

Why go to university?

There are many different reasons why people decide to go to university as a full time student directly after their A Levels or other Level 3 course. Here are just a few to help you start to think about if it is a good option for you:

- Some people simply want to continue studying in depth a subject that they have really enjoyed and to at the same time gain a recognised high level qualification
- Some people need a degree for their chosen career e.g. doctor
- Some people want to go to university as it opens up many opportunities for them in terms of careers
- Some people have no idea what career they want to follow at the age of 18 years and so go to university so they have another 3 years to make up their minds
- Some people just like the idea of being a student and living ‘the student life’. They like the idea of getting involved in many different clubs and societies and activities. It can also give individuals a chance to mature, to experience living away from home, to experience managing their own finances and to be gently eased into adult life
- Some people want a chance to make new friends from all different backgrounds and meet other people from all over the UK and the world with different cultures, views and opinions
- Some people want a chance to develop transferable skills such as problem solving, team work, analysing, researching, presentation and critical thinking skills. Such skills are extremely useful in most employment sectors

A few disadvantages to consider

- Financial Issues – having a debt when you leave will be seen as a disadvantage to many, but do make sure you totally understand about student finance before you get put off of going to university for this reason alone. This school careers website has a

section about Higher Education Student Finance that you and your parents can read. Also do remember that it is possible to gain, scholarships, sponsorships, financial help such as bursaries and grants from each university or charitable organisations

- There are risks involved such as your course not living up to your expectations, the possibility that you will find it difficult to settle in or that you will not get along well with your student accommodation or house mates, however, many of these issues can be overcome and there is a lot of support you can access from various university departments should you need it

Alternatives to studying at a university as a full time student

Should you decide after researching that being a full time student at university directly after you're a Levels or other Level 3 course is not an option that you want to follow there are many other options to look into, here are a few:

- Take a gap year and then go to university as a full time student
- Study for a degree on a part time basis e.g. Birkbeck (University of London) or other universities
- Study for a degree through distance learning e.g. Open University
- Study for a different type of higher education course e.g. Foundation Degree, HND/HNC
- Study for a different course (not a degree) through distance learning
- Study for a course at further education level
- Take a year and resit exams and then make a decision
- Seek a degree apprenticeship

- Seek a lower level apprenticeship such as a higher, advanced or intermediate apprenticeship
- Seek employment
- Work for yourself

Use www.eclips-online.co.uk, ask your Careers Adviser or Careers Lead for the login details, to research more information about university and also to research many of these alternatives mentioned above. This school careers website also has information about some of these topics.

Mrs Vicki Banbrook – Careers Adviser

Aug 2025