This booklet has been produced by C&K Careers to provide information and advice to parents and carers about higher education.

Young people have a lot to think about - what to study, where, how much it costs and what to do afterwards and parents and carers can help them with the decisions they have to make.

- Higher education (HE) is study, usually lasting three or four years, that follows secondary or further education. Young people (usually 18 years or older) need to have qualifications such as A levels, BTEC Level 3 or NVQ/VQ level 3 to move on to HE.

- HE includes academic courses and also career-based or vocational courses, which usually have a large practical element.

- HE is popular. In 2014, 30.4% of 18 year olds entered higher education.

If you’ve been thinking ‘this isn’t for us’, you may be pleasantly surprised if you read on.

Help and advice on applying to HE is provided in schools and colleges by tutors, teachers and careers advisers. There are also many useful websites which you will find on pages 24-26.

For information about other options after level 3 study, such as apprenticeships, voluntary work and employment look at page 29.
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The information contained in this booklet was correct at the time of writing, but please be aware that the information may change. C&K Careers is not responsible for the content of external websites.

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Why go?

There is evidence to prove that most graduates benefit from higher education, but it is not for everyone.

Wider career options

• A degree is essential, or recruitment is mainly at graduate level, for a growing number of jobs, including law, accountancy, healthcare professions, nursing, IT, teaching, architecture, media, engineering and social work.
• Employers value the general or transferable skills that HE students acquire; 80% of new jobs will require these.

Greater earnings

• Government research has shown that a degree is worth an average of £168,000 in additional earnings for men and £252,000 for women compared with their peers who did not go to university.
• Graduate pay varies depending on the course, details at www.unistats.com. They need to think about long term prospects and not their initial pay.
• Even during the recession, thousands of graduates have entered appropriate jobs.

Student life

Young people can enjoy both the academic and social opportunities that higher education provides.

But...

• Higher education is not for everyone. Young people have to consider how higher education will affect their career choices and circumstances.
• There is a cost - student loans have to be repaid.
• Higher Apprenticeships offer an alternative work-based route to level 4 or foundation degree qualifications. See www.apprenticeships.org.uk for more information and vacancies. The Government has also announced that ‘degree apprenticeships’ will start in September 2015.
• Jobs or academic success are not guaranteed. University study is not an end in itself; students need to obtain the experience and skills employers want. Indeed, many courses include tasks or activities to help students develop work-related skills. An appropriate work placement or sandwich year in industry, or making the most of extra curricular activities and relevant vacation work whilst at university, will also help to make them more employable.
Universities and colleges set their own course entry requirements.

Apart from qualifications, ability and a passion to learn, institutions are looking for focused, well-rounded individuals who can show they will benefit from the course. Universities and colleges rely on the student’s **Personal Statement** and the academic reference (written by the school or college) for evidence of this.

Popular courses or courses with limited places usually ask for higher grades.

Some courses in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and law have pre-entry tests. Contact details for further information are on page 25.

Some courses (including teaching, social work and healthcare) expect students to have had relevant work experience. Art students should prepare a portfolio of work and acting courses may include an audition in the recruitment process.

Details for specific courses and institutions are:

- on the UCAS website [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)
  Use ‘Find a course’ and ‘Find an undergraduate course’ for detailed information about the course, entry qualifications and career opportunities

- in prospectuses. You can order them by ringing institutions or by contacting them from the UCAS website.
Choosing courses

What to study?

Over 37,000 different courses can be studied in the UK. Students can choose from a range of degree and diploma qualifications including BA, BSc, DipHE, FdA, FdSc and HND. HNDs, DipHE and foundation degrees are usually vocational courses that last for two years. Entry requirements are usually lower than those for a degree but include A level or equivalent study. These can usually be topped up to degree level. Check this before applying. Many courses offer an integrated work placement for up to one year. These are sometimes called 'sandwich courses'. This type of work experience can be very helpful when applying for jobs. You can see details of these and other qualifications on page 27.

Where to go?

Location is important because many students drop out of university because they do not like the place. Over 300 institutions across the UK offer courses of higher education. Points to consider:

- Home or away
- City or campus
- University or college
- Traditional or modern
- Large or small
- Scholarships, fees and finance

Quality

www.unistats.com is the official website for comparing courses and institutions. Unistats includes the National Student Survey, which asks students to grade the quality of teaching and support they have received and also standardised information about individual courses to help prospective students. It also includes course information, employment and salary data and accommodation costs.

Several guides or league tables comparing institutions are available on the internet:

- The Guardian www.theguardian.com/education/universityguide
- The Telegraph http://coursefinder.telegraph.co.uk
- Which? University http://university.which.co.uk

Criteria vary between the guides so please check carefully.
There is a lot to think about - encourage them to start their research in Year 12.

- Young people should be encouraged to think about the subjects they are good at and to select courses that play to their strengths and interests. Surveys show that the most successful students are those who love their courses.

- **Research** - the UCAS website is a good place to start; the course or institution search links to all universities. Entry qualifications are listed and prospectuses can be ordered.

