

## Post 18 Options

### 1. What are my options?

- **NotGoingtoUni:** [NotGoingtoUni](#) is a central site for all students considering an alternative route to university. All the opportunities are listed here!
- **School Leaver Programmes:** offer structured training and development for young people who have drive and ambition. Typically, the schemes are tough to get onto, the entry-requirements are usually quite high, and salary/benefit packages are very good.
  - [AllAboutSchoolLeavers.co.uk](#): search opportunities
  - [A-Z of School Leaver programmes](#) from The Big Choice website
  - [Top Employers for School & College Leavers Award](#): see how employers are ranked for their school leaver programmes, Higher Apprenticeships and sponsored degree programmes.
- **Foundation Degrees:** Foundation Degrees are higher education qualifications that combine academic study with work-based learning.
  - Search for a Foundation degree online at: [Foundation Degree Course Search](#)
- **Apprenticeships:** What is an apprenticeship? An apprenticeship is a work-based training programme. It aims to equip the apprentice with nationally recognised vocational qualifications and work-ready skills. Employers use apprenticeships to train new or current employees. An apprenticeship programme is a mixture of both on-the-job and off-the-job training that is provided entirely by the employer or through a partnership with a learning provider. Most apprenticeships usually last between one and four years. Apprenticeships are open to those over the age of 16.
  - [National Apprenticeship website](#)
  - [Canterbury College](#) is a learning provider and advertises opportunities online and at its Information Centre just off main reception at the College. Other colleges who are learning providers, such as K College, will do the same
  - <http://www.cant-col.ac.uk/studying-with-us/Courses/part-time/apprenticeships>
  - <http://www.facebook.com/ctrjobs>
  - [NotGoingtoUni](#): opportunities from all over the UK
  - [All About Careers](#): browse Apprenticeships available
  - You can also find vacancies advertised at your local job centre
- **Employment with training:** some organisations offer employment opportunities that are not classed as Apprenticeships but are still high quality jobs with good training leading to qualifications. Such opportunities can be very varied and employers could range from major retail chains to national construction companies.

- [JobsforKent](#): Kent on Sunday contains a large appointment section divided into categories such as public sector, administration etc
- [Kent Jobs](#): jobs advertised in Kent Messenger Group Newspapers are listed on the Kent Jobs website
- [Jobs in Kent](#)
- [This is Kent jobs](#)
- [Canterbury City Council](#) job vacancies
- [Kent County Council](#): search for job opportunities within KCC
- [University of Kent](#) vacancies
- [HM Revenue & Customs](#): search for customer service/administrative job opportunities
- [JobsGoPublic](#): search for job opportunities in the public sector
- **Distance Learning**: There are study opportunities with Open University and with an increasing number of UK universities and companies offering online courses.

## 2. School Leaver Programmes

Most school leaver programmes are aimed at recruiting A-level students who might otherwise be considering going to university. They tend to be offered by large companies in industries like accountancy, banking and finance, engineering, retail, hospitality and IT. These schemes are usually intended for students who either want to avoid some of the cost of university education, or want to jump straight into employment. Many school leaver programmes offer school leavers the chance to work for a company whilst gaining a professional qualification and/or university degree. For companies, it's their chance to grow their own talent and encourage social mobility within the industry. "School leaver programme" is a pretty flexible term and, from the range of different school leaver options available, it is evident that companies have interpreted it differently. At the crux of a school leaver programme is the aim to attract bright, ambitious A-level talent to the company. Perhaps a better way to define a school leaver programme would be a "high school graduate scheme". Largely, they look to provide trainees with a superior level of training and qualifications than they might get through an apprenticeship, particularly an Intermediate or Advanced Apprenticeship.

