



# SHAPING YOUR FUTURE:

**INFORMATION, RESOURCES & TOP TIPS FOR PLANNING YOUR CAREER  
AND NEXT STEPS AFTER YEAR 13**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## SECTION ONE: Discovering more about yourself and Careers

**‘Know Thyself’**

**Strengths and skills**

**Personality and Careers Quizzes**

**Career Websites**

## SECTION TWO: The National Qualifications Framework

**Understanding Qualification Levels 1-8**

## SECTION THREE: Higher Education

**University, Further Education College & the Open University**

## SECTION FOUR: Apprenticeships

**Intermediate, Advanced, Higher and Degree levels**

## SECTION FIVE: Finding a job

## SECTION SIX: Taking a Gap Year

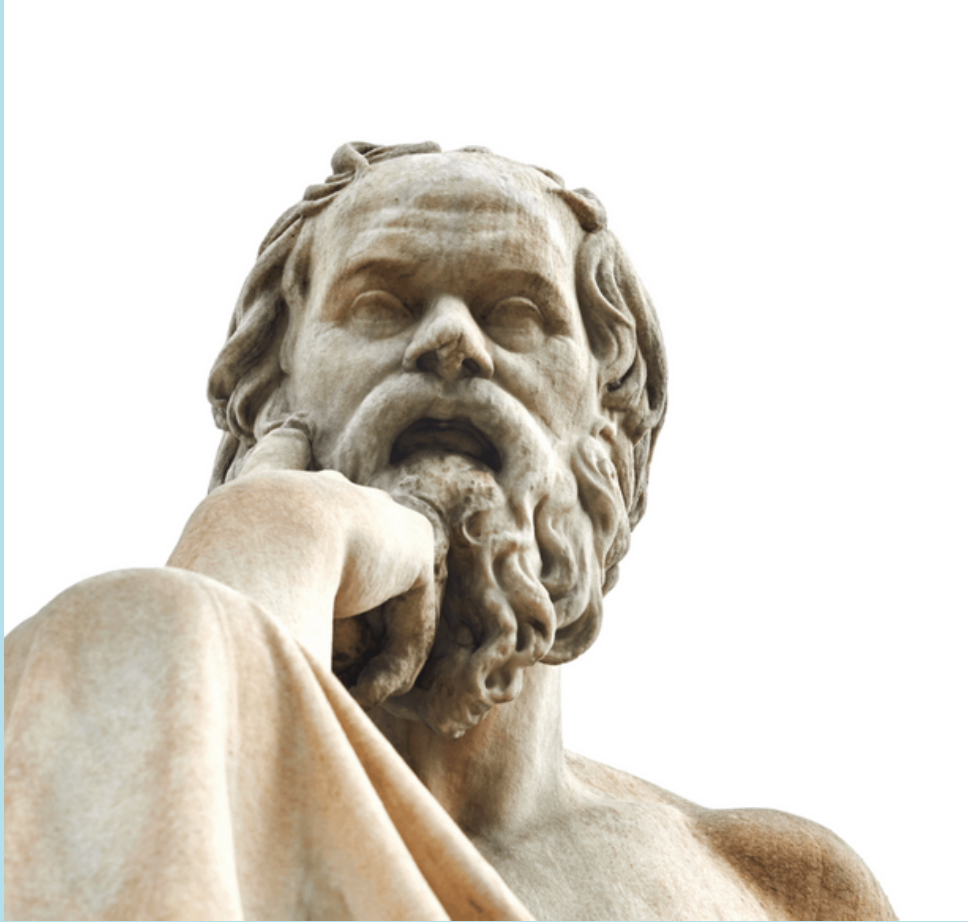
## SECTION SEVEN: VOLUNTEERING, WORK EXPERIENCE, AND APPLICATIONS - **How to make yours shine!**

## SECTION EIGHT: Understanding Grades

**GCSEs, A-Levels, Applied Levels, Vocational (e.g. BTEC), Degree**

## SECTION NINE: Recommended reads + some inspiration

# SECTION ONE



*"Know thyself"*

Socrates

Knowing yourself...

Your:

- **strengths**
- **skills**
- **weaknesses**
- **values**
- **preferences**

As well as...

