

# PARENTS' GUIDE TO POST 18 OPTIONS



**CAREERS**  
taking you places (👉)

## Information for Parents/Carers/Guardians

### Careers Service:

At Solihull College & University Centre we are here to provide 1-1 guidance and support to all students during their studies. We aim to guide them into developing, discovering and maintaining their career aspirations with an individual approach to Career Planning. We have 3 professionally qualified Careers Adviser available:

- Alka Prinja                      Careers Co-ordinator
- Jane Findlay                    Careers Adviser
- Helen Cunningham        Careers Adviser

### What careers can offer:

We have resources to help all levels of students and they can use our services whether they attend full time or just for a few hours. Mature students as well as 16 – 19 year olds are welcome to come and see us in the Careers Service or to have access to the Careers Information. We have:

- Networked computer Careers Licenced software (Start profile, Adult Directions, Higher Ideas and Kudos) which can generate career suggestions and ideas. These are found on the internal student hub – Careers area.
- Internet access to careers websites including [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)
- Information and advice on choosing university courses and the application process.
- Help with writing CVs, completing application forms and preparing for interviews.
- Information on local job vacancies and where to search for vacancies.
- Guidance information about options is open to all students during and after completing their course.

If your son/daughter is unsure about what they want to do next and would like a careers appointment to help them decide on the best option then the careers team can be contacted in the following way:

**Drop-ins**                      Monday to Friday 12-1pm at Blossomfield campus  
Monday & Wednesday 12-1pm at Woodlands campus

**Tel:**                              0121 678 7020/7021      **Email:** [careers@solihull.ac.uk](mailto:careers@solihull.ac.uk)

## Parents' Guide to Post 18 Options

At Solihull College & University Centre, we encourage our students to think carefully about their post 18 options to move forward into the next phase of their lives. It is important that students carefully research the exciting opportunities that are open to them, and that they are aware of the necessary entry requirements for each one of these options including:

- University
- Apprenticeships
- Gap Year
- Employment

Parents play a vital role in supporting their son or daughter on their career journey and this guide is aimed at helping provide you with the information to do this,

## UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE



Some students may decide to continue with their education by applying to University or a Higher Education College. Students may choose to study at University as it is essential for entry into a profession (e.g. Teaching, Nursing, Social Work etc.) or because they have a real interest in the subject.

Whatever the reason your son or daughter wants to study at a higher level, University study will bring a range of skills, behaviours and experiences that will allow them to develop themselves and potentially progress their careers further.

Students will need to research course options, entry requirements and methods of assessment etc. from University websites and open days. The main reason students drop out of courses is because they didn't like the University or town they were living in or they didn't know what the course involved. Even if your son or daughter fails to complete their degree they will still have to pay back for the time they studied. This could so easily be avoided by a little research beforehand. You are welcome to attend open days and help your child contact University Admissions team to check any areas of concern.

All applications for full time undergraduate courses across the UK are processed through the UCAS (University & Colleges Admission Service) system. This is an online system accessed through the UCAS website at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com). UCAS also has a section and guide for parents to support your knowledge: <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/ucas-undergraduate-parents-and-guardians>

Solihull College & University Centre have a team of Careers Adviser's based in Student Services who are available to support your child with their UCAS application, provide general course & careers guidance. Their course and personal tutor will also be very knowledgeable in this area and will be good at advising predicted grades and whether the subject would be suited for them to study at a higher level.

### STUDENT FINANCE:

As parents you will be worried about the cost of university as it's not cheap! The cost of the tuition fee is around £9,250 for one academic year and your child will also need to fund their living costs. Financial advice and information is available through Student Finance England [www.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.gov.uk/studentfinance) or [www.sfgotland.co.uk](http://www.sfgotland.co.uk) which details loans available for tuition and maintenance. Universities may also give out additional funding in the form of Bursaries and Scholarships, which will be available on their websites.