- **Career choices** - for some professions, entrants need to take an accredited course. For information about different careers, with links to relevant professional bodies, look at the website of the National Careers Service, [https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk). Details of course accreditation is also available on [www.unistats.com](http://www.unistats.com).

- **Visits** - these are vital. They offer a chance to see the university for yourselves and ask questions about:
  - the course content
  - accommodation
  - assessment methods
  - student facilities
  - tutor support
  - fees and financial help.

- **Results and destinations** - check out the destinations of students completing the course over the last two to three years. How many got relevant jobs or started postgraduate training or courses? Go to [www.unistats.com](http://www.unistats.com) to compare official data on graduate destinations. You can also look into graduate careers and job vacancies on these websites:
  - [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)
  - [www.targetjobs.co.uk](http://www.targetjobs.co.uk)
  - [www.yorkshiregraduates.co.uk](http://www.yorkshiregraduates.co.uk)
  - [www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk)
Meeting the entrance requirements

Students need to be realistic and should choose courses that match their expected level 3 qualifications. UCAS has developed a tariff that compares qualifications and is often used by universities when making offers. Students may be asked for specific grades or points; for example, 280 points including subject X at grade B. This chart shows the most popular qualifications; for a full list visit www.ucas.com.

The UCAS Tariff

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UCAS is introducing a new tariff for courses starting from September 2017. For more information see [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com).
Young people need to make an informed and realistic choice and this will take time and effort. Parents and carers can:

- ask about career plans
- check they have done their research
- be positive, open and supportive. It’s a tense time - not only are university applications to be made but exams loom
- help them to be realistic. Talk about their preferences with regard to their likely results
- encourage them to discuss their plans with their subject tutors or careers adviser
- go to university open days or departmental visits with them. It is vital for students to see where they will live and study for the next few years. Many institutions arrange sessions specially for parents and carers, which usually cover student finance, accommodation and student support and counselling. Information about open days can be found at www.ucas.com or on individual university and college websites
- attend a UCAS higher education convention. These are usually held in spring or early summer at venues across the UK. Anyone can attend these free events, for more information look at www.ucas.com. Some schools and colleges also hold higher education information events for students and their parents or carers
- help them to make an early application and not leave it until the final deadline. Frequently, offers are made within days of the application being received. Students should aim to send it off during the first half of the autumn term of Year 13
- add vital UCAS deadline dates to the family calendar - see the HE calendar on page 14.
Most applications to higher education are made through UCAS. Students applying for art, music, dance or drama have additional arrangements to consider. Check the UCAS website for changes to the application process for 2016.

- The UCAS website, www.ucas.com, has details of all the institutions in the system and detailed advice about completing the online application.

- It currently costs £23 to apply through UCAS (£12 for a single course).

- Students can apply for up to five choices but there are exceptions:
  - students can only apply to either Oxford University or Cambridge University
  - only four of their choices can be for courses in medicine, dentistry or veterinary medicine.

- As many institutions no longer interview, the application is the only guide admissions tutors have about potential students. A late, slapdash application will not impress.

- University admissions tutors will look carefully at the Personal Statement section of the application. This needs to be original and include reasons for choosing the course, career aims, relevant qualities and experience. UCAS software can detect statements copied from the internet.

- Once the application has been sent, Track gives applicants online access to view university decisions, make changes to personal details and contact UCAS. Young people can start using Track once they have received a ‘Welcome email’ from UCAS. Invitations to attend interviews may also be sent on Track. They need to reply to these as directed.

- Students have to choose two offers to hold once all their institutions have considered their application. They should be realistic and select offers they are likely to meet. Their ‘insurance’ or second choice should be one requiring lower grades.

- UCAS deadlines are on the calendar on page 14. It is important that applications and replies are sent back as requested.

- On results day, important decisions have to be made. Don’t plan holidays at this time. Clearing, a vacancy service to help unplaced students begins, see page 11.
Applications for music, art, drama and dance

Music

- Conservatoires UK Admissions Service (CUKAS) is a separate online application system for talented musicians wanting to study at one of the UK’s eight conservatoires.
- The application process is very similar to UCAS but deadlines are much earlier, so auditions can be held.
- Students can also apply through UCAS, in the normal way, for other HE courses.
- Further details are on www.cukas.ac.uk.

Art and design

- Many art colleges prefer students to complete a one year Foundation Diploma in Art and Design before starting a degree. These are available at most further education colleges and provide a ‘diagnostic’ year that helps students to choose and progress on to suitable degree courses. Students use this time to try out new techniques. Applications are made directly to the colleges for these courses.
- Applicants for art and design degree courses apply through UCAS.

Dance and Drama

- Unlike other UCAS courses, art and design courses have a closing date of either 15 January or 24 March. These are clearly identified on the UCAS website.
- They can apply for up to five courses.
- They need to be ready for interviews and portfolio inspection once their application has gone in. More advice about interviews and portfolios is on individual university and college websites.
- It is complicated! Ask for advice about applications from tutors or careers advisers in school or college.