→ **what you enjoy**

→ **what brings you the most fulfilment...**

Are all key in helping you:-

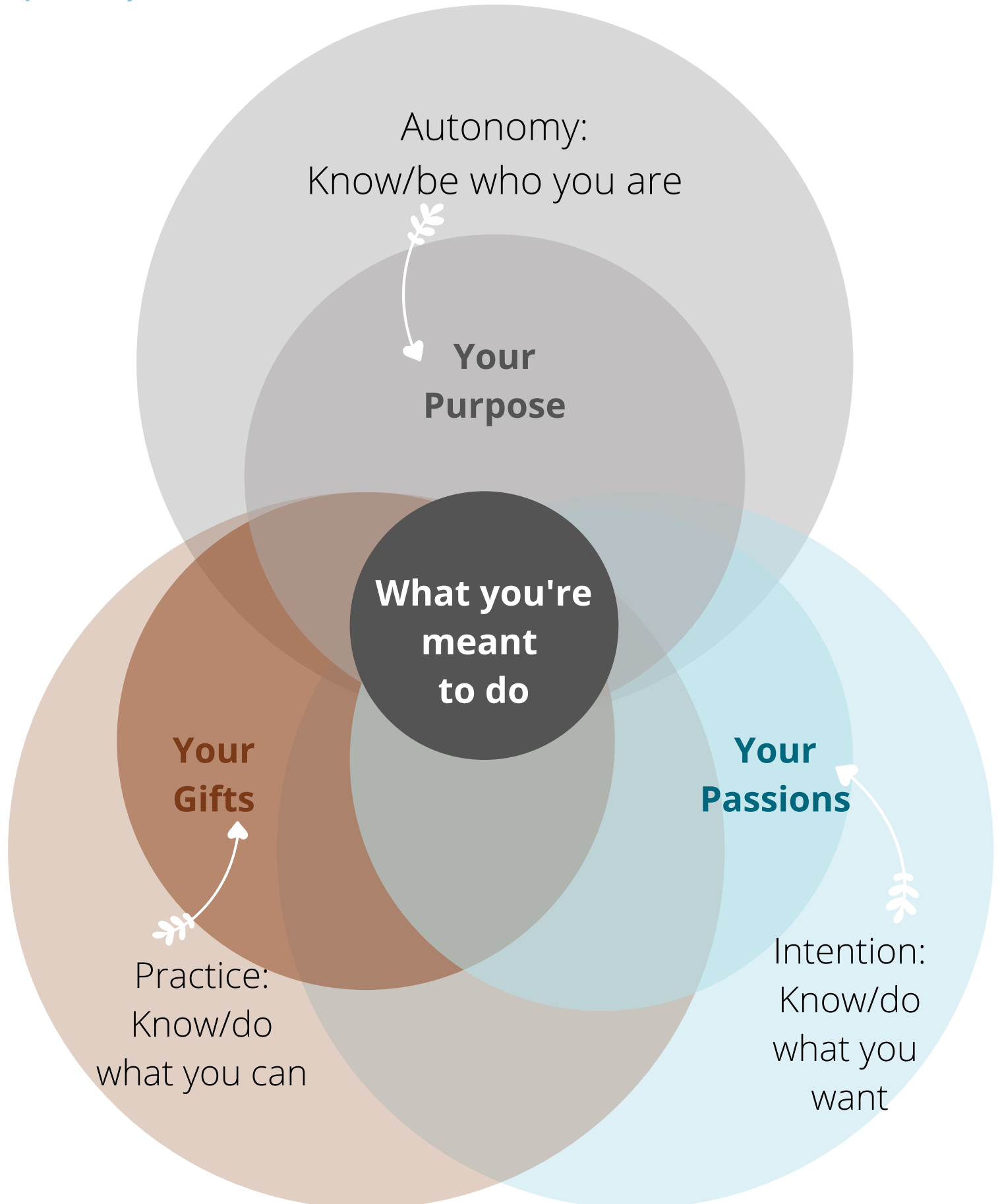
- **consider careers which may suit you well, and...**
- **discover routes into those careers, which suit you best**

# *Learn more about yourself....*

Your unique combination of strengths (gifts), skills, and passion/s can help you discover your purpose.

