

Post-18 Options #3



What are my options?

1. Employment
2. Apprenticeship
3. **University**
4. Gap Year

Preparing for University

Question 1 - What would you like to study?

There are nearly 400 degree-providers in the UK and countless others overseas, so you have lots of choice!

Some degrees prepare you for a specific career, while others are called 'gateway' courses ie those which prepare you for lots of alternative careers.

Choosing a course you will enjoy is really important but not all degree courses lead to financially-rewarding careers.

CONSIDER: Do you know what career you would like or do you need to buy some time before you make up your mind?

Preparing for University

Question 2 - How do you prefer to study?

Some degree courses are 100% coursework.

Others are 100% exam-based.

Many combine the two approaches.

CONSIDER: When you start to research courses, make sure you find out **HOW** the course is assessed and whether that will suit you personally.

Preparing for University

Question 3 - Where do you want to study?

Some people want to stay at home while they study - family commitments, part-time work commitments, social commitments and financial commitments can all play their part in this decision.

Many people want to leave home and study elsewhere - the need to be independent, the desire to experience another location and the particular things a university can uniquely offer can all play their part in this decision.

CONSIDER: You don't need to study in Dundee to be independent but you don't have to study in Kent to stay living at home.

Preparing for University

Question 4 - What do you want your university to be like?

Some universities are based in scattered buildings across a city centre.

Some universities are built on an out-of-town campus, with all teaching facilities and residences on site.

CONSIDER: What kind of university experience appeals to you?

Preparing for University

Question 5 - What grades do you expect to get at the end of Year 13?

Each course has entry requirements. These can be specified in terms of:

- Grades at A level
- Required subjects at A level
- UCAS points (where grades are equated to points and the results in individual subjects don't matter)
- Creative courses usually require a portfolio

CONSIDER: Are you studying the right subjects to do what you prefer at university? Are you on track to get high enough grades for your chosen course of study?

UCAS Tariff Points for University

IB Dip (HL)		A Level		BTEC	
7	56	A*	56	Dist *	56
6	48	A	48	Dist	48
		B	40		
5	32	C	32	M	32
4	24	D	24		
		E	16	P	16
3	12				
2	0				
1	0				

Preparing for University

Conditional and Unconditional offers

Usually, universities make conditional Offers - this means they will specify what grades or how many UCAS points you need to achieve to earn the place.

Increasingly, universities are making unconditional offers - they say that your results don't matter but you usually have to make that university your first choice. You are 30 times more likely now to receive an unconditional offer than you would have been 5 years ago! Many universities make incentivised or conditional unconditional offers, where they say your offer will be unconditional but only if you make them your first choice.

BE WARNED: There is a legal challenge being mounted to end unconditional offers and some universities - Nottingham, Sussex and St Mary's - have announced that they will no longer make unconditional offers.

An unconditional offer is not an excuse to throw your results away! Future employers will not touch you with a barge pole if you do that! Research has shown that the majority of students who accept unconditional offers underachieve by 2 or more grades.

Preparing for University

The type of university you apply to will affect your experience and the offer they are likely to make to you:

Ancient - the oldest universities in the UK (eg Oxford, Cambridge and four in Scotland)

Redbrick - the 19 oldest universities in the UK (all given their charter before 1963, including Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Hull, Bristol, Reading, Southampton)

Plate Glass - universities given their charter between 1963 and 1992 (such as Bath, Kent, Sussex, Loughborough, Warwick, York)

New - all given their charter since 1992 and often offering very specialised and/or unique courses

Russell Group - the self-appointed 'top' 24 universities in the UK and very selective

Preparing for University

Contextualised Offers

The government has what is known as a ‘Widening Participation Agenda’, which aims to get more people into university from underrepresented groups, such as: low-income families, first-generation university applicants, ethnic minorities, those with a disability, residents of areas that send fewer than the national average number of people to university etc.

As Dartford falls into that final category, we often end up on universities’ ‘Contextualised Offers’ lists, which means they will usually make lower offers than usual to you to help you to access their university.

NB If you fulfil one or more of the WPA criteria, make sure you highlight that in the final paragraph of your Personal Statement.

Next Step: Assess what to study and where

Self-assess your university needs, so that you can filter your search and make it easier to select courses and universities to explore in greater detail:

- **Subject**
- **Assessment method**
- **Location**
- **Type of university**
- **Entry requirements**

This filtering should hopefully specialise your search for the right course in the right university for you.

On the 'Post-18 Options' site:

- All of the Post-18 Options videos (these can also be found by searching 'Lee Forcella-Burton' on YouTube) and slideshows
- Examples of excellent personal statements
- Parents' Guides to: Post-18 Options, University, University Applications, Apprenticeships, Degree Apprenticeships & Results Day
- Advice and guidance on taking a gap year
- Advice and guidance on creating a CV and writing application letters
- Links to www.ucas.com - advice and guidance on applying to university, finding an apprenticeship, choosing a career and taking a gap year