- Practical courses in acting, dance, musical theatre and stage management are offered by some private schools of dance and drama.
- Government funding is currently available for a limited number of the most able students. The awards are income-assessed and for specific courses at specific schools. Applications are made directly to the school of dance and drama.
- For further details about funding for dance and drama, visit www.gov.uk/dance-drama-awards.
- Courses in dance and drama are also offered by many mainstream universities.
What if a young person decides they want to study a different course after the application form has gone in?

UCAS have strict rules about changes, which you will find on the website. If they have applied for fewer than five courses, they can add further ones (through Track) but they cannot normally change a choice or university or college unless it is within seven days from the date printed on their ‘welcome email’ or there are exceptional reasons. After this time, a referee on the initial application would have to write to UCAS on their behalf. To change to a different course at the same university, contact the institution directly.

If a young person declines all offers, they will become eligible for UCAS Clearing or Extra. They will then be able to apply to courses that have vacancies. Once the exam results are known and an offer has been confirmed, the institution would have to agree to release a student before applications to other courses could be made through Clearing, unless he or she has achieved much higher grades than expected.

What if there are no offers?

Students who hold no offers, for whatever reason, can apply online for further courses one at a time, using Extra. This starts in February and finishes on 30 June. Universities and colleges list courses with ‘Extra availability’ on the UCAS website. Eligible students are able to refer themselves through Track to courses with vacancies. Before applying it is advisable for students to discuss their options with their tutor or careers adviser.

What if a young person does much better than expected?

If their grades have met and exceeded the conditions of their course offers, they can, for a few days only, apply for alternative courses while holding their original choice. They should ask for advice and think carefully before deciding to ‘trade up’. This is called Adjustment. They will have to find and secure an alternative course themselves.
What if they don’t get the right grades?

- Don’t panic! They may still be offered a place if they slip a grade.
- They should ring and check directly with the department or refer to Track, on the UCAS website. Speaking to course admission tutors directly may help.
- If unplaced, they can apply through Clearing for courses that have vacancies.

What if they are unplaced?

- **Clearing** is a service to help unplaced students find a suitable course.
- Last year 61,300 students found a suitable place through Clearing.
- If they are eligible for Clearing, UCAS Track will have details of what they need to do and their Clearing number.
- Vacancies are listed on UCAS and university websites.
- When a young person finds a suitable course through Clearing they should ring the admissions tutor. Before ringing, they need their Clearing number and Personal ID number to hand and be prepared to put forward good reasons for applying.
- Some institutions hold open days for Clearing applicants. Visit if you can. A young person needs to be sure that they want that course and institution before accepting it.

**It’s vital that applicants are at home in August.**

Alternatives to Clearing

- Other options include employment, a Higher Apprenticeship, a gap year or repeat year, see page 29.
- Speak to a careers adviser or tutor about all the options once results are known.

What if no one else in my family has been to university?

Nearly every institution of higher education is working with schools and colleges to encourage more students to consider higher education. Ask if your school or college is involved.

How will taking a gap year affect an application to higher education?

Most courses and future employers have a positive approach to these, especially if they include relevant experience, such as voluntary care work, relevant paid employment or language study abroad. However, some courses may prefer students straight from school or college - check with each institution if in doubt. A deferred entry application can be made from Year 13 in the same way as other applications. Places are held over the gap year. It is advisable to include details of their plans for the gap year and how they will benefit in the personal statement on the UCAS application. More information about taking a gap year is on page 13.
What if they don’t go at 18?

There is no upper age limit on most courses. Lots of students enter university later.

What if a young person has no idea about a future career. Is it worth going to university if they don’t have a job in mind?

Statistics show that students from vocational or career-based courses find employment sooner than those from traditional arts or non-vocational courses. However, many vacancies for graduates do not specify a subject; employers use the degree as a measure of ability and aptitude. Relevant vacation work will help students who decide on the job they would like to do during their course. All universities offer careers and job hunting help to their students. From the beginning of their course students should target opportunities at university which will help them develop the skills, leadership potential and ‘character’ employers look for. For more information about graduate opportunities including case studies go to:
www.prospects.ac.uk
www.targetjobs.co.uk

Can they do a part-time degree course?

Yes, degrees can be studied on a part-time basis with most universities, including the Open University (OU). An increasing number of young people are choosing this route as you can combine a degree, foundation degree or HNC with a relevant job or Higher Apprenticeship, see www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Applications for part-time and OU degree courses are made directly to the institution. Tuition fee loans are available for some part-time students if they are studying for 25% of their time, see page 16. More information about part-time courses is available from individual universities.

What about applicants with a disability?

The application should not be affected by their disability. All universities and colleges offer equal opportunities and provide a lot of practical help to students with physical or learning disabilities such as dyslexia. It is advisable to check out the facilities and discuss requirements before applying. For further help and advice go to www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Disability Rights UK provides information and advice. Contact them online or on their helpline 0800 328 5050 (freephone). Open:
Tuesdays 11.30am-1.30pm
Thursdays 1.30pm-3.30pm

Additional funding to help students with disabilities may also be available, see page 19.
There are pros and cons to taking a gap year. A well thought out and planned gap year is looked on more favourably than a year adrift!