You can learn more about who you are, and potential purpose (including career inspiration):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXAk-LaNmW8>





Buy a book or create a file – call it ‘Career Ideas’, ‘My Career Dreams’, or something similar.



Begin to brainstorm - list what makes you, you – your strengths, skills and \*competences (\*often referred to in the world of work):

A strength is...an activity that makes you feel strong, excites you, energizes you. It's more than just something you're good at

A Skill is...something you can learn (and master) through repetition.

A Competence: refers to skills and knowledge while being more than just the skill or knowledge itself. It includes ability and behaviour.

<https://www.cv-template.com/en/course/strengths-skills-competences-cv>

*Taking the time to do this will definitely pay off*



Hard skills are those which can be measured (e.g. via exams). Soft and transferable skills are also highly sought after by employers and universities. Our skills, strengths and levels of competence help us to increase our employability.

Consider and research the skills listed below:

**Adaptability**

**Analytical Skills**

**Commercial awareness**

**Communication**

**Decision making**

**Flexibility**

**Initiative**

**Innovation**

**I.T. Skills**

**Interpersonal skills**

**Leadership**

**Learning**

**Negotiation**

**Networking**

**Numeracy Skills**

**Planning and Organisation**

**Problem solving**

**Research**

**Resilience**

**Teamwork**

**Time management, working under pressure and to deadlines....**

There are more examples of hard/soft/transferable skills, can you find them online/via Job Profiles...?



**A word about weaknesses:** It is good to be self-aware. While we do not need to focus on our weaknesses all the time, it is important to be aware of areas you need to work on – is it time management? Or Teamwork? How can you improve on your weaknesses? Employers will be keen to know how you are working on your weaknesses too. Always seek to frame weaknesses in a positive way and let Employers know you are working on them, indicating how. Avoid saying that you are always late, etc. There is some great advice online about how to present your weaknesses.

**A common interview question** – Tell us about your strengths and weaknesses! Start preparing now, it will definitely help you.

**TASK:** Write down the skills/strengths you already have, and give examples. Also write those you would like to work toward or improve upon...

A few examples:

**Subjects you are/were good at in school**

- ★ Where you achieve your best grades
- ★ When you have achieved a clear outcome – won a prize or commendation for a piece of work / artwork / written work, etc.
- ★ An ability to communicate in another language

**A skill you have acquired in your spare time – at a school club, a local club/organisation or at home**

- ★ learning to play a musical instrument
- ★ achieving a badge as part of a Uniformed organisation, e.g. Scouts, Girls'/Boys' Brigade, Guides, Air Cadets, Sea Cadets, Army Cadets, Volunteer Police Cadets, etc.
- ★ Others tell you they love a particular dish you make, you're great at something particular
- ★ You are able to fix and mend things – bikes, computers, clothes
- ★ Success within a sport – within a team, competitively, or achieving a certain level – e.g. different belts within Judo, School or Local Team, etc.

**Can you think of any more strengths and skills? Why not ask your teachers, at home and your friends too?**

**Write them down.**



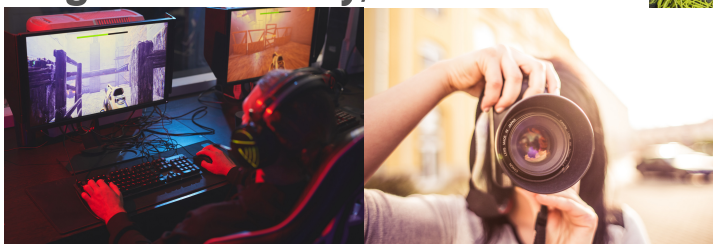
*Developing your strengths and skills and increasing your employability: where, when & how?*

## Studying

at school, college and university, or online



## Hobbies



Art/Photography, Cooking, Dance, Make-up/Fashion, Music, Reading, Sport/Fitness, Drama, Gaming, DoF