- [AllAboutSchoolLeavers.co.uk](#): search opportunities
- [A-Z of School Leaver programmes](#) from The Big Choice website
- [School Leaver programmes V University](#): AllAboutCareers debates the pros and cons

Companies offering School Leaver programmes include:

- [ACCA](#): Accountancy
- [BDO](#): Accountancy
- [Close Brothers](#): Banking
- [Deloitte BrightStart](#): Professional Services (Financial/Business Sector)
- [Grant Thornton](#): Accountancy
- [National Audit Office](#): Chartered Accountant (ICAEW)
- [National Grid's Engineer Training Programme](#):
- [RBS](#): Banking

### **3. Foundation Degrees**

Foundation Degrees are higher education qualifications that combine academic study with work-based learning. Designed jointly by universities, colleges and employers, they are available in a range of work-related subjects. Foundation Degrees are designed to equip you for a particular area of work – as well as giving you the general skills that are useful in any type of job. They're university-level qualifications, equivalent to the first two years of an honours degree. It's possible to 'top up' your qualification to an honours degree. This usually involves an extra year studying full-time (or the part-time equivalent). Foundation Degree courses are designed with a particular area of work in mind, with the help of employers from that sector. Typically, you'll get the chance to learn in the workplace as well as the classroom. Foundation degrees are offered by universities in partnership with higher education colleges and further education colleges. The study methods can be very flexible, which means that they are available to people already in work, those wishing to embark on a career change and to those who have recently completed level 3 qualifications (eg A levels, Advanced Apprenticeships or NVQ3).

[More information about Foundation Degrees from UCAS](#)

**Search for a Foundation degree online at:** [Foundation Degree Course Search](#)

### **What is a Foundation degree?**

- It is NOT a foundation course or 'entry-level' programme that leads to a degree-level course (such as the foundation diploma in art and design); it is a degree-level qualification in its own right
- A university level (Level 5), employment-focused qualification
- A course designed in partnership with employers to address local, regional or national skills needs
- A course delivered primarily by universities and colleges
- A course which offers a blend of academic and work-based learning
- A qualification validated and awarded by universities
- A stand-alone recognised degree in its own right equivalent to the first two years of an honours degree
- A qualification which allows graduates to use letters after their name such as FdA, FdSc, FdEng, depending on the course of study
- A course which entitles graduates to progress to honours degree level (usually into the final year) or other higher level (such as professional qualifications) through further study
- It is NOT less academically challenging than an honours degree; it offers a blend of practical, work-based learning with rigorous, degree-level academic study

## **4. Apprenticeships**

**What is an Apprenticeship?** You'll be learning and earning at the same time and you'll go to college on day release to study for qualifications – a mix of theory and practical learning. There are a variety of Apprenticeships available from cooking to accountancy and veterinary nursing to sport and fitness. There are more than 130 Apprenticeships available in over 80 different sectors – something to suit everyone. Apprenticeships can be taken by anyone at any age, usually between 16 and 24.

- **Intermediate Apprenticeships** lead to qualifications such as NVQ Level 2. No entry requirements
- **Advanced Apprenticeships** lead to qualifications such as NVQ Level 3 or BTEC award. Entry is normally with 5 GCSEs (A\*-C) or completion of an Intermediate Apprenticeship. Available from organisations such as:

- [BT Apprenticeships](#)
- [National Grid's Advanced Apprenticeships](#):
- **Higher Apprenticeships** work towards work-based learning qualifications such as NVQ Level 4/5, foundation degrees, HNCs/HNDs and other professional qualifications. Available from organisations such as:
  - [Rolls Royce](#) Civil Engineering, Defence Services, Fans, TS&D, Naval Marine, Purchasing, Manufacturing
  - [Airbus](#) : Engineering

### How to find an Apprenticeship

- [National Apprenticeship website](#)
- [Canterbury College](#) is a learning provider and advertises opportunities online and at it's Information Centre just off main reception at the College. Other colleges who are learning providers, such as K College, will do the same
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**Can I be an Apprentice and Still Go to University?** Yes. In fact some Apprenticeships earn UCAS points and there are plans to make qualifications gained during Apprenticeships count towards university applications. For more answers, visit [www.ApprenticeshipGuide.co.uk](http://www.ApprenticeshipGuide.co.uk)