**Gap years may involve:**
- paid employment here or abroad
- voluntary work
- work experience with a relevant company
- travel
- cultural exchange.

Increasing numbers have a split year - several months of paid work and then travel.

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<td><strong>travel</strong> - a chance to travel and experience different cultures before getting caught up in careers</td>
<td><strong>finance</strong> - how will they fund it?</td>
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<td><strong>motivation</strong> - time out to be certain about courses</td>
<td><strong>future plans</strong> - some admissions tutors have reservations about students taking a year out so <strong>ASK</strong>, especially if planning to study maths, medicine or science</td>
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<td><strong>work experience</strong> - if related to future career ideas it will be helpful and impress future employers</td>
<td><strong>work routines</strong> - it may be difficult to settle into study again</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>money</strong> - working and saving to help meet the cost of HE</td>
<td><strong>money</strong> - they may miss a pay packet if they have had one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>escape</strong> - from study and exams!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About 5% of UCAS applicants decide to take a gap year and make a deferred application. [www.yearoutgroup.org](http://www.yearoutgroup.org) has links to all leading year out organisations.
**Year 12 - Summer Term 2015 - Preparation**

Most schools and colleges provide a programme of study to help their students to select courses and become familiar with the application process. Students should go to open days, send for prospectuses and plan any necessary work experience.

| Mid July | CUKAS applications start. See page 9. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Do plans need revising with regard to grades for assessed work and exams?  
Start online UCAS application.  
Applying for medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or law? Check if there is a pre-entry test. Students are responsible for registering and paying for these, see page 25. |

**Year 13 - Autumn Term 2015 - Decisions to be made and forms completed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mid September</th>
<th>Opening date for all UCAS applications.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 October</td>
<td>Deadline for ‘on-time’ CUKAS applications to music courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 October</td>
<td>Closing date for all applications to Oxford and Cambridge Universities and for most courses in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science/medicine.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Spring Term 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15 January</th>
<th>Early February</th>
<th>Late February</th>
<th>24 March</th>
<th>March onwards</th>
<th>31 May</th>
<th>Late February</th>
<th>Late June</th>
<th>August</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UCAS application deadline</strong>, except for some art and design courses with a 24 March deadline. Universities have to give equal consideration to all applications received by 15 January. Applications received after 15 January will be 'late'. UCAS will process the application but courses may already be full.</td>
<td><strong>Applications for Student Finance can be made.</strong></td>
<td><strong>UCAS Extra</strong> is triggered if no offers have been received or offers have been declined. Students without offers can apply to more courses one at a time through UCAS Extra. See page 10.</td>
<td><strong>Deadline for some art and design courses.</strong></td>
<td><strong>When all offers have been received, a ‘Replying to offers’ link on UCAS Track becomes visible. A response needs to be made or all offers could be lost.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recommended date for student finance applications to guarantee payment at the beginning of term.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Last date for ‘late’ applications to UCAS. After this date, all applications go into Clearing. Check Clearing arrangements on the UCAS website.</strong></td>
<td><strong>All exam results are out. If accepted, return confirmation as requested. Higher results can ‘trade up’, look for ‘Adjustment’ on page 10. If unplaced, Clearing begins - see page 11.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some students and their parents or carers are worried about the costs of going to university and deciding, because of this, not to go, but bear in mind that:

- there are no upfront payments and there are non-repayable grants, scholarships and bursaries to help many students, as well as loans
- it is important to think about the ‘bigger picture’ - long term aims - and choose courses that provide the best chance of success in the future. The cost of HE should be viewed as an investment in the future putting young people in a better position to earn a higher salary. See page 20 for possible ways to reduce the cost and see page 5 for questions to ask about the quality of courses
- no matter how much they borrow, repayments are based on what they earn
- it is a good idea to take advantage of all the extra-curricular activities that will give them the skills employers look for.

Research is vital - investigate not only charges for tuition fees but also the help available for different choices, such as loans, grants, bursaries or scholarships. The information about student finance below is based on the information available for young people starting in higher education in 2015. Details about funding/policy for 2016-2017 were not available at the time of writing.
For the latest information, check out www.gov.uk/student-finance.

Cost of higher education falls into two parts: tuition fees and living or maintenance costs. Loans are available to help all students meet these costs.