## Work Experience

Paid and unpaid



## Volunteering

In the community

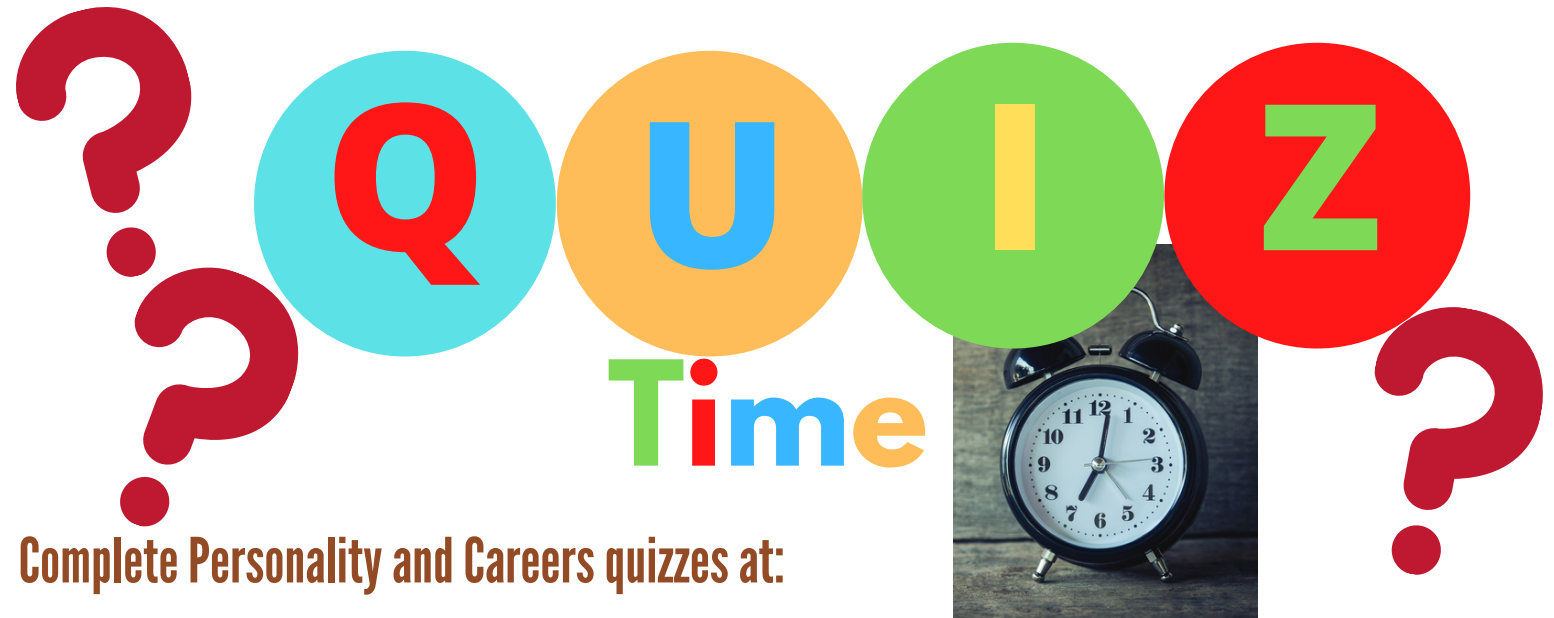


## Membership of a group/team

e.g. Guides, Boys'/Girls' Brigade, Armed Forces Cadets, Sports Club, Police Cadets, Amateur Dramatics, Teams, Sports Teams, Orchestra, band, etc.





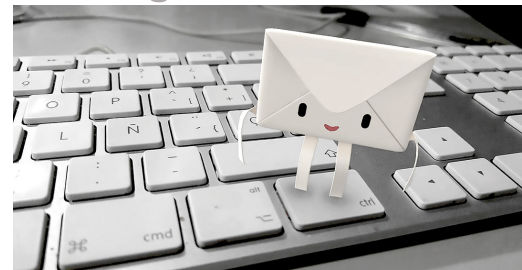


**Complete Personality and Careers quizzes at:**

[www.unifrog.org](http://www.unifrog.org) (utilise this fantastic careers platform - complete the 'Profiles' on your personal Unifrog homepage)