### Points to consider before taking an Apprenticeship

- What happens when the apprenticeship ends? Will there be a job for you and/or will you be able to progress to the next level of apprenticeship?
- How much can you expect to earn? Some employers do pay their apprentices more money than the statutory £2.60 per hour they are required to pay to young people aged 16-18. Apprentices who are 19+ and who have worked for their employer for more than one year are eligible for the national minimum wage
- Wages can be low – need to consider costs of accommodation, it's likely you'll need to continue living at home initially.
- Need to consider costs & logistics of travel to and from work, you may not be able to afford to run a car

- You need to be sure this is the right career path for you – on an apprenticeship, you focus on one subject only, it's not a broad-based education, it's vocational and targeted to a specific occupation
- There's still coursework to complete although much less than that of a university student but there's more pressure to pass – failure to pass could mean you risk losing your job

### **Advantages of becoming an Apprentice**

- The experience of work is invaluable
- An apprentice gains a qualification + experience + a wage – earning while you're learning
- Levels of motivation are much higher and more focused
- More 'hands-on' approach to learning

## **5. Employment with Training**

Some organisations offer employment opportunities that are not classed as Apprenticeships but are still high quality jobs with good training leading to qualifications. Such opportunities can be very varied and employers could range from major retail chains to national construction companies.

**Why is training important?** Being trained in a job ensures that you can do the job properly. A good structured training scheme will explain exactly what your role is, how you fit into the organisation and teach you what you need to know to fulfil your duties to a high standard. Good training should also lead to the opportunity to gain further qualifications which prove what you can do. You will be able to highlight these qualifications on every CV and application form you write should the time come for you to move on and you will feel more confident in your own abilities as you can see yourself improve your knowledge and skills.

### **What is the difference between employment with training and Apprenticeships?**

Broadly, there is not much difference as both routes lead to recognised qualifications and are paid jobs. Some organisations run their own training schemes and you therefore apply directly to them (many larger companies and public sector bodies have their own careers sections on their websites). Others advertise their vacancies as Apprenticeships and you can apply for them via Apprenticeships Vacancies Online, the national website. These employers often organise their training through a separate learning provider which monitors and assesses the employer's trainees.

**How do I know if my employer offers training?** Usually an employer will state in a job advert whether a position comes with training. If not it may be contained in the job description when you request the details. Training is something you should always ask about should you be called for interview - what type of training will you receive? What qualifications will you be able to work towards? A good employer will be concerned about the training needs of their staff and want to do the best for them. This not only shows an employer who cares about the future of their employees but also that they

understand how good training makes good business sense. A skilled and qualified workforce is normally one that produces better results and so leads to a more successful business.

**What can I do if the job I want doesn't come with training?** Talk to your employer, there's no harm in discussing your training needs and your ambition to gain more qualifications. If this is not possible you could always discuss your training needs with your local Jobcentre Plus. They can tell you about various programmes which can offer financial incentives to employers for training their employees and perhaps talk to your employer. The main such programme is called Train to Gain.

### **Resources to support your search**

- [DirectGov](#): Work and Careers advice for young people

### **Looking for Jobs across the UK**

- [SchoolLeaverJobs.co.uk](#) find school leaver jobs and apprenticeships in the UK. Big name companies such as British Gas, Boots, Garmin and BT are among the many listing opportunities for school leavers with A Levels

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## **6. Distance Learning**

**The Open University:** [www.openuniversity.co.uk/18-24](http://www.openuniversity.co.uk/18-24)

At The Open University students learn in their own space and time. It may be called

'distance learning' but The OU says it won't feel like it. Students get one-to-one support and a lively online community to dip in and out of. Learning with the OU is interactive and flexible – they deliver everything you need to you by download, podcast, email, DVD and books. Studying with the OU allows students to fit study around life so they can stay at home, move out or work full or part time. It's possible for students to earn up to £16,845 a year and study for free, no matter what their parents earn. Over the past 40 years, over two million students have studied with the OU and they currently have a community of 210,000 students – 32,000 of these are under 25. The OU is ranked as the top UK university for overall student satisfaction according to the National Student Survey 2009. A - Z of undergraduate qualifications: <http://www3.open.ac.uk/study/atoz/summary-qualifications.htm>

