

Supporting Your Child's Progression into Higher Education

Information on higher education to support parents and carers

Hello from the team at HeppSY!

As an organisation we offer support to young people and their families to help them make an informed decision about higher education.

This leaflet will help to answer some of the questions you may have about the choices your child will be making.

Key websites and further information

HeppSY
www.heppsy.org

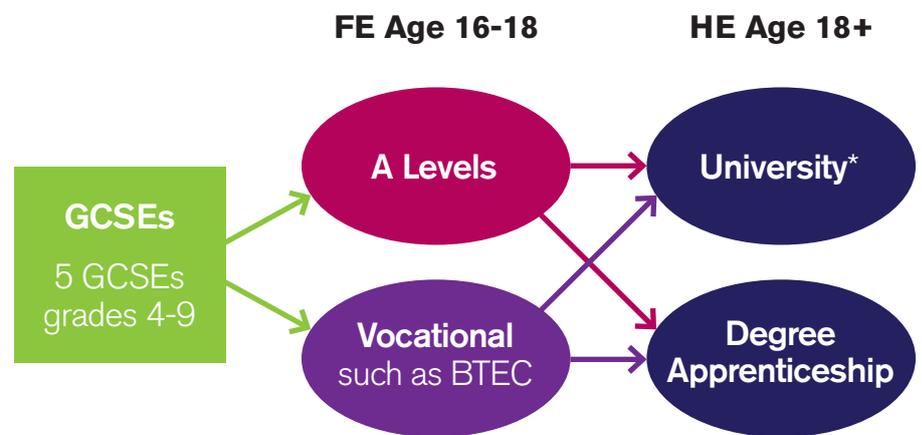
The HeppSY website has a section dedicated to parents with lots of useful information and videos to help you support your child to make an informed choice. There is also the facility to ask our careers team any questions you may have.

Other useful websites

- UCAS - www.ucas.com
- Student Finance - www.gov.uk/studentfinance
- Which? University - university.which.co.uk
- Discover Uni - www.discoveruni.org.uk
- Prospects - www.prospects.ac.uk
- The Money Saving Expert - moneysavingexpert.com/students
- Hepp - www.hepp.ac.uk

What is higher education?

Higher education (HE) refers to qualifications and courses available to people after finishing level 3 study.



*Your child can study higher-level courses at universities, some further education colleges and some private training providers.

There are lots of higher education qualifications to choose from, including:

- Bachelor's Degrees
- Foundation Degrees
- Higher and Degree Apprenticeships
- Higher National Certificates and Diplomas

Anyone studying a degree-level course in higher education is known as an undergraduate, and those who successfully complete their degree course are called graduates.

Why choose higher education?

Financial & career benefits



- Graduates can 'fast track' within certain careers, often through graduate schemes and earn more money



- Many higher level and higher paid jobs require applicants to have a degree or equivalent level qualification



- Young people will develop skills for employment, including transferable skills ranging from organisation, to hands-on work experience.

Student experience



- Your child can study a subject they are passionate about or discover something brand new



- Students can choose to either stay at home or move away from home and live independently



- Many courses offer the possibility of studying abroad or completing a work placement

What should your child be thinking about and when?

Year 9

They will start to think about what they want to do next and may be making their GCSE choices. It's important to think about:

- What do they enjoy?
- What are they good at?
- Now is a great opportunity to explore new and different subjects
- Don't forget to check if there are specific GCSEs they need for their higher education choice

Year 10

Now is the time when they will start their GCSEs and take mock exams. They may also start to think about what they want to do after school:

- Is there work experience or voluntary experience they can get which links to the career they have in mind?
- Do they know what A Levels or BTECs they would like to pursue?

Year 11

Their final year at school will be busy with exams:

- Make sure they start revising early and create a revision planner
- Visit local colleges and sixth forms to see where they'd like to go after school
- Find out what subjects and qualifications are best for the higher education course or career they are interested in

Year 12

This is their first year at sixth form or college and your child will start the courses they've chosen to study at A Level or BTEC. They should also be preparing to apply to higher education:

- Research courses and institutions
- Visit open days and UCAS fairs
- Find out about the higher education application process, visit: www.ucas.com
- Try and get relevant work experience or do some volunteering
- Do they have enough relevant experience and things to talk about for their UCAS personal statement? If not, it's not too late to do something about it!

Year 13

In their final year at sixth form or college your child will complete their higher education application early in the year – so it's important to be prepared!

- Make sure they know their school/college deadline for applying (this may be earlier than the UCAS deadline)
- Double check course details and entry requirements BEFORE applying
- Try to attend visit days at the institution when they make an offer
- Respond within the deadlines set by UCAS or the institutions they have applied to
- Apply early for student finance and accommodation (if applicable)

Student finance explained

There are two main things that your child will pay for in higher education: learning and living.

Student Finance England is the government organisation who provide first-time students with a student loan to help pay for their higher education study.

Student loans are split into two parts:

Tuition fee loans

Tuition fees are currently up to £9,250 and cover things like lecturers' wages and facilities such as libraries, labs and equipment. For most first-time students, tuition fee loans will cover the full cost of tuition fees, which are paid directly to the university or college.

Living cost (maintenance) loans

This loan helps to cover the cost of accommodation, travel, food, basic essentials and socialising.



Paying it back

Once your child has finished their studies it's time to pay back the loan. However, they won't pay back anything until they earn above the threshold, which is currently £26,575 and then they will pay 9% of what they earn over that amount.

For example: If they earn £27,575 then they will earn £1000 over the threshold and they will pay back 9% of this: 9% of £1000 = £90 per year.

Bursaries and scholarships

Bursaries are funds that do not have to be paid back. They are given to some students by their university/college or by different charities.

Scholarships can be full or part funded and are awarded to students by an institution based around certain factors. This could be talent based, household circumstances, academic achievement or through an agreement or partnership with the school or college they previously attended.

It is worth checking with your child's chosen institution to see if they are eligible.



UCAS

UCAS is The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. The majority of students applying to higher education will apply through UCAS. www.ucas.com



The UCAS system allows students to search for courses, find out about course content and entry requirements, and submit applications to prospective institutions.

Students are able to apply for up to five courses initially, which can be at different institutions or all at the same institution.

There is a cost for making an application, the current figures are:

- 1 choice = £20
- 2-5 choices = £25

Open Days

Open days are a great way to find out more about a higher education institution. Throughout the year all higher education providers hold open days. During these events, you can:

- Take a look around the campus and facilities, including visiting lecture theatres, seminar rooms and the Students' Union
- Hear more about courses that your child is interested in
- Talk to lecturers and other academics
- Visit the surrounding area and tour student accommodation
- Hear from student ambassadors – current students employed to talk about their university experience and tell you what it is like to study there



It's worth attending open days at more than one institution so you can make comparisons and ensure your child makes the right decision about both the course and the institution.