- <https://www.16personalities.com/> (Learn about yourself and what makes you, you)
- [www.icould.com](http://www.icould.com) (Buzz Quiz – short Personality and career matching test)
- [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) (You will need to register online)
- [www.sacu-student.com](http://www.sacu-student.com) (You will need to register online)

**Research careers, find job profiles and related information at:**



- <https://www.unifrog.org/> - a fantastic careers platform with many functions used by MET
- [www.careerpilot.org.uk](http://www.careerpilot.org.uk) - excellent all-round website including information, skills matching and videos
- <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/> - skills assessment, career information + web chat/careers advice via phone
- <https://www.allaboutcareers.com/>
- [www.icould.com](http://www.icould.com) - includes videos of people talking about their Job roles
- <http://www.careerninja.co.uk> – for the free careers personality test and career related information
- [www.healthcareers.nhs.uk](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk) - for a wide range of detailed healthcare careers information
- [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) – good source of careers information and what you can do with your degree
- [www.planitplus.net](http://www.planitplus.net) - see careers areas and the careers match quiz
- <http://www.tomorrowsengineers.org.uk/> - engineering information
- [https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/explore\\_lmi/](https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/explore_lmi/) - important 'Labour Market Information' – including salary, estimated growth relating to different jobs/sectors, etc.



# SECTION TWO

The UK National Qualification Framework					
	ACADEMIC	VOCATIONAL			APPRENTICESHIP
Level 8	Doctorate (PhD, DPhil)	Award, Certificate, Diploma			
Level 7	<u>Masters</u> Degree (MSc, MA, Meng)	Award, Certificate, Diploma, NVQ PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate in Education – Teaching)			<u>Masters</u> Degree Apprenticeship
Level 6	<u>Bachelors</u> Degree (BSc, BA, BEng)	Graduate Certificate and Diploma, NVQ			Degree Apprenticeship
Level 5		Foundation Degree (FdA, FdSc)	Higher National Diploma (BTEC HND), NVQ		Higher Apprenticeship
Level 4			Higher National Certificate (BTEC HNC), NVQ		
Level 3	A-Levels	BTEC Extended Diploma (= 3 A-Levels) OR T-Level	BTEC Diploma (= 2 A=Levels)	BTEC Extended Certificate (= 1 A-Level)	Advanced Apprenticeship
Level 2	GCSE Grades 4-9	BTEC <u>Level 2</u> , NVQ (National <u>Vocational Qualification</u> )			Intermediate Apprenticeship or Traineeship
Level 1	GCSE Grades 1-3	Level 1 Award, Certificate, Diploma + Level 1 in ESOL, Essential Skills, Functional Skills, NVQ, and Music (grades 1-3)			Traineeship
Entry Level		Entry Level Award, Certificate (ELC), Diploma + Entry Level in ESOL, (English for Speakers of Other Languages), Essential Skills Functional Skills, and Skills for Life			Traineeship

# SECTION THREE

## Higher Education (University + some Further Education (F.E.) Colleges (levels 4-8):



**Thinking about university? Useful websites: Use your UNIFROG account to explore all things university +**

**[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) – The UK University application and information website**

**[www.sacu-student.com](http://www.sacu-student.com) – Personal Statement help and advice. Great student section**

**[www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) – Graduate career prospects + lots of helpful information**

**<http://russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college> - help with A' level choice (also learn about the 'Russell Group' universities)**

**[www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk) – contains very helpful information**

**[www.thestudentroom.co.uk](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk) - Forums on choosing universities / degrees / student life and much more!**

**<https://www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2019/jun/07/university-league-tables-2021> - ranks universities and university courses (link changes at the start of each academic year)**

**<https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/> - advise the A-Level subjects which might be required for certain degree courses, especially at Russell Group universities**

**\*Some Further Education Colleges also offer degrees and HNC (Higher National Certificates) ,HND (Higher National Diploma) + Foundation Degree courses . Tuition fees may be more competitive.**

**The Open University - <http://www.open.ac.uk/> - Offer flexible ways to study**

**\*\*Top Tip: youtube / the internet - have great advice on applications and interviews \*\***



# SECTION FOUR

## Apprenticeships

This option enables you to gain work experience and earn a salary and gain a qualification. As with all options, if you would like to apply for an apprenticeship to begin after Year 13, it is a good idea to apply for a variety of back-up options (e.g. various levels of apprenticeship, jobs, and/or university) as entry to Apprenticeships can be competitive.

