

## Choosing what to study at college or university

Deciding which course to study at college or university can seem daunting and you can feel under pressure. Even if you know what you want to do, you are bound to have some niggling doubts, especially if you love lots of different subjects at school.

Well, it is a big decision, and one you may have to commit to in order to finish your studies. Here are some points to help you make the right decision.

### What are you good at?

Studying a subject that you regularly get good grades in is an excellent starting point. This may seem like an obvious statement, but if for example, you fancy being a physicist, and find maths a struggle, it's likely you'll find it harder at college or university when you have to study that subject at a deeper level.

### Do you enjoy the subject?

Even if you are good at a subject, you still have to be interested in it, at least to a certain extent. Why? Because you will have to commit to between two and four years of study or more, depending on the course! On the other hand, don't write off a subject if you find just bits of it boring - that's normal, and something that all students and professionals alike learn to live with. But if you find your mind wandering in the classroom most of the time, then it might not be a good choice.

### So you've already made your mind up?

Before you commit to a career and choose your course, look up some university or college websites and make sure you know what the entry requirements are for the courses that you want to study. Not only do some courses require specific subjects, but also specific grades. For example, you might need National 5 English at A or B, or Higher Biology at A or B.

### What if you can't decide?

If you can't find any courses you really like, or if there are too many to choose from that you do like, sit down and think hard about topics that you naturally like to think or read about. You can also speak to teachers, parents or a careers adviser to get their feedback. Sometimes another person looking at your problem from the outside can provide a whole new perspective.

If you are interested in a course covering more than one subject, a combined degree might be an option. For example, you could study languages with law, or geography with chemistry. Alternatively, you could stay on for postgraduate study if you want to qualify in an additional subject.

You could also try the [CareerMatch](#) and [CourseMatch](#) tools, which may give you ideas and help you to decide.

### And finally – some dos and don'ts

- Do choose a course based on a subject you have some natural ability in, and not one that you struggle to

keep up with.

- Don't choose a course just because your parents think you should do it, or because your friends are doing it and you don't want to feel left out. They will go their own way anyway.
- Don't get stressed if you feel stuck - spend quality time thinking about the subjects at school that really interest you. What is it about them that grab your attention? Do you feel good doing it, or that it comes naturally to you?
- Don't let other people's opinions put you off – unless they are genuinely trying to provide constructive advice.
- Do find out as much as you can about any courses you are interested in – maybe it wouldn't cover all the areas that you would like in a course.