



GET INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

Tutor's resource materials for Years 12–13
2008/09



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01

INTRODUCTION



Using this pack

The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills' Aimhigher campaign is all about promoting higher education and encouraging young people to 'aim higher', especially young people from families with no tradition of higher education.

You are probably already helping your students decide which careers and further qualifications are right for them: the materials in this pack have been designed to help you.

What is it?

Get into Higher Education has been produced by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills to help further education and sixth form tutors encourage their students to explore the benefits and opportunities of higher education.

Who is it for?

These materials will benefit all post-GCSE students who are deciding what to do when they leave college or sixth form, and particularly those on vocational courses who may not have considered progressing on to higher education. The pack addresses two common barriers to young people getting into higher education:

- The perception that higher education is not for them
- Concerns about whether they – and their families – can afford it

What is in the pack?

Do not feel you have to use all the information in this pack – pick and choose the activities from each of the sections that will work best with your students. The materials are divided into five sections and each one is colour coded to help you find your way round quickly and easily.

02 **What is HE and what is it all about?** – Practical information about higher education, including what all the jargon means, what a day entails and examples from former students about the choices they made.

03 **Careers: Skills, courses and qualifications** – Careers information on the skills, abilities and opportunities offered by higher education, including details about courses and institutions.

04 **Finances** – Practical information about costs, budgeting and funding, with activities that show pupils how to manage their money.

05 **Next steps: How to apply...** – This section consolidates the information given in the previous sections and provides a practical checklist of what to do next for students who have decided to apply to a higher education institution.

06 **Factsheets** – Facts and figures supporting all the activities in the pack.

How to use it

This pack contains four different types of material:



Activities: These range from group discussions to role plays to quizzes. Each activity gives a suggested timing – this is an estimate only. You can spend more or less time depending on your students' and your own preference. In general most activities take less than 30 minutes. Wherever possible all the materials you need for a specific activity are included in the pack.



Handouts: These may be photocopied and given to your students.



Tutor's notes: These are linked to some of the activities and provide answers to the quizzes.



Factsheets: These are linked to various activities and provide facts, figures and supplementary information.

Not all the activities have handouts, and not all the handouts are accompanied by Tutor's notes. Each activity lists the resources you need, and the relevant handouts and notes follow immediately after. Factsheets can relate to several different sections and these are stored separately at the end of the pack.

This pack was not designed for all of the activities to be used – pick and choose activities which are suitable for your class.

Further resources

Direct Gov: www.direct.gov.uk/uni

The Direct Gov website is a 'gateway' where you and your students can find out all the information they need when it comes to higher education. Where the portal could be a useful reference tool for a particular activity or handout, we have included an icon that looks like this:

The logo for Aimhigher, featuring a stylized 'A' made of two overlapping triangles (one blue, one green) followed by the text 'imhigher...' in a blue, sans-serif font.

www.direct.gov.uk/uni

What do you think?

We need to know if you and your students have enjoyed using this pack and found it useful, so we can make improvements to future publications. Please fill in an online questionnaire at www.teachernet.gov.uk/aimhigherfeedback Thank you!