Tuition fees and tuition fee loans

- Tuition fees are the costs charged by the university.
- Each university can decide what it charges, including whether to charge at different levels for different courses. Information about tuition fees is in prospectuses and on the UCAS website.
- Full-time students can take out a Tuition Fee Loan to cover the cost of their fees. (Make sure they apply for the right amount of loan.) The maximum loan for a course at a publicly funded university is £9,000 and £6,000 for a private university.
- Part-time students studying for at least 25% of their time are also entitled to a maximum Tuition Fee Loan of £6,750 for a publicly funded university and £4,500 for a private university.
Maintenance Costs and Loans

- **Maintenance Loans** are available to all eligible full-time students. The amount they can borrow for maintenance/living costs will depend upon your household income, whether they live at home, away from home or study in London. In 2015, the maximum rates for new students are: £4,565 if they live at home, £5,740 if they live away from home outside London, and £8,009 living away from home in London.
- All students can apply for a 65% maintenance loan without having household income assessed.
- Part-time students are not eligible for Maintenance Loans.

Maintenance Grants

- In 2015, a non-repayable Maintenance Grant of up to £3,387 will be paid to new, full-time students whose family income is £25,000 or less. Students with family incomes between £25,001 and £42,620 are eligible for a partial grant.
- The amount of Maintenance Loan is reduced by 50p for every £1 of Maintenance Grant received.

Loans

- Young people will start to accrue interest on the loan from the date they start their course. The rate of interest is based on the rate of the Retail Price Index (RPI).
- Estimates show that students doing a three year course charged at £6,000 will leave university with about £30,000 of debt and if fees are £9,000, debts will be closer to £38,000.

Repaying student loans

- **The amount they pay back each week is based on their earnings not the size of their loan.**
- Loan repayments do not start until they are earning at least £21,000 a year.
- Repayments are at a rate of 9% of income above £21,000. Graduates earning £25,000 will repay £30 a month. This is taken out of wages. The £21,000 threshold will start to rise with UK average earnings from 2017.
- The rate of interest will depend upon how much they are earning.
- Many students will never pay back the full amount of their loans. They need to accept their students loans are something that they will pay towards for a long time; these should not prevent them getting a mortgage or credit.
- All outstanding repayments are written off after 30 years.
Eligibility for student finance

- Students must meet the UK residency conditions. Find details online at www.gov.uk/student-finance.
- The course must be of a certain type and lead to a higher education qualification.
- The university or college must be publicly funded or running courses that are publicly funded.

Applications

- Students apply online for financial support to Student Finance England.
- Applications start in January/February. They do not need to have been accepted to apply. To secure funding for the start of the course they should apply before 31 May.

Additional help for some students

Healthcare students

- The NHS Bursary helps students with both tuition fees and living costs. The bursary is paid to students on pre-registration degree courses in: audiology, chiropody/podiatry, dental hygiene, dietetics, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, operating department practice, occupational therapy, orthoptics, physiotherapy, prosthetics and orthotics, radiography, speech and language therapy.
- All students with NHS funded places have their fees paid and receive a non-means tested grant of £1,000 each year.
- Students are also eligible for a means tested NHS Bursary and a non-income assessed loan of up to £3,263. (The loan is administered by Student Finance England.)
- The means tested bursary depends upon the number of weeks at university, parental income and where they are living. For example, the maximum bursary for a student studying for 45 weeks a year and living with parents is £3,351 away from home, outside London it is £4,395, and in London £5,460
- Dental and medical students on a standard five or six year course can apply for a bursary (and have their fees paid) for years 5 and 6. For the first four years they have the same financial help as other higher education students.
- Disabled Students’ Allowances are also available as part of the NHS Bursary scheme and are similar to those described on page 19.
Student finance

- The institution offering a young person a place will inform NHS Student Bursaries who will, in turn, contact them about their application for finance.

Social work students

- The Department of Health offers students on approved degree courses in social work a non-repayable bursary. The bursary is paid to students in years 2 and 3. Their course provider will tell them if they are eligible. For more information go to [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/837.aspx](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/837.aspx).

Dance and drama students

- The financial help you can apply for depends upon the course and the institution.
- Awards are currently available for the most talented students, aged 18 and over, applying for specific practical courses in acting or directing, not academic study, which is covered by undergraduate student funding.
- Some of these courses are at private drama schools. Private drama school fees can be high.
- For more information go to [www.gov.uk/dance-and-drama](http://www.gov.uk/dance-and-drama).

Special Support Grant

- The Special Support Grant replaces the Maintenance Grant for people who, as full-time students, can claim some benefits.
- It is not possible to receive both a Maintenance Grant and a Special Support Grant.
- For more information go to [www.gov.uk/student-finance](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance).

Disabled Students’ Allowances (DSAs)

- Additional, non-repayable funding is available for students with disabilities.
- DSAs can help pay for specialist equipment such as computer software, a non-medical helper, extra travel costs and other costs such as tapes.
  Details of the current scheme are on the student support website: [www.gov.uk/student-finance](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance).
  The student’s needs are assessed by Student Finance England before an award is made.
Dependant’s Grant

• Additional support is available for students with dependants. For more information go to www.gov.uk/student-finance.

Other help and ways to cut costs

• **Sponsorship offered by large employers** may be available to some students, particularly those on vocational or work-related courses. Young people should inform their teachers or tutors of their interest in sponsorship so details of programmes sent into school or college are passed on. These may also be advertised on company websites, in university prospectuses and on www.notgoingtouni.co.uk.

