

FUTURE STEPS

SUN

DISCOVER
YOUR
FUTURE



FUTURE STEPS

It's never too late

Since March this year, a lot of things have changed for everyone. These changes may have affected your plans for September or made you think more about what to do next.

You might think you've missed your chance to apply for university or your apprenticeship may have been cancelled. Whatever your situation is, it's never too late to change your mind or try something new!

There is a lot of change at the moment, so it is advisable that you research your options carefully – this booklet will help you start thinking about what you need to do in order to choose your next steps and apply.

You can also access our online chat by following this link:

bit.ly/SUNFutureSteps



CONTENTS

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'VE BEEN ACCEPTED AT UNIVERSITY	4
YOU'VE GOT YOUR RESULTS AND NOW YOU'D LIKE TO GO TO UNIVERSITY!.....	5
I DIDN'T GET THE GRADES, CAN I STILL GO TO UNIVERSITY?.....	6
CHOOSING A COURSE	7
CHOOSING A UNIVERSITY	8
CHOOSING ACCOMMODATION	9
WHAT IS CLEARING?.....	10
I'VE GOT A PLACE AT UNI, BUT I'M NOT SURE I WANT TO GO NOW.	11
MY APPRENTICESHIP HAS BEEN CANCELLED — NOW WHAT?	12
I'M STILL NOT SURE WHAT I WANT TO DO	13
JARGON BUSTER.....	14

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'VE BEEN ACCEPTED AT UNIVERSITY

This is a really exciting time for you. You've got your grades and you've been accepted onto the course you wanted. You might be thinking, what do I have to do now? Below are some points to help you get started:

- ✓ Check your confirmation letter from the university or provider, is there anything you need to do?
- ✓ Processes might be virtual, contact your university if you're unsure about how things will work in September
- ✓ Is everything on track with your [Student Finance](#)?
- ✓ Open a [student bank account](#)
- ✓ Confirm your accommodation – some universities have a way of connecting you with other students who will be living in the same halls as you, do some research to see if you can make connections before you arrive
- ✓ Follow the university's social media pages to get key updates about your arrival
- ✓ If you are leaving home, start making a list of things to pack and buy to help you move in to your accommodation
- ✓ If you're moving away from home, look into [student content insurance policies](#)
- ✓ Think about getting a [UCAS card](#) and a [travel card](#)
- ✓ If you aren't already, start getting clued up on bills and budgeting – there are lots of secure apps to help with this

YOU CAN FIND OUT MORE ABOUT WHAT TO DO NEXT ON THE [UCAS WEBSITE](#).
WE ALSO HAVE A REALLY HANDY [FAQ PAGE](#) FOR MORE INFO!

YOU'VE GOT YOUR RESULTS AND NOW YOU'D LIKE TO GO TO UNIVERSITY!

Firstly, congratulations! Your hard work has paid off and you got your grades. If you are now wishing you had applied to university, then good news, it isn't too late. You can apply through Clearing up to five days after you've received your grades. You can find out more about Clearing on page 10.

Although you don't have long to apply to university, before you access Clearing, it would be useful to do some research into which universities you would like to call, if you haven't already.

The following pages cover key things to research and think about when applying to university. You can contact your careers department at your school/college and they can put you in touch with a Careers Adviser to get support on where to go, but ultimately the choice is yours. You can also speak to current university students about how they prepared for university via [Future Steps](#).

Once you've confirmed your place at a university through Clearing, it is then time to apply to student finance and accommodation.

If this all seems a bit rushed for you, why not do your research and apply to go to university next academic year? You can still get the same experience, but you will also have a gap year to earn extra money, gain experience, and take time to think about what you want to do. See page 8 for information on gap years.

I DIDN'T GET THE GRADES, CAN I STILL GO TO UNIVERSITY?

Your results are in and they're not what you were hoping for to be accepted on your firm or insurance choices – don't worry!