When applying - research the apprenticeship, the company and the qualification you will gain. Consider if/how the apprenticeship will enable you to go further in your education and training.

Each employer will share what they are looking for in an Apprentice. The subjects you took, and grades you achieved at Level 2 (GCSE) and Level 3 (A-Level or Level 3 BTEC) may be important, or the employer may be more focused on your skills, strengths and qualities. Requirements vary widely, so do research every Apprenticeship. Below is a rough guide for entry requirements:

**Here are the different levels of Apprenticeship:-**

- Intermediate Apprenticeship – A small number/range of GCSE grades may be required
- Advanced Apprenticeship – 4+ GCSE's often at 4-9 grades required for entry
- Higher Apprenticeship – 2+ 'A' levels or equivalent may be required for entry
- Degree Apprenticeship - 2+ 'A' levels or equivalent may be required for entry

**\*Each employer will indicate the skills, qualities, strengths and qualifications they are looking for\* - they will make decisions based on applications, assessments and interviews at various stages of the application process.\***



## Helpful Apprenticeship websites:

There is not currently one, go to website for Apprenticeships, so include a wide range of websites and resources in your searches. Start searching and applying for a number of opportunities during September of Year 13, onwards. Search regularly (e.g. weekly, every 2 weeks) and apply as soon as you can to ensure you do not miss great opportunities!...

[www.unifrog.org](http://www.unifrog.org) - explore opportunities and fantastic tools to help you find and secure an apprenticeship opportunity!

[www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk) - the government website – probably includes widest number of apprenticeships available. Includes option for email alerts for new opportunities.

[www.notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk)

[www.thestudentladder.co.uk](http://www.thestudentladder.co.uk) - excellent apprenticeship website offering placements with large high profile companies as well as advice.

[www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk](http://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk)

[www.allaboutcareers.com](http://www.allaboutcareers.com)

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

[www.university.which.co.uk](http://www.university.which.co.uk) – Higher and Degree Apprenticeship Guide

[www.careermap.co.uk](http://www.careermap.co.uk)

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

[www.thescholarshiphub.org.uk](http://www.thescholarshiphub.org.uk) – Degree Apprenticeships

<http://www.aimapprenticeships.co.uk/>

Explore All Opportunities | Berkshire Opportunities

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/yaan/ambassadors/> - find out about YAAN – the Youth Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network and hear Ambassadors share their stories.

[www.young-professionals.uk](http://www.young-professionals.uk)

[www.indeed.co.uk](http://www.indeed.co.uk)

Search company websites - they carry a huge amount of information on recruitment and opportunities

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/resources/> - see the vacancy snapshot + much more!

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



# SECTION FIVE

## FINDING A...



## SEARCH, APPLY AND REPEAT:

By using a variety of media, it is important to search and apply regularly (e.g. on a weekly basis - just as with apprenticeships). It is important you do not rely only one or a few applications. You can search and apply for jobs using the following methods:

**ONLINE - e.g. via:**

**WWW.INDEED.CO.UK**

**WWW.MONSTER.CO.UK**

**WWW.REED.CO.UK**

**VIA COMPANY WEBSITES (SEE CAREER SECTIONS)**

**JOB FAIRS: <https://www.thejobfairs.co.uk/> + <https://targetjobs.co.uk/events>**

**SOCIAL MEDIA - LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram**

**NEWSPAPERS**

**MAGAZINES**

**RECRUITMENT AGENCIES - e.g. Reed, Office Angels, other small/specialist career agencies**

**ARMED FORCES RECRUITMENT WEBSITES AND CAREERS CENTRES**

**VIA CAREER / OTHER WEBSITES WITHIN THIS PACK**

**THROUGH WORD OF MOUTH**

**THROUGH FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

**THROUGH VOLUNTEERING AND WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES**

**APPROACH COMPANIES DIRECTLY AND DISCUSS OPPORTUNITIES - BY LETTER, EMAIL +/- PHONE**



# SECTION SIX

## TAKING A GAP YEAR...



A Gap Year is a fantastic way to combine adventure, work and life experience, as well as voluntary experience - all invaluable in helping you gain new skills, confidence and perspectives...