For further advice & guidance:

- Speak to Admissions Team at the Universities/Colleges of your choice
- UCAS Student Support line: 0371 468 0468

## UCAS DEADLINES & TIMESCALES

There are different dates that you and your child need to be aware of when making an application and waiting for decisions. Please note that after they have submitted their UCAS application it will come to the College NOT UCAS! Their tutor will review it for obvious mistakes and then attach a reference. Our two Faculty Directors will then review the reference and then finally send it to UCAS. This may take some time, particularly if your child has made errors and we need to send the form back to them.

**If your child meets our submission deadlines we will guarantee to send the form by the UCAS deadline date of 15 January. If your son/daughter sends their application late we cannot guarantee it will be sent in time**

**Mid-Sept 2017** 2018 entry applications can be sent to UCAS.

**15 Oct 2017** Deadline for receipt at UCAS of applications to the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge and all with choices for courses in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine/science to reach UCAS.

**3 Nov 2017** Our internal deadline for UCAS submission for Health and Early Years courses.

**17th Nov 2017** Our internal deadline for UCAS submission of all other courses.

**15 Jan 2018** **UCAS Equal Consideration Date. Deadline for receipt of applications at UCAS for all courses except those listed with a 15 October 2017 deadline and some Art and Design courses with 24 March 2018 deadline.** Applications received after 15<sup>th</sup> January date will be classed as late and not considered until all "on time" applications have been processed.

**25 Feb 2018** UCAS Extra opens. If your son/daughter has been unsuccessful in securing a place at university, they can continue to apply for one additional course at a time until they receive an offer.

**6 May 2018** If your son/daughter has received all offers from their universities/colleges by 31 March, they will need to reply to any offers by this date. **If UCAS don't receive replies, offers will automatically be declined.**

**4 June 2018** If all decisions were received by the 7 May then your son/daughter must reply to any offers by today or **UCAS will decline all offers.**

**25 June 2018** If all decisions were received by the 4 June, then a response is required or **UCAS will decline all offers.**

**30 June 2018** UCAS Clearing opens.

**16 July 2018** If your son/daughter applied by 30 June universities need to send their decisions by this date or UCAS will mark the choice as unsuccessful on their behalf.

**23 July 2018** If all decisions were received from your universities/colleges by 16 July, your son/daughter need to reply to any offers by this date or **UCAS they will decline.**

**14 Aug 2018** A Level Results Day – check Clearing again to see if any new places available.

**21 Sept 2018** Last date UCAS will accept applications for courses starting in 2018.

**Attention!** Universities may also give other dates by which your son/daughter should provide them with further information e.g. Exam grades, DBS checks etc. It is

**essential** they meet these dates as students have been declined places due to failure to comply

## APPRENTICESHIPS



An apprenticeship gives a job with training alongside it. Young people will spend most of their time in work, but they will also undertake training. This might be on day release to College or with an Assessor that comes out to the work environment. Employees' will be paid at least the national minimum wage of £3.50 per hour, though some

employers may choose to pay you more.

An apprenticeship can take between one and four years to complete depending on the level and type of industry. There are four different levels of apprenticeship:

- Intermediate Apprenticeship - Level 2
- Advanced Apprenticeship - Level 3
- Higher Apprenticeship - Level 4 – 6
- Degree Apprenticeship - Level 6 – 7

Many apprenticeships are advertised on the National Apprenticeship Website, though others may be only advertised on the employer's own website. So just like looking for a job careful and continuous research and action will be required from your child.

Your son/daughter should register and sign up for alerts on; National Apprenticeship Website:  
<https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>

Other great websites for finding apprenticeships are:

- Not Going to Uni: <https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/>
- UCAS: <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/16-18-choices/search-and-apply/post-16-apprenticeships>

They will need to put a lot of effort when completing an application form, as they will be applying in completion with others. It is important that they carefully consider why they want the apprenticeship, why they believe they can do the role and what they have to offer. It may be a generic National Apprenticeship Application form OR the Employer may have their own bespoke application. Your support in reading and checking the application may be vital to their success.

