

What you choose next will depend on your future goals and ambitions and also your preferred learning style.

If you have a specific career in mind there may be training routes you need to follow, for example you will need a degree in medicine to become a doctor. With other career areas such as business or finance, routes are more flexible – you could do an apprenticeship, higher or degree apprenticeship, foundation degree, degree or a job where you study for a professional qualification.

Top tips to help you decide

The choice you make should be right for YOU - before making a decision, you need to have a clear idea about what you are looking for and what you would like to get out of the next move you make.

① Think about ... your likes and dislikes

These will have developed over the last two years – the more experience you have, the clearer these will become.

- What you enjoy and are good at – including any experience of work.
- What you don't like doing and find difficult – including any experience of work.
- What you liked or disliked about any work experience or voluntary work you have done.
- How far you are willing to travel to college or work or whether you would consider living away from home. Take into account the time and cost involved.
- How you learn best – in the classroom, practical workshops, tutorials, on-the-job training.
- What kind of environment you would like to work or study in.

② Think about ... your future goals and ambitions

- How you plan to achieve these
- Whether you need specific subjects or qualifications for a particular career or to study a Higher Education course
- Research careers, courses, jobs and apprenticeships

③ Prioritise which factors are most important to you

- To help you organise your ideas and make it easier to decide which option to choose
- Use the **pros and cons checklist** on **page 2** to help you decide

④ Compare your requirements with the options available and make your decision

Pros and cons checklist

Use the points below to help you compare the pros and cons of each option and work out what's important to you.

Apprenticeship

- Earn money
- 'On the job' learning style
- Develop employability skills
- Gain a nationally recognised qualification
- No full time student experience
- Time management – combining full-time work with study
- May not be available when/ where you want it
- Learn specific job skills
- Now available at higher and degree level (levels 4 and 6)

Higher/Degree apprenticeship

- No tuition fees
- Earn money
- Gain experience of work
- Competition for places
- Develop employability skills
- Opportunities in restricted subject areas
- Potential job on completion
- "Tied" to the company for a specified time

Employment

- Develop employability skills
- Earn money
- Gain experience of work
- Opportunity to "work your way up" /promotion
- Could lose touch with academic study skills
- Some national employers offer their own school leaver schemes working towards qualifications at a range of levels

Self-employment

- Flexible – fit in around other commitments
- No guaranteed income
- Time management
- Motivation
- Financial commitment may be required (investment)
- Uncertainty
- You control what you do
- Sense of achievement

Volunteering

- Flexible – fit around other commitments
- Develop employability skills
- Unpaid
- Gain experience of work
- Meet new people
- Great addition to your CV

Full-time degree

- Experience student life
- Costs/debt
- Independence
- Self-discipline to plan and control your own workload
- Wide choice of subject areas and locations

Gap year

- Develop new skills
- Break from studying
- Independence
- Help others
- Chance to earn/save
- Experience different things before settling
- Develop language skills
- Financial commitment/outlay
- Delay starting a job or course
- Language barrier

Part-time degree (inc. distance learning)

- Can combine study with other commitments
- Study at your own pace
- Lower fees
- Self-discipline to plan and control your own workload
- Isolation (studying alone)

Foundation degree

- Lower entry requirements than an honours degree
- Lower fees
- Can top up to a full degree
- Gain industry experience
- Could be studied flexibly/part time – combined with a job

Studying abroad

- Experience of living in a different country
- Tuition costs could be lower
- Develop language skills
- Language barrier
- Not all courses recognised in the UK
- Wide choice
- Amount of time needed for research and applying
- Lack of financial support
- Independence

College

- Wide choice of vocational subjects and specialist colleges
- Can study at higher education level
- Self-discipline to plan and control your own workload
- Convenience (could study locally)

Once you've decided – identify your skills and qualities

You will need to understand your personal qualities and strengths when completing an application for...

✓ A college or university course

✓ A job or apprenticeship

✓ A voluntary work placement

- How motivated and enthusiastic you are
- How well you would cope with the demands of the course or job
- How good your communication skills are
- How you can use your initiative
- How well you are able to work as part of a team
- Whether you are able to be flexible and adapt to different situations
- Your personal achievements including academic qualifications and experience both in and out of school/college
- Why your skills make you suited to the course/job/placement you are applying for

Market yourself on an application, CV or at an interview by showing...

Use the worksheet on page 4...

- Think of the three skills or qualities which describe you best
- Try to make these are varied and relevant to the job or course application
- If you're not sure about which to choose ask the opinion of someone who knows you well
- Think about what evidence you could use on an application form or at an interview to illustrate these skills or qualities, such as examples of when you have used you own initiative or how you have worked as part of a team

Don't forget..

The skills you have learnt from school/college subjects, for example...

In **maths** - handling data. In **English** - presenting information. In **science** – analysing and problem solving. In **group projects** - planning, organisation, team work and leadership

Thinking about your personal abilities early can help you make the most of your chances

Your Notes

Help from Services for Young People

www.servicesforyoungpeople.org >Support for young people

Your nearest HCC Services for Young People Access Point Project is:

Bishop's Stortford Young People's Centre, 14 Northgate End, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 2EU

For help for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, contact the LDD Team ...

01438 844999

email: SfYP.LDD@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Services for
Young People

Making decisions – Your skills and qualities worksheet

Services for Young People

Skill or Quality

Example 3

Example 1

Example 2

Example 1

Example 2

Choose the three skills or qualities which describe you best.
Then write down examples of how you have used them.
You can use these examples to market yourself on a job or course application, on your CV or at an interview

Skill or Quality

Example 3

Example 1

Example 2

Skill or Quality

Example 3