

Applying to Post 16 and Personal Statements.

Information to help



Post 16 Options

College & 6th Form

Consider the difference between course structure; A Levels are exam-based qualifications whilst vocational qualifications include coursework, exams and/or practical assessment of learning. From September 2020, some providers will offer T Levels which are industry linked and include a mandatory work placement. Understanding the difference between qualifications will help you to make an informed choice.

Aim to visit as many providers as possible. Understanding the differences between establishments helps inform your choice.

Think about the level you are working at, and what is the realistic next level for you. The level you join college is largely based on what grades you achieve in your GCSEs. Aim to have a back up plan which could involve applying to more than one college or 6th form.

If you have a career in mind, research what options are best linked to that career and which college offers these subjects. If you're not sure, keep options open and seek advice from your career practitioner or teacher.

Apprenticeships

To find out more use www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk. To research and see what vacancies are available use www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship. You can set your own account up to get vacancy alerts and to monitor your progress. Research what opportunities are available now locally, this will give you an insight into local employers and key labour market trends.

You will need to know what career area(s) you are interested in, for example, hair & beauty, construction, hospitality & catering etc.

Consider an alternative – apprenticeships are competitive and not all applicants will be offered a place. Success requires a certain amount of preparation, and luck!

Understand the process; training providers will support the process, but you are likely to be required to find your own employer. Work experience can support with gaining contacts in the industry.

For further help see your tutor, progress leader or career practitioner.

Employment with Accredited Training

Another option is to go into paid employment but if you are under 18, this should still include accredited training. An example of this would be working in retail and completing an NVQ in customer service alongside. The training aspect must equate to 240 hours and be a nationally recognised qualification.

Looking for work can take time, commitment and organisation.

You can look for vacancies online, through word of mouth, on company websites and via social media. It's a good idea to prepare a CV that you amend for each job accordingly.

Recommended websites:
www3.hants.gov.uk/newjob.htm
<https://www.allaboutschooleavers.co.uk/>
<https://www.indeed.co.uk/>
<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/jobs/>
<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/your-council/careers-portal/>

Whilst going straight into paid work can seem very appealing, consider the longer-term implications and what the potential career prospects offer.

Traineeships

A traineeship is a scheme designed for people who may be looking for an apprenticeship vacancy or who feel that they do not yet have the skills, qualifications and/or experience to start either an apprenticeship or employment with training.

You will **NOT** earn a salary from a traineeship; check with the training company if there will be support with travel costs. This way you are not committing to starting something somewhere you may not be able to afford to get to.

Think about the sector that you would like to have experience in - remember that this is your chance to try things and experience new career options.

You can find out more about Traineeships via:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/traineeships>
<https://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship>

Through this document you may be informed of other websites which are not under the control of EBP South. We have no control over the nature, content and availability of those sites. The inclusion of any links does not necessarily imply a recommendation or endorse the views expressed within them.

PROCESS

Find a course/courses



APPLY by Application Form and in some cases you will need a personal statement.



Attend Interview



Accept your place(s)



BEFORE

- Which course?
- Attend open events.
- Entry requirements.
- Closing dates.





PERSONAL STATEMENTS – WHY?

- Helps you and the interviewer to talk during your interview.
- Chance to introduce yourself.
- Opportunity to explain what you want to study and why.
- Chance to talk about future career ideas and where you see yourself.
- Helps the college/sixth form decide if they should offer you a place.



PERSONAL STATEMENTS – What to include?

- Subjects you've picked and why.
- Any hobbies or interests you have either in school or your own personal time.
- Any positions of responsibilities or volunteering you do or hold.
- Try and show how the things you do links to your own skills and qualities.
- State what your strengths are but also identify things you want to improve and how college/sixth form will help you.

<https://www.ucas.com/connect/videos/personal-statements-ucas-progress>

INTERVIEWS

- Reasons for applying.
- Subject/Industry knowledge.
- Predicted grades.
- Work experience.
- Attendance at school.
- Learning support/medical needs.
- Career aspirations.



Applications for College - How to Write a Personal Statement

Your personal statement is a way of explaining your reasons for wanting to study at a particular college, do a type of course, and to demonstrate your ability to complete the course successfully. The application process for college can be very competitive and a strong personal statement is crucial to ensure your chances of success.

There is no single, right way of writing a personal statement. However below are a few suggestions on what to include (you may want to use some or all the points below to help structure your personal statement). Remember its purpose is always based around selling yourself to the college admissions staff, summarising your skills and experiences and showing how they are relevant to what you are applying for.

Please note: Each college may provide its own guidelines on what to include in your personal statement (this might include a word or page limit, or specific content requirement), but please check with the college/s you are applying to.

Introduction

Here you could outline:

- Who you are and/or where are you currently studying.
- What qualification type (e.g. A levels or vocational) and subject/s you are applying for (e.g. English literature, bricklaying, childcare).
- Your reasons for wanting to study your chosen subjects.
- Your reasons for wanting to study at that college (e.g. what makes that college stand out for you?).

You should demonstrate enthusiasm for your chosen subject/s, course type, college, and show that you have a good understanding of both the subject area(s) and college you are applying to. Failure to personalise your personal statement to a college and course could suggest you are not serious about your post 16 college choices.

Talk about your school subjects

In this section you should discuss your strengths and key skills, relating relate them to the subject(s) you are applying for. This will demonstrate that you can complete the course/s successfully.

Discuss any position of responsibility you may have had

This might include being a Student Leader, Prefect, Peer Mentor etc.

Talk about work experience including non-GCSE activities in school

This could include what you did for your Year 10 work experience. Do you have a part-time job? Do you volunteer? What skills, knowledge, and experience have you developed from these experiences? How useful are these experiences in relation to your future college studies? You could also include assisting at open evenings, taking part in drama productions, school fundraising events, projects, sports teams, meetings etc.

Talk about extra-curricular activities outside of school

This could include any hobbies or interests (rock climbing, keeping fit, youth club etc.). You could also talk about any additional certificates/awards you have achieved such as Duke of Edinburgh, sports achievements, music awards (e.g. Grade 4 Piano) etc. It can also include any charity/fundraising activities you have taken part in or organised outside of school. Don't forget to mention if you are signed up to do the NCS (National Citizen Service) at the end of Year 11.