers quiz that matches personality types to suited jobs

[NHS Careers](#) - for a wide range of detailed NHS careers information, including the NHS values and a career quiz and NHS-specific labour market information

[Medschools](#) – for our aspiring future medics

[iCould](#) – careers information videos and the Buzz quiz

For information on options, planning and applying:

[Find an Apprenticeship](#) – for advice about apprenticeships (including Higher and Degree apprenticeships) and live vacancies

[Berkshire Opportunities](#) – to explore options, jobs and courses in Berkshire

[Activate Learning](#)

for Reading & Bracknell

[BCA, Maidenhead](#)

[BCoT, Basingstoke](#)

[Henley College](#)

[Newbury College](#)

[QMC, Basingstoke](#)

[Sparsholt, Winchester](#)

[UTC Reading](#)

[UCAS](#) - The main university application and information website

[Uni Taster Days](#) – online activities, workshops, visits for aspiring university students

[Open Days](#) – dates and booking for university open days

[The Complete University Guide](#) – including university rankings

[Informed Choices](#) – Russell Group information and advice

[Not Going to Uni](#) – alternatives to university

[Gap Year and Voluntary Organisations](#)