This is a surprisingly common situation to be in, lots of students don't achieve what they had planned and they have still gone on to university through the Clearing process. If your results aren't too far off what you had hoped, it's always worth contacting your firm or insurance choices to see if they are able to still accept you. You can do this by calling the university's admissions teams and can discuss your options with your firm or insurance university.

If you are not able to get your firm or insurance choices there are still options.

Clearing is a great opportunity to get onto another course at your firm or insurance universities, or maybe onto the course you really want but at a different university. Depending on what your priorities are, there will be lots of options to consider.

If you decide to go through the Clearing process there will be plenty of advice available from your school/college, or on the live chat on [Future Steps](#), to guide you through. There are usually thousands of places available, so you should be able to find a course and a university that suits you.

At the time of publication of this guide, the Government announced a 'triple lock' process that will give you added security as you receive your A level grades this year. You could accept your calculated grade, appeal to receive a valid mock result, or sit autumn exams to ensure your achievements are recognised. Please be aware re-sitting or appealing could cause a delay in going to University for this academic year.

*To follow the progress of this new process, follow OFQUAL for updates:
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual*

**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CLEARING ON PAGE 10, ONCE YOU'VE GOT INTO
YOUR UNIVERSITY WE HAVE A HANDY TO DO LIST ON PAGE 4.**

CHOOSING A COURSE

There are a few factors you might want to consider when deciding which course is right for you:

WHAT INTERESTS YOU?

If you are going to study a subject in detail, it should be something you are passionate about. Choose a subject you enjoy to help you reach your goals.



WHAT TYPE OF COURSE DO YOU WANT TO STUDY?

You may have heard of a Bachelors degree (BA/BSc/BEng), as this is the most common type of undergraduate higher education qualification. However, there are several types of university courses available, so take some time to research and explore the different options. Some courses are also available for part-time study.



DO YOU HAVE A SPECIFIC CAREER IN MIND?

If so, you might want to consider if your ideal career requires a particular degree subject. Websites such as prospect.ac.uk can help you with this.



TOP TIP

DON'T FORGET TO LOOK AT THE UNITS/MODULES YOU WILL STUDY ON EACH OF THE COURSES YOU ARE INTERESTED IN, AS DIFFERENT UNIVERSITIES WILL OFFER THE SAME COURSE TITLE WITH VARYING UNITS/MODULES. CHOOSE SOMETHING THAT FITS WITH YOUR INTERESTS AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS.

CHOOSING A UNIVERSITY

Your chosen subject will probably be offered at several different universities, as well as some colleges and other specialist institutions. How do you choose? You'll need to ask yourself about where you'd feel most comfortable studying:

DO YOU WANT TO BE CLOSE TO HOME?

Maybe you want to stay local, or perhaps you are excited to explore a new town or city. Either way, think about how often you'll want to travel home and travel costs. Remember, you don't always have to move away from home to go to university.



WHAT ELSE DO YOU WANT FROM YOUR UNIVERSITY?

Do you want to take part in a particular sport or society? Or perhaps you want to know if there are facilities related to your course e.g. photography studios or science labs.



CAMPUS OR CITY CENTRE?

Some universities are located in the middle of cities, some in more suburban areas, and others on leafy, out-of-town campuses, with students living and studying on the same site. There are advantages for both, but consider what appeals to you the most.



TOP TIP

TRADITIONAL OPEN DAYS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED. HOWEVER, LOTS OF UNIVERSITIES ARE HOSTING **VIRTUAL OPEN DAYS** WHICH YOU CAN ACCESS ONLINE. THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE MORE CAMPUSES THEN YOU USUALLY COULD!

CHOOSING ACCOMMODATION

UNIVERSITY HALLS OF RESIDENCE

This is a popular option for first-year students and a great way to meet lots of people. Halls are usually very convenient as they are often on or near campus and students are usually expected to pay one monthly payment, including bills.