Find out more about some of the exciting and varied opportunities here:



### Gap year

Discover gap year, volunteering and work experience opportunities in th...

[prospects.ac.uk](https://prospects.ac.uk)



### Gap years - ideas and things to think about

There are lots of things you could do with a gap year, and it's not all about travel. Check out gap year ideas, tips, pros and cons.

# SECTION SEVEN

## Volunteering:

Another great way to gain work experience, gain a taste of certain careers/job sectors, develop your skills, AND it shows employers you are enthusiastic and have initiative.

Find out more here:

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/volunteering/have-you-thought-about-volunteering>

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/volunteering/what-can-i-do>

[www.do-it.org](http://www.do-it.org)

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



**Work experience/Internships:** A great way to find out about the world of work and possibilities. Sometimes paid, but more often a chance to learn more about certain job sectors, gain useful experience. Plus - employers view it very positively.

For more information, please explore:

<https://careerpilot.org.uk/information/a-job-or-career/work-experience-what-s-in-it-for-me>

You can contact Employers directly - for advice on how:

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/work-experience-and-internships/how-to-ask-employers-for-work-experience>

Virtual work experience:

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/a-job-or-career/finding-virtual-work-experience/what-to-expect-from-virtual-work-experience>

**You can also speak with your Teachers, and ask your family & friends if they might have any contacts you can approach**





# APPLICATIONS - make yours shine



**1) Show you have researched...**

the role

the company

the person specification (strengths, skills, qualifications & qualities required/preferred)

**2) Tailor your skills to those the employer is looking for:**

provide evidence (e.g. of strengths, plus skills/transferable skills gained through study, work /voluntary experience and through your hobbies and extra-curricular activities

**3) Show your interest, enthusiasm, and motivation towards the role and company - tailor your application, CV and Cover Letter to each role you apply for - this takes time, but pays off - hugely!**

**4) Practice and then write/type your application (if applying online use Word and cut and paste)**

**5) Check for mistakes before submission**

**6) The more applications you work on and submit, the easier they become**

**Following your application -**

**Prepare for interviews and assessments (e.g. online tests, group activities, etc.).**

**Research what form assessments and interviews will take & prepare accordingly.**

**The time you take and effort you give to complete your - job, work experience, volunteering, gap year, or apprenticeship applications will be evident to employers - it can help you gain the opportunity of your dreams!**

For University applications - see [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) and [www.sacu-student.com](http://www.sacu-student.com)

# SECTION EIGHT

## UNDERSTANDING GRADES: GCSEs

	New grading structure	Old grading structure
	9	A*
	8	
	7	A
	6	B
Strong pass →	5	
Standard pass →	4	C
	3	D
	2	E
	1	F
	U	G
		U

## BTEC Level 2 and GCSE grade equivalent

GCSE Grade	BTEC grade	Current points	New points
A*	Distinction*	58	8
A	Distinction	52	7
B	Merit	46	6
C	Pass	40	5
D		34	4
E		28	3
	L1 Pass	25	2.5
F		22	2
G		16	1
U		0	0



Academic Grades: 'A' Levels, BTEC Level 3 and UCAS Tariff PointsLink for further information and copy of table on following page: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/comparing-btec-to-other-qualifications/btec-ucas-points.html>

# UNDERSTANDING GRADES: Level 3 - A-Levels, BTEC, T-Levels

Extended Diploma	Diploma	Foundation Diploma	Extended Certificate	Certificate	AS level	A level	UCAS tariff points
D*D*D*							168
D*D*D							160
D*DD							152
DDD							144
DDM							128
DMM	D*D*						112
	D*D						104
MMM	DD						96
		D*					84
MMP	DM						80
							78
MPP	MM						64
			D*			A*	56
PPP	MP	M	D			A	48
						B	40
	PP		M			C	32
				D*			28
		P		D		D	24
					A		20
			P	M	B	E	16
					C		12
					D		10
				P			8
					E		6