• **University scholarships and bursaries.** Many institutions also offer help through their own scholarship schemes. These may be based on merit or subject area. Details are in prospectuses. Some of these have very early closing dates.

• Watch out for **shorter courses.** Some universities are also looking at introducing fast-track two year courses. For example, BPP, a private university offers two year degree courses with fees of £6,000 a year.

• **Part-time study and employment.** Fees for the Open University in 2014-2015* were at a rate of £5,264 for each equivalent full-time academic year.

• **Higher Apprenticeships** are jobs with training that include study and qualifications at HE level. For further information see page 29.

• **Study overseas.** An increasing number of institutions are offering courses taught and examined in English, where fees are often lower or free, see page 21.

• **Part-time jobs.** Most universities have ‘job shops’ that carry part-time job vacancies for students.

*Figures for 2016-17 were not available at the time of going to print. Visit www.open.ac.uk for the latest information.
Increasing numbers of students are choosing to study abroad. The three main ways to do this are:

- by taking a language course or specialist course in a subject such as European Studies, European Law or International Business which includes spending part of the course abroad
- through the Erasmus+ programme. This offers students taking a wide range of subjects the opportunity to study for part of their degree in the EU
- studying the whole of the degree abroad. Universities across Europe are reporting higher numbers of UK students joining programmes taught and examined in English.

Reasons to go

So they can:

- enjoy the culture of another country
- learn or improve their language skills
- enhance their career opportunities
- improve their confidence and independence
- enhance their CV and profile especially when applying to firms doing business abroad or multi-national companies.

In addition, students choosing to study their whole course abroad may be able to access popular and over-subscribed courses such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and physiotherapy.

Points to consider

- The quality of the institution and course – you can check this out for institutions across the world at www.topuniversities.com.
- Recognition of qualifications – they need to check that the course is recognised by relevant professional bodies in the UK.
- Costs – details of tuition fees and living costs are in the ‘International’ section of university websites. In the EU, they will only be asked to pay tuition fees at the same level as the home students. In some EU countries, tuition fees are much lower than in England or free but in other countries outside the EU they may find much higher costs. They will have additional costs for travel and health insurance and exchange rate fluctuations to factor in.
- Can they cope with living abroad?
- Do they need a visa? Embassies will advise on this.
- They will need to research the entrance and language requirements, application systems and procedures. They need to start planning 12-15 months before they go.
Study overseas

Erasmus+

- The Erasmus+ programme enables students in 32 countries to study for part of their degree at institutions across Europe.
- Students can spend from three months to a full year studying in another country. Some courses require a good working knowledge of the language but others offer language skills tuition or courses taught in English.
- They should investigate now, whether universities they are considering offer Erasmus+ opportunities for the course they want to do. For general information about Erasmus+ look on https://erasmusplus.org.uk/about/opportunities-for-students. Details are also in prospectuses.

Courses taught in English in Europe

A number of websites offer advice about courses taught in English abroad. These are a useful starting point:
- information and advice about study in Europe is on this EU website www.studyineurope.eu
- Eunicas offers advice to UK and Irish students interested in studying in Europe. For a small fee they offer an application support service, go to www.eunicas.ie
- A Star Future offers information and advice about courses taught in English at universities abroad, go to www.astarfuture.co.uk.

English speaking countries

- The Fulbright Commission offers information about study and awards available to UK students to pursue studies in the USA. Go to www.fulbright.co.uk.
- Study Options is the official representative of institutions in Australia and New Zealand, go to www.studyoptions.com.
You may be surprised by how much there is to organise before the start of their first term.

Students need to be able to juggle their academic and social lives and also, maybe, a part-time job.

Young people may find it useful if they can;

- plan a healthy, cheap diet
- cook a reasonable range of meals
- work out a budget and stick to it
- operate a washing machine
- keep in touch with family
- plan their work
- be realistic
- take responsibility for their personal security and safety - check insurance cover for their possessions.

If they have decided to live at home while they attend university, try to come to some agreement about what will give them greater independence.

What if they don’t settle? If they are unhappy with their course or accommodation, they should raise this with their tutor. Many don’t like to admit that there is a problem. Regular contact may help them to open up - this is something for you to look for during calls home.
Useful websites and helplines

Researching courses and institutions

www.ukcoursefinder.com
For young people who are not sure what subject they want to study - they can take a ‘study interests questionnaire’

www.unistats.com
Website for comparing UK higher education course data. Includes official data for undergraduate courses on each university’s and college’s satisfaction scores in the National Student Survey, jobs and salaries after study and other key information for prospective students

http://university.which.co.uk
Comprehensive information and advice about all aspects of applying for, and going to, university. Also includes ‘The parent’s guide to university’, free to download

www.theguardian.com/education/universityguide
‘Guardian University Guide’ includes a parent’s guide to university league tables

http://coursefinder.telegraph.co.uk
Website for comparing detailed information about universities and the courses they offer

www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk
Includes an ‘Advice for parents’ section

