
What are my Post-18 opportunities?

- Higher education
- Apprenticeships
- Traineeships
- Work
- Self-employment
- Gap year
- Unemployment

Higher Education

Higher education qualifications include:

Diplomas

Bachelor degrees

Foundation degrees

Post-graduate degrees

Diploma

In the UK, diploma can refer to several different types of academic qualification. The [Diploma of Higher Education](#) is a higher education award below the standard of a bachelor's degree. The term can also refer to a [Postgraduate Diploma](#) or to the [14–19 Diploma](#) that was introduced in [England](#) in September 2008.

Bachelor Degree

Bachelor's degree programs and program titles vary by university. There are two primary kinds:

Bachelor of Arts (BA). This degree may usually requires a majority of coursework in the arts; areas such as social science, humanities, music or fine arts. It may usually involves learning qualitative research methods such as literary analysis and ethnography.

Bachelor of Science (BSc). This degree may usually requires a majority of coursework be taken in the sciences, such as life sciences, physical sciences, or mathematical sciences. It may be more focused on quantitative analysis, such as statistics and other forms of number-crunching.

Other kinds of bachelor's degrees include:

BASc - Bachelor of Applied Science

BArch - Bachelor of Architecture

BBA - Bachelor of Business Administration

BComm - Bachelor of Commerce

BCompSc - Bachelor of Computer Science

BD - Bachelor of Divinity (also the name of a postgraduate degree in some universities)

BDes - Bachelor of Design (Visual design dicipline)

BEd - Bachelor of Education

BEng or BE - Bachelor of Engineering

BFA - Bachelor of Fine Arts

BMath - Bachelor of Mathematics (also the name of a postgraduate degree in some universities)

BMus - Bachelor of Music (also the name of a postgraduate degree in some universities)

BPharm -Bachelor of Pharmacy

BTech - Bachelor of Technology

BSEE - Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering

BSF - Bachelor of Science in Forestry

LLB - Bachelor of Laws (also the name of a postgraduate degree in some universities)

Post-graduate degrees

<http://www.allaboutcareers.com/careers-advice/postgraduate-study/what-is-a-postgraduate-degree>

Apprenticeship V University

Avoid student debt with an apprenticeship, get paid to learn: something almost unheard of these days. (The minimum wage for apprentices is admittedly pretty low – just £2.73 an hour – and applies to all 16-18-year-old apprentices, and those aged 19 and over in the first year of their apprenticeship.)

Most apprentices earn on average around £170-£200 a week; although some earn less and others earn more.

You could also be qualified and in work before, or at the same time as, your peers emerge from university. You will already have worked in a proper job for a number of years alongside your training, making you super employable (as well as debt-free, of course).

Even if you take A-levels, you could still go down the apprentice route. Higher apprenticeships are the crème de la crème of apprenticeships, bearing many similarities to school leaver programmes.

You can also get qualifications like foundation degrees, HNDs and undergraduate degrees as part of a Higher Apprenticeship. Apprentices can usually top up their qualifications after the apprenticeship too.

Apprenticeships aren't for everyone though: as people tend to start them younger than university degrees, the drop-out rate is quite high. It's also not necessarily the right choice for every profession: you might find at some point in your career that you hit a glass ceiling, one which only a degree will get you through.

Social life and being able to move away from home

A university education in the UK is respected the world-over

Cost - most full-time students need a tuition fee loan, which covers the full cost of the tuition fee and maintenance loan, to help pay for living costs at university. These are added together to give the total amount of debt.

Student Debt

A typical student on a three-year course outside of London, will graduate with around £35,000 - £40,000 of student debt. This loan accrues interest; in England e.g this is 5.5%.

After graduation, yearly repayments are set at 9% of whatever is earned above £21,000, regardless of the total loan amount.

Despite the money involved, the latest Office of National Statistics [report](#) comparing graduates to non-graduates found that:

Graduates were more likely to be employed than those who left education with qualifications of a lower standard

Non-graduates aged 21-30 have consistently higher unemployment rates than all other groups

Non-graduates aged 21-30 have much higher inactivity rates than recent graduates.

Research has shown that graduate starting salaries at the UK's leading graduate employers is, on average, a whopping £29,000. A quarter of top graduate programmes will pay new recruits more than £35,000 when they start work and ten organisations are offering at least £40,000 to this year's graduates.

Student debt, even though it can be large, does not affect the borrower's credit rating, as student loans are not included on credit reference files.

Any outstanding student debt is written off after 30 years, even if nothing has been paid back during that time (because the borrower wasn't working or was earning below £21,000).

In fact, studies have estimated that over 70% of graduates won't have paid their full loan back after 30 years.

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate>

Apprenticeships

Types of Apprenticeship

Intermediate apprenticeship (level 2)

Advanced apprenticeship (level 3)

Higher apprenticeship (levels 4-7)

Degree apprenticeship (levels 6-7)

What to consider

Real job, earn a salary (at least the national minimum apprenticeship wage)

Work for at least 30 hours per week

1-5 years depending upon the level of apprenticeship and the industry sector.

Most of the training is delivered in the workplace, the rest is given by a training organisation, either at the workplace, off-site (perhaps at college) or via e-learning.

The training is tailored to develop the skills the employer wants

Better long term salary prospects

Degree Apprenticeships

Why do a Degree Apprenticeship?

Apprentices achieve a full bachelor's or master's degree (Levels 6 and 7)

Gain experience & a top class education

Higher Apprentices are already able study to degree level as part of their apprenticeship but Degree Apprenticeships go further.

Apprentices split their time between university study and the workplace, and will be employed throughout – gaining a full bachelor's or master's degree from a top university while earning a wage and getting real on-the-job experience in their chosen profession.

Avoid student debt

The cost of course fees is shared between government and employers, meaning that the apprentice can earn a full bachelors or even master's degree without paying any fees.

They are industry-designed

Degree Apprentices study towards a degree that has been tailored by future employers: groups of businesses, universities and colleges have developed practical, vocational degree courses which will allow people to combine both the academic study from a traditional university degree and the practical experience and wider employment skills vital for career success.

There is a wide variety to choose from

Degree apprenticeships were announced in 2015 in the following specialisms:

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- Chartered Surveying

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- Electronic Systems Engineering
 - Aerospace Engineering
 - Aerospace Software Development
 - Defence Systems Engineering
 - Laboratory Science
 - Nuclear
 - Power Systems
 - Public Relations
 - Digital
 - Automotive Engineering
 - Banking Relationship Manager
 - Construction

Traineeships

Traineeships are designed to help people who want to move into an apprenticeship or a job. Unlike apprentices, trainees don't yet have some essential skills like English and maths, or have work experience. The traineeship aims to provide them with these.

Traineeships last anything up to a maximum of six months

Traineeships may also be unpaid (it is left up to the employer to make that decision) and are not subject to minimum wage laws, unlike apprenticeships, which legally must be paid and meet the Apprentice National Minimum Wage.

Traineeships are specifically designed for 16 - 24 year olds, whereas apprenticeships can be taken at any age.