OpenLearn gives you free access to learning materials from The Open University and is a great place to get an idea of what to expect from university study. You'll find materials from our courses on a range of subjects. Try as many as you like for free: [www.open.edu/openlearn/about-openlearn/try](http://www.open.edu/openlearn/about-openlearn/try)

**RDI (Resource Development International):** [www.rdi.co.uk](http://www.rdi.co.uk)

RDI partners with eight UK universities, to deliver its programmes via distance learning. Its subject list is long and includes courses in management, business, HR management, law, public sector, psychology, IT & telecoms, finance & accounting, sales & marketing, service excellence, tourism & hospitality and supply chain management.

**Distance Learning College and Training:** [www.dlcandtraining.co.uk](http://www.dlcandtraining.co.uk)

This is the UK's top specialist provider of accredited distance learning courses in logistics, supply chain management, purchasing, and export & management. Globally recognised professional institutes accredit all its courses. Over the last five years the Distance Learning College has enjoyed a 97 per cent pass rate on all courses.\*

**Modern Montessori International (MMI):** [www.modernmontessori-intl.com](http://www.modernmontessori-intl.com)

Want to teach children aged from two-and-a-half to six? MMI offers suitable diploma and bachelor degree teacher training courses. Although online, MMI also has 70 centres in the UK, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, India, Sri Lanka, Australia and New Zealand, so it's certainly well established and respected.

**UK Open College:** [www.ukopencollege.co.uk](http://www.ukopencollege.co.uk)

One of the largest distance learning establishments, the UK Open College offers relatively affordable home learning on 250+ courses. Study one of 15 A-Levels, get creative with a writing or beauty therapy course, try bookkeeping or business, or move into HR or childcare – see the website for a full course list.

**Learndirect:** [www.learndirect.co.uk](http://www.learndirect.co.uk)

Learndirect has helped over 3 million gain new skills and nationally recognised qualifications in maths, English and IT, as well as business and job-specific skills, life skills and job seeking and employability. Learndirect also runs eCourses, most of which don't lead to qualifications, but allow you to brush up on your skills in areas such as Microsoft Office, web design & development and customer service.



**BSY Group:** [www.bsygroup.co.uk](http://www.bsygroup.co.uk)

Established in 1946, this is one of the largest colleges in Europe specialising in alternative health and complementary therapies, such as yoga, massage, fitness and counselling. You can sign up for a certificate or diploma course. BSY conducted a recent survey in which 99 per cent of students rated its courses good to excellent, and would recommend them to a friend.

**Oxford College:** [www.oxfordcollege.ac](http://www.oxfordcollege.ac)

Oxford College promotes home learning in the UK and worldwide. Its online programmes include A-Levels, Fast track A-Levels, Level 3 Diplomas, Level 1 courses (as an introduction to a subject area), Level 2 courses (equivalent to GCSE level) and BTEC HND courses, which can be topped up with a third year at university to gain an honours degree. Subjects covered are vast – from Accounting to Zoology!

**University of London:** [www.londoninternational.ac.uk](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk)

Get an internationally recognised diploma, bachelors degree or masters degree here. With China emerging as a leader in the global supply chain, its International Management (China) MSC and Postgraduate Diploma has become more attractive, and its short courses (35 hours to 240 hours) in conjunction with The Royal Veterinary College are popular.

**The University of Derby:** [www.derby.ac.uk](http://www.derby.ac.uk)

This establishment offers around 20 online courses, including foundation, honours or postgraduate degrees, in a wide range of subjects. It's known for its online Master of Business Administration (MBA) degrees. You'll get support from a tutor and be able to discuss your subject online with your distance-learning peers.