Researching career ideas

https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk
Information about nearly 800 different jobs - click on ‘Job Profiles’. You can also do a ‘Skills Health Check’- a set of online questionnaires with a report. They are designed to give you information about your skills, interests and motivations in the workplace. The tools help you to think about the kinds of jobs that might be best for you in future. You can also speak to an adviser online or on the phone

Applications

www.ucas.com
0371 468 0468
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service - information about all courses. The website has an advice section for parents and carers. You can also download the ‘Parent guide’
Useful websites and helplines

www.cukas.ac.uk
0371 468 0470
The Conservatoires UK Admissions Service - to research and apply for practice-based music, dance and drama courses at eight UK conservatoires

Student finance

www.gov.uk/student-finance
0300 100 0607
Latest information on student finance and applications

www.slc.co.uk
The Student Loans Company

www.moneysavingexpert.com/students
Free guide to student finance

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/816.aspx
Information about the NHS Bursary Scheme

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/825.aspx
Information about social work bursaries

Students with disabilities

www.disabilityrightsuk.org
0800 328 5050
Helpline open Tuesday 11.30am - 1.30pm and Thursday 1.30pm - 3.30pm

Pre-entry tests for courses in medicine, dentistry, veterinary science and law

www.bmat.org.uk
Biomedical Admissions Test

www.lnat.ac.uk
National Admissions Test for Law

www.ukcat.ac.uk
UK Clinical Aptitude Test
Useful websites and helplines

Studying abroad (see pages 21 and 22)

www.erasmusplus.org.uk/about/opportunities-for-students
Information about the Erasmus+ programme

www.fulbright.co.uk
Studying in the USA

www.studyoptions.com
Studying in Australia and New Zealand

www.studyineurope.eu
Studying in Europe

www.astarfuture.co.uk
A Star Future offers information and advice about courses taught in English at universities abroad

Voluntary work and gap year (see page 13)

www.do-it.org.uk
Hundreds of voluntary opportunities throughout the UK

www.csv.org.uk
Community Service Volunteers

www.princes-trust.org.uk
Prince’s Trust Volunteers

www.yearoutgroup.org
Gap Year organisations

www.bunac.org/uk
Volunteering and working abroad

Graduate opportunities

www.prospects.ac.uk
www.targetjobs.co.uk
www.yorkshiregraduates.co.uk
www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk
Adjustment a short period after results come out during which students who have exceeded their original conditional offer can apply for other courses.

Apply the UCAS online application system.

Bursaries extra sources of financial help available from colleges and universities. These are paid on top of student loans and are not repaid.

Campus University a university on a ‘greenfield’ site where teaching, living and social activities are on one site.

Clearing UCAS service that operates from results day to 20 September to match applicants without an offer of a university place with suitable vacancies.

CUKAS Conservatoires UK Admissions Service.

Combined Degree a degree made up of modules from different subjects.

Deferred Application students apply in the normal way but put off the start date for one year. They need to check that the courses they are applying to accept a deferred entry.

Degrees
BA Bachelor of Arts degree
BSc Bachelor of Science degree
BEd Bachelor of Education degree
BVSc Bachelor of Veterinary Science degree
BEng Bachelor of Engineering degree
LLB Bachelor of Laws degree
BMus Bachelor of Music degree
MBChB Bachelor of Medicine degree

Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) normally two years in length and for those who satisfy degree course entry requirements. DipHE can often be topped up to a degree through additional study.

Foundation Degree, FdA, FdSc a two year work-related qualification that may be topped up to a full degree. Ask about this when applying.

Extra a scheme triggered by UCAS in February for applicants without any offers, whereby they can make additional choices, one at a time. See page 10.

Foundation Diploma in Art & Design a one year intensive preparatory course for students heading for a degree/HND in art and design. Usually studied at a College of Further Education.
Foundation Year  a period of study prior to the normal first year of a degree course, for those who don’t have qualifications in the right subjects or at the right level. Sometimes called ‘year zero’. Courses are offered in a range of subject areas, such as engineering, science, technology, pre-medical and dentistry. Applications are through UCAS, as usual.

Gap Year  a break from study, usually lasting for one academic year. Sometimes called a ‘year out’. See page 13.

Healthcare Bursaries  are available from the NHS for some healthcare courses. See page 18.

Higher National Diploma (HND)  a vocational course that lasts for two years. Entry requirements are usually lower than those for a degree but include A level or equivalent qualifications. It can be topped up to degree level with further study. Ask about this when applying.

Oxbridge  combined name for Oxford and Cambridge universities.

Personal Statement  a statement on the UCAS application, reflecting a young person’s reasons for choosing the course and including their career aspirations, background experience and so on.

Sandwich Course  courses during which periods of study at university are alternated with time in industry.

Sponsorship  whereby students may receive financial support from industry or commerce while doing a course.

UCAS  Universities & Colleges Admissions Service; the organisation that handles applications for degree and higher education courses.