But if you miss out on a place at university halls, don't panic!

PRIVATE HALLS OF RESIDENCE

Similar to halls run by universities, but owned and run by private companies.

PRIVATE RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

A good option if you have applied late in the year and halls are no longer available. Private accommodation is also great if you like your independence.

LIVING AT HOME

If you are studying locally this could be a very convenient and affordable option.

"I wanted to go into halls, but there were no places left. My university set up a Facebook group and I met five other girls in the same position. We got on really well, so decided to get a house."

NURA



WHY NOT LOG ONTO FUTURE STEPS AND ASK CURRENT STUDENTS ABOUT THEIR ACCOMMODATION?

TOP TIP

YOUR UNIVERSITY MAY HAVE A LIST OF APPROVED LANDLORDS LETTING AGENTS, OR MAY HAVE A PARTNERSHIP WITH PRIVATE ALLS. THEY CAN HELP WITH FINDING ACCOMMODATION, EVEN IF YOU'RE APPLYING LATE IN THE YEAR, SO GET IN TOUCH WITH THEM.

WHAT IS CLEARING?

Each year there are around 30,000 undergraduate courses at universities with places which, when August comes around, haven't been filled.

Clearing is used by universities and colleges to fill places which they still have available on their courses. If you haven't met the entry requirements for your original choices, didn't receive an offer you are happy with, or if you haven't yet applied, you can use Clearing to find a place on a course at university this September!

Whilst it might seem a little bit daunting, gaining a place at university through Clearing is becoming increasingly popular and normal. In 2018 over 60,000 students gained a place at university through making a late application. Why not look at our [Future Steps](#) FAQs to find out more.

Universities have a lot of support in place for students making a late application. Many will run virtual open days, [chat sessions with current students](#), and one-to-one calls with academics as part of the process.

If you haven't already got set up on UCAS, you will need to register to make an application through clearing. UCAS will be able to support you if you are thinking about going to university through clearing. You can see what support is available through the UCAS [website](#).

This year UCAS has also launched a course matching tool called [Clearing Plus](#). Why not give this a go to help with your research or just for fun.



I'VE GOT A PLACE AT UNI, BUT I'M NOT SURE I WANT TO GO NOW...

It's important to understand why you are reconsidering going to university, this is a major life milestone and it's ok to be nervous.

Try to identify the reason(s) you are experiencing doubt; are you nervous about starting something new and unknown? If so, could you speak to friends to see if they are feeling the same way? Can you support each other to feel less worried? – “a problem shared is a problem halved”. Are there practical actions you can take to overcome your doubts? Do you feel you need more information about your course, the way you will be taught, or settling into campus?

Universities have a number of schemes in place to support new students preparing for university. This may include putting you in touch with other new students or clubs and societies. You can also get some live [advice from student ambassadors on Future Steps](#). If you are worried about finances then you can find out what [support is available](#).

If your doubts are around your choice of course or university, then you may be able to speak to your Careers Adviser, alternatively, you can speak to a Careers Adviser via [Future Steps](#). You may be able to defer your place and take a gap year, for more information about taking a gap year visit [UCAS](#).

If you feel that going to university is not for you, you could consider taking a higher or degree apprenticeship. Visit [Amazing Apprenticeships](#) to find out about what is available you could do. The [Not Going To Uni](#) website has lots of information about alternatives pathways after school/college.

MY APPRENTICESHIP HAS BEEN CANCELLED — NOW WHAT?

Stay positive! There is government support and funding for employers taking on apprentices and there may be another employer with an apprenticeship vacancy that suits you.

Websites such as [Find an Apprenticeship](#), [Indeed](#), [Total Jobs](#) or [Not Going To Uni](#) advertise apprenticeships locally and nationally. [Solent Apprenticeship Hub](#) can provide one-to-one support to people living in their catchment area.