Please be aware that your son or daughter may not be able to study for a particular Intermediate or Advanced Apprenticeship if it covers the same material/same qualification as courses they may have already completed.

Find out more:

<https://www.getingofar.gov.uk/>

Solihull Postcode Students - <https://www.solihullforsuccess.com/News/1/ApprenticeshipPlus>

### What is a Higher/Degree Apprenticeship?



Higher or Degree apprenticeships offer a job alongside higher level training, This will enable them to get a higher education qualification (Level 4 to 7), relevant work experience and no student debt. They can offer a work-based route into professions which have traditionally been the preserve of graduates.

There are currently around 75 different higher and degree apprenticeships offering a real alternative to University study only.

### Higher Apprenticeship:

Higher apprenticeships offer Level 4 & 5 and some Level 6 qualifications. Most of the training is delivered in the workplace, with an element of off-the-job training which usually takes place with a training provider/College or University.

- Level 4 and 5 qualification e.g. a higher education certificate, higher education diploma or a foundation degree
- Level 6 – equivalent to a bachelor's degree

Higher Apprenticeships are currently available in the following sectors:

Land-based industries	Business	IT
Creative Media and the Arts	Energy	Engineering and Electrical
Finance	Health and Care	Hospitality and Travel
Manufacturing	Processing and Logistics	Public Services & Vehicle Transport

### Degree Apprenticeships

Degree apprenticeships combine working with studying part-time at a university. Apprentices are employed throughout the programme, and spend part of their time at university and the rest with their employer. This can be on a day-to-day basis or in blocks of time, depending on the programme and requirements of the employer

- Level 6 is equivalent to a bachelor's degree
- A Level 7 is equivalent to a master's degree

Degree apprenticeships are currently (or soon to be made) available in the following sectors:

Chartered Surveying	Chartered Manager	Electronic Systems Engineering
Aerospace Engineering	Aerospace Software Development	Defence Systems Engineering
Laboratory Science	Nuclear Science	Power Systems
Digital and Technology Solutions	Automotive Engineering	Banking Relationship Manager
Construction	Technical Support Engineering	Product Design and Development
Bespoke Tailoring	Licensed Conveyancer	Dental Technician
Healthcare Assistant Practitioner	Chartered Legal Executive	Solicitor
Operations Manager	Laboratory Science	Outside Broadcasting Engineering

### How to apply?

Search and apply for degree apprenticeships by visiting employer websites, and through:

- <https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>
- <https://www.thetechpartnership.com/>
- <https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/>

### For more information

- <http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk/higher-apprenticeships/>

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-and-degree-apprenticeships>
- <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/apprenticeships-uk/degree-apprenticeships>

## EMPLOYMENT



Entering straight into employment is another real option for students. Looking for a job is not always easy but it will help if students have a structured approach.

There are many ways of searching for jobs, from building networks and directly contacting employers, utilising recruitment agencies, to having structured and methodical methods of conducting online search.

Students can research for employment opportunities by looking at local or national company websites, local and national newspapers and industry journals, job boards and recruitment agency websites. Good places to start could be:

Monster	<a href="http://www.monster.co.uk/">http://www.monster.co.uk/</a>
Direct.gov	<a href="http://jobseekers.direct.gov.uk">http://jobseekers.direct.gov.uk</a>
Total Jobs	<a href="http://www.totaljobs.com/">http://www.totaljobs.com/</a>
Career Builder	<a href="http://www.careerbuilder.co.uk">www.careerbuilder.co.uk</a>
Target Jobs	<a href="http://targetjobs.co.uk/">http://targetjobs.co.uk/</a>
WM Jobs	<a href="https://www.wmjobs.co.uk/">https://www.wmjobs.co.uk/</a>
Fish4Jobs	<a href="http://www.fish4.co.uk/">http://www.fish4.co.uk/</a>
Birmingham Mail	<a href="http://www.midlands.fish4jobs.co.uk">www.midlands.fish4jobs.co.uk</a>
Reed	<a href="https://www.reed.co.uk/">https://www.reed.co.uk/</a>
Indeed	<a href="http://www.indeed.co.uk/">http://www.indeed.co.uk/</a>
Jobsite	<a href="http://www.jobsite.co.uk/">http://www.jobsite.co.uk/</a>
Job is Job	<a href="http://www.jobisjob.co.uk">http://www.jobisjob.co.uk</a>
CV Library	<a href="http://www.cv-library.co.uk/">http://www.cv-library.co.uk/</a>