UCAS Tariff  see page 6.

UCAS Track  see pages 8, 10 and 11.

Vocational Courses  subjects relating to a specific profession or area of work, such as engineering, IT, journalism and sport. Check professional bodies for details of accredited courses.
This is a brief introduction to the alternatives to higher education and sources of help.

Apprenticeships
Apprenticeships involve working for a company and undertaking qualifications related to a specific job. They are available at Intermediate, Advanced and Higher levels. The Government has also recently announced the introduction of ‘degree apprenticeships’.

Apprenticeships are becoming increasingly popular with young people as a route to higher level careers. They are not just about trades such as bricklaying or hairdressing; they cover over 170 industries/sectors. Higher Apprenticeships lead to a qualification at level 4 or above which is the equivalent of a higher education qualification. They have been devised for over 40 sectors. The majority tend to be found in accountancy/finance, business administration, legal services, engineering technology and IT. Some young people leaving Year 13 with level 3 qualifications may have to start on an Intermediate or Advanced Apprenticeship.

For more information about apprenticeships, including vacancies and details about how to apply go to www.apprenticeships.org.uk.

Full-time employment
Some young people decide to go into full-time employment after Year 13 and a smaller number go into part-time employment or voluntary work.

Some useful websites for young people considering employment after Year 13 are:

- www.thebigchoice.com
- www.notgoingtouni.co.uk
- www.allaboutschoollleavers.co.uk
- www.studentladder.co.uk
- www.futuretalent.co.uk

Individual company websites.
Newspapers and their websites.

Job vacancy websites such as:
- www.totaljobs.com
- www.monster.co.uk
- www.indeed.co.uk

Jobcentre Plus Universal Jobmatch
www.gov.uk/jobsearch

Voluntary work
www.do-it.org.uk
www.csv.org.uk

Setting up your own business
www.gov.uk/browse/business/setting-up
www.shell-livewire.org
www.princes-trust.org/need_help/enterprise/programme.aspx

Further education
Some young people who decide on a change of career or stay on an extra year to complete their studies will go into further education after Year 13. Many young people who are thinking about doing a degree related to art and design will go to college after Year 13 to complete a ‘Foundation Diploma in Art and Design’, before applying to university.
uni Facts

Additional Information for Parents & Carers in Calderdale & Kirklees
Careers advisers

In most schools and colleges in Calderdale and Kirklees careers advisers from C&K Careers help young people make plans for the future. Many hold drop-in and group sessions each week or young people can request a careers interview. Careers advisers can be contacted at school or college if you would like to speak to them.

Careers information

C&K Careers produces a range of information for young people and for parents and carers which is available on our website www.ckcareersonline.org.uk. To access some of the careers information you will need a code which young people can get from their school or college.

UniFAQs is a comprehensive guide to higher education from C&K Careers aimed at young people in Year 12. It is distributed through schools and colleges. Young people who have not received their copy should contact C&K Careers on 01484 225500 and ask for Infoline.

JobFAQs is a booklet from C&K Careers aimed at young people looking for employment after Year 13. It provides information about where to look and how to apply for vacancies. Students receive JobFAQs from their school or college or can contact C&K Careers Infoline to request a copy.

Leaflets covering a range of subjects are available in careers libraries in schools or colleges or can be printed out from www.ckcareersonline.org.uk. You will need a code to access these which young people can get from their school or college.
On www.ckcareersonline.org.uk there is a career matching program called ‘Job Explorer Database’. As well as a quiz to help generate career ideas there is also information about 700+ jobs. Young people can click on the ‘Job Explorer Database’ icon on the homepage and enter the code for their school or college.

C&K Careers Infoline

For information and advice you can also ring C&K Careers on 01484 225500 and ask for Infoline.

Local events

There are two UCAS higher education conventions in Yorkshire in 2015.

- West and North Yorkshire higher education convention: 16 and 17 June at Leeds Beckett University (formerly Leeds Metropolitan University).
- Sheffield higher education convention: 19 June at Sheffield Motorpoint Arena.


The University of Huddersfield will also be holding a ‘Parents Information Evening’ on 24, 25 and 26 March 2015. This event will explain everything you need to know about higher education, regardless of subject or university. Full details and an invitation will be sent to you by the university.

Check out our website

www.ckcareersonline.org.uk careers advice and information for all.
Dewsbury Careers Centre
(in Dewsbury Library)
Railway Street, Dewsbury, WF12 8EB
T: 01484 225500
Monday to Thursday
10.00am - 5.00pm
Friday 10.00am - 4.00pm

Halifax Careers Centre
16 Alexandra Street, Halifax, HX1 1BS
T: 01484 225500
Monday to Friday
10.00am - 4.00pm

Huddersfield Careers Centre
24 High Street, Huddersfield, HD1 2LR
T: 01484 225500
Monday to Thursday
10.00am - 5.00pm
Friday 10.00am - 4.00pm

On request, we can provide information in other formats.
To ask about this call C&K Careers on 01484 225500 and ask for Infoline.