Research and contact other local employers in the same industry and ask if they are taking on apprentices. They may not know about [incentives](#) for taking on apprentices. You could offer to do some work experience with them to demonstrate your commitment and enthusiasm for the job.

You could (re)consider applying to university or perhaps start a Foundation Year. A [Foundation Year](#) gives you the chance to study and gain an understanding of your field of interest before committing to a full degree programme. If you successfully complete the Foundation Year, you can go straight into the first year of a degree. Or you can be looking for an apprenticeship whilst gaining skills and experience.

Due to the pandemic, many employers are postponing taking on apprentices, as the situation develops this is likely to change and employers will need to increase their workforce. If you're unable to secure an apprenticeship in your chosen field at the moment, it is worth considering gaining employment, which will allow you to gain experience and skills and earn a wage, until a time that an apprenticeship becomes available.

I'M STILL NOT SURE WHAT I WANT TO DO...

If you are still struggling to know what to do next, here are a few things to think about that might help:

Tackle your future in small chunks. You don't have to decide what you want to do for the rest of your life, just the next step.

Contact your school or college and ask if they can arrange for you to speak to a Careers Adviser, they can provide an impartial listening ear and help you think about what options are best for you.

Alternatively, you can contact the National Careers Service, they can provide advice via phone (0800 100 900) or [webchat](#). Or take their [skills and career assessment](#), at the end you'll get a summary of job groups that might interest you based on your answers. It also gives you details about different careers and how to get into them.

It might help to talk to family and friends about their education and career paths. If you have an interest in a profession or job area, you could contact someone doing the job to ask about their career journey.

You could consider looking for **voluntary work**, **work experience** or an **internship** as a way to experience a career area you are interested in. **Do It** allows you to search for volunteering vacancies in your area. For work experience and internships you will need to contact individual companies, explaining to them why you want to gain experience with them. **Remember** work experience and some internships are usually unpaid.

JARGON BUSTER

UCAS

Stands for the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. This is the organisation that handles nearly all higher education applications to university, colleges and other providers general advice and guidance.

UCAS TRACK

UCAS Track is on the UCAS website and it allows you to keep up-to-date with your applications. Here, you can check to see if you've been made any offers and respond to them.

UCAS EXTRA

If you included five choices on your application, have received decisions from all five, and weren't accepted, or if you declined the offers you received, you will be able to use UCAS Extra. Extra runs from March until June and students can make one application at a time.

CLEARING

If you didn't get the grades you needed, didn't receive offers, declined your offers or have not previously applied via UCAS, Clearing allows you to apply for courses at universities that still have places available. (See page 10 for more information)

ADJUSTMENT

Is when you can 'trade up' from your current UCAS choices. This can happen when you've achieved better grades at school/college than predicted, and means you could apply for a university with higher entry requirements.

FOUNDATION YEAR

Is sometimes called Year Zero or a gateway year. It is a year-long course which allows you to learn a subject you don't already have the qualifications for. This is different to a foundation degree.

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE

Is a three or four year course you can complete after finishing school or college, which specialises in one or two subjects.

BSc OR BA

There are different degree titles but many subjects fall under BSc (Bachelor of Science), BA (Bachelor of Arts) or BEng (Bachelor of Engineering). Other common titles are BM (Bachelor of Medicine) and LLB (Bachelor of Laws). Some subjects, such as psychology or geography, are available as BA and BSc courses. The BSc is likely to have more scientific or technical content while the BA will focus more on human or social aspects of the subject.

POSTGRADUATE DEGREE

Postgraduate study refers to the range of courses available to students who have generally completed undergraduate studies.

MASTERS DEGREE

Typical qualification titles include MA (Master of Arts), MSc (Master of Sciences) and MRes (Master of Research). These are most often studied after an undergraduate degree. These are also called post-graduate degrees.

PhD

A Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is the highest level of degree you can achieve after a post graduate degree. You independently conduct original and significant research within a specific subject.



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