# UK Degree Classifications

<div><div>British Undergraduate Degree Classification System</div><div></div><p>Navigate your way through the the British undergraduate degree classification system which grades degrees (bachelor's degrees and integrated master's degrees) in the UK.</p></div>			
Classification	Mark	OU Mark	Equivalent grade
First-class (1st)	70%+	85%+	A
Upper second-class (2.1)	60-69%	70-85%	B
Lower second-class (2.2)	50-59%	55-70%	C
Third class (3rd)	40-49%	40-55%	D

**\*OU = Open University**

# SECTION NINE

## Recommended reads:

How to Find Work You Love - Paul Allen

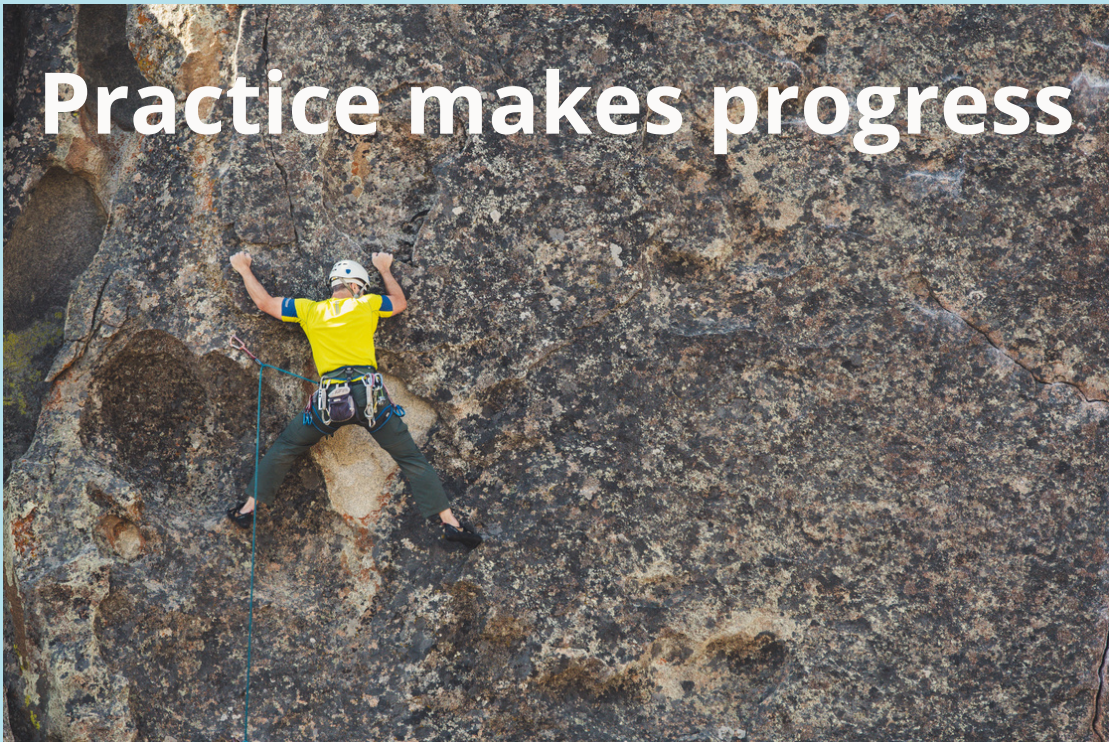
What Colour is Your Parachute? For Teens:  
Discover Yourself, Design Your Future and Plan  
for Your Dream Job (3rd Edition) -  
Richard N Bolles and Carol Christen

People, Planet, Passion: Simple Steps to discover a  
fulfilling non profit career that makes a difference  
and earns you a living - Devi Clark

What Employers Want: The employability skills  
handbook (2nd Edition) - Karen Holmes


Now What? The Young Persons Guide to  
Choosing the Perfect Career - Nicholas Lore with  
Anthony Spadafore

# Practice makes progress



**The best preparation for  
tomorrow is doing your best  
today.**

H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

 BrainyQuote



*Prepare, work hard, & run your race*

