

Going to university?

Thinking about going to university, but not sure if it's right for you?

Choosing to study for a degree is a life-changing decision, and one that deserves lots of thought and preparation.

So, before you start thinking about choosing what, and where, to study it's worth taking the time to asking yourself one very important question.

Why go to university?

When you're thinking of devoting several years of your life, and a considerable amount of money, to full time study it makes sense to understand the reasons behind your choice.

Understanding your motivation for going to university will help you to keep going when times get tough and assignment deadlines are looming. It'll also help when you complete your personal statement as part of your application.

So, it's time for some serious thought!

Good reasons for going to university

You may want to:

- get into a particular career and a degree will give you the skills, knowledge and qualifications you need to get in
- study a subject you really love to a higher level
- have a wider choice of career options – many careers are open to graduates of any discipline
- improve your chances of getting a better paid job
- study a new subject that's only available at university
- develop your full potential and get the highest academic qualification you can
- become more independent, and take responsibility for your own learning.

Everyone's reasons will be different. What are yours?

Dubious reasons for going to university

You may:

- feel it's expected of you because you get good grades
- go because 'everyone else' you know is going
- fancy the student social life, but not the reading, research and exams
- think it's your only option.

Of course the views of people who are important to you do matter, but they won't be doing the course. You will!

Alternative options

University isn't for everyone and it's not the only path to a successful career. So, it is worth knowing about the alternatives.

Here are just a few examples of alternative options for well-qualified school leavers.

- **College** – most colleges offer a range of higher education courses at different levels.
- **Apprenticeships** – particularly technician or advanced apprenticeships.
- **School and College Leaver Programmes** – these training programmes tend to be offered by larger employers in certain sectors, particularly in construction, engineering and financial services, and some of these lead to a degree.

These may not interest you, but you should be aware of what they have to offer. Why not read our article on ['Alternatives to full time study'](#) to find out more?

If you feel university is for you go on to read the articles ['Choosing what to study'](#) and ['Choosing where to study'](#).