Your son or daughter needs to remember that they will be in competition with many others for roles so will need to carefully construct their application or tailor their CV to a job on offer. The Careers Team have a number of Guides to help, these include:

- Creating a Winning CV and Cover Letter
- Writing Successful Job Applications
- Finding a Job
- Winning at Interview

Or they can make an appointment to see us and we can review their CV, help them create a job search action plan or undertake a mock interview.

Traditional “Trainee Management Schemes” offered for 18+ School Leavers are invariably now part of organisations ‘apprenticeship programmes (see Higher Apprenticeships) but look on their websites for further details. Examples include Tesco Trainee Management Scheme, Marks and Spencer Trainee Management Scheme and Sainsbury’s Trainee Scheme.

Finally – students must not be shy- they need to be pro-active in looking for employment and to start networking with various companies or through parents/carer contacts.

## TAKING A GAP YEAR



Taking time out from study can be a great way of gaining work experience, travelling, experiencing new cultures and developing new skills. However it is essential your son/daughter plans and researches what they will do during this break to ensure that they make the most of the time.

They should create a plan with clear aims. What do they want to achieve from their time away from study and/or work? Who are they going with? How are they going to fund it and What type of year do they plan to have?

Options include:

- Independent travel (with or without work abroad options)
- Volunteer or work in the UK
- Learn a new skill such as IT or follow a course to develop a new interest
- Join an organised project in the UK or abroad e.g. conservation

There are a number of websites that help with the ideas, planning and practical considerations that have to be made. These include:

- [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/gap\\_year.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/gap_year.htm)
- <http://www.firstgapyear.com/index.html>
- <https://www.gapyear.com/>
- <http://www.gapadvice.org/>
- <https://workingholidaystore.com/>
- <http://www.yearoutwork.co.uk/>
- <http://igapyear.com/>

## How to make a Career Choice



As we all know deciding what we want to do with our lives is hard, what is the right or wrong choice, and how do we get there? The Careers team can help but your son/daughter can help themselves by through research into options available AND by understanding themselves as best they can

Understanding what they like/dislike, their strengths/weaknesses, where they might like to work, what skills they want to use etc. This will really help them focus on what they want and need to do. Using our Guide to Career Planning will help them to find out about themselves and make choices on courses and or jobs/apprenticeships. This is available in a hard copy from our Careers Team or from the Careers online portal if you are studying at the College.

There are also a number of Career matching software tools that can help generate ideas and provide information on careers such as:

- Kudos – <https://kudos.cascaid.co.uk/#/> Register using our code: **b911sb**

- Startprofile - <https://www.startprofile.com/Login.aspx> Register using our code: 20748
- Prospects - <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/planner>
- UCAS: <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/16-18-choices/find-career-ideas/buzz-quiz>

## Further Help

National Careers Service – Helpline 8am – 10pm 7 days a week 0800 100 900

Solihull Employment and Skills Team (Solihull Residents) – [solihullforsuccess.com](http://solihullforsuccess.com)  
0121 704 8076: [employmentteam@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:employmentteam@solihull.gov.uk)

Birmingham Careers Service – (Birmingham Residents) <http://www.birminghamcareersservice.co.uk/>  
0121 675 6105 [bcareers@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:bcareers@birmingham.gov.uk)

Checked by Careers 09/2017