



Alternatives to University

More than one route to success:
Options after Year 13

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Alternatives to University

There's one big question everyone is obsessed with right now - is university worth it?

While we could go round in circles debating this for hours, our simple answer would be yes, for some people, and no, for others.

University is a fantastic experience that can open so many doors for students, but that doesn't mean it's for everyone – there are plenty of alternatives.....



Entry-level Job



Apprenticeships



Traineeship

Alternatives to University



Work Experience



Internship



Start your Own
Business



Gap Year



After Year 13

- 1. Entry-Level Jobs**
- 2. Apprenticeships**
- 3. School Leaver Trainee Programmes/Sponsored Degrees**
- 4. Work Experience /Internships**
- 5. Starting Your Own Business**
- 6. Gap Year**



Entry-Level Jobs



- **Best for:** students who want to go straight into the world of work.
- Entry-level jobs are just what they say on the tin - jobs designed for school leavers without the need for higher education qualifications.
- Some might require **certain grades or work experience**, while others will just want to see **passion and a good work ethic**.
- **Qualifications needed:** Varies and in some cases none.
- **Length:** Indefinite.
- Once you've got your foot in the door it's all about working your way up!



Apprenticeships...



Apprenticeships are open to anyone over 16 and it never too late to start one. With A-levels or equivalent, you could complete a level four (higher) apprenticeship.

- Allow you to combine **work** and **study** by mixing **on-the-job training** with **classroom learning**
- **You train** as you also work towards a **nationally-recognised qualification (Functional Skills, NVQ's level 2-5, Technical Certificates (BTEC / City and Guilds) and Academic Qualifications HNC HND foundation degree or equivalent to full Bachelor's degree)**
- Usually train for **one day a week** either at a college or a training centre or in the work place
- You'll also be constantly developing your transferable skills or soft skills such as:
(**Communication, Teamwork and Problem Solving, as well as knowledge of IT**)



Apprenticeship Levels

There are four different levels of Apprenticeship:

1. Intermediate - equivalent to five good GCSE passes

2. Advanced - equivalent to two A-level passes

3. Higher - equivalent to the first stages of higher education, such as a foundation degree

4. Degree - comparable to a Bachelors or Master's degree



Length of Apprenticeship

The length of your apprenticeship will depend on a number of factors, such as the **level of the apprenticeship, your chosen sector, employer requirements** and **your individual ability**. However, usually last between **one** and **six** years.

Their length follows a basic framework:

- **Intermediate apprenticeships** typically last between **one year** and **18 months**
- **Advanced apprenticeships** are usually studied **over two years**
- **Higher and degree apprenticeships** take **three-to-six years** to complete.

It's worth checking directly with your chosen employer before applying to confirm how long your course will last, as some won't follow this structure.



Entry Requirements

As each type of apprenticeship offers a different-levelled qualification on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), their entry requirements will vary. Generally speaking, they are as follows:

Intermediate Apprenticeship:

16 + and no longer in full-time education

Advanced Apprenticeship:

Prior work experience and at least three A*-C or 9-4 grade GCSEs or equivalent

Higher Apprenticeship:

At least five A*-C or 9-4 grade GCSEs, as well as some Level 3 qualification such as AS-levels, a BTEC National or a level 3 NVQ

Degree Apprenticeship:

A-levels in a specified grade range or a higher apprenticeship qualification, on top of at least five A*-C or 9-4 GCSE grades

You can apply for apprenticeships at any time of the year - it all depends when an employer has a vacancy.



Pay Rates and Working Hours

- Under 19 and an apprentice, or 19 or over and still in your first year as an apprentice, you'll be entitled to the apprenticeship wage of £4.15 (from April 2020).
- **19 or over** and who've **completed** their first year will be able to claim the **National Minimum Wage**, which currently stands at **£6.45** per hour (**for those aged 18-20**) or **£8.20 (21-24)**.

This pay rate is stated as a guideline - some employers will pay you a higher wage.

- Sick pay, any additional benefits such as healthcare plans and childcare vouchers
- At least 20 days of paid holiday per year.

Use the [GOV.UK Holiday Calculator](#) to work out your exact entitlement.

Your working hours will vary depending on your employer, but you won't be able to work more than 40 hours per week or any fewer than 30.

- Typically, you'll work between 35 and 37.5 hours per week.
- For instance, your daily working hours will be 9am to 5.30pm, with an hours break for lunch
- Hospitality and Healthcare roles should expect to work antisocial shifts.



The Top Ten Benefits of Doing An Apprenticeship

1

Receive on-the-job training by industry professionals

6

No student loan!

2

Earn while you learn

7

Excellent career progression

3

There are over 200 different apprenticeships to choose from

8

Paid holiday

4

Gain specialist skills

9

Gain a range of qualifications while you work

5

High street discount card available for all apprentices

10

Good relationships with employers means better job prospects



Traineeship



- **Best for:** students lacking the qualifications or experience needed for an apprenticeship.
- Traineeships are short courses with work experience designed **to prepare students for a full apprenticeship or full-time work.**
- Students typically complete a traineeship if they don't yet have the necessary qualifications to be accepted onto an apprenticeship.
- Unlike apprenticeships you **don't get paid**, but you will likely get travel and food expenses reimbursed.
- While gaining vital workplace skills and securing valuable work experience, you'll also get **Maths and English support** to boost your job prospects and earning potential.
- **Qualifications needed:** No set entry requirements.
- **Length:** Six weeks to six months.
- Use the official government website to find traineeship near you <https://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship>



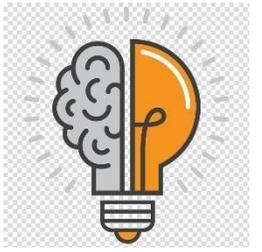
Work Experience and Internships



- **Best for:** students struggling to get an entry-level job or wanting to try out a position before they commit to a permanent job.
- **Work Experience** tends to be more **casually organised** - your best bet is to contact individual companies to find out what their policy is.
- **Internships** are more formal schemes, usually with **set entry requirements** and **responsibilities**, and as a result they tend to be more competitive.
- Many are reserved for university students and graduates, but others are open to school leavers or college students.
- **Qualifications needed:** Varies.
- **Length:** One week to 12 months.



Starting Your Own Business



- **Best for:** students with an entrepreneurial spirit who want to work for themselves.
- If you're the kind of person who prefers to work independently and is full of creative ideas for making money, then setting up your own business could be a fulfilling alternative to university or a full-time job.
- But you don't even need to set up your own business to become self-employed.
- Freelance work, Blogging, Become an Uber Driver, A Baby Sitter etc.
- It takes some serious drive and determination to make money this way, and it certainly won't happen overnight, but you never know.
- **Qualifications needed:** None.
- **Length:** Indefinite.



Gap Year



- **Best for:** students who aren't sure about what they want to do in the future, or who want a year out from study or work.
- They're commonly associated with travelling around the world.
- People often worry that taking a gap year might look bad on their CV, but as long as you do something productive with it, it'll likely have the opposite effect.
- If you do decide to go travelling, an awareness of other cultures, language skills, independence and planning will all impress future employers.
- **Qualifications needed:** None.
- **Length:** One year.



Conclusion

- There are a number of alternatives to University
- So do your **research**
- **Speak** to people
- **Explore** different opportunities
- **Discuss** your findings with your **family** and/or **carer**

Useful Resources:

<https://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk/Choices.aspx>

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships>

<https://careerfinder.ucas.com/jobs/apprenticeship/>

<https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/>

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/>

<https://careemap.co.uk/>

<https://www.milkround.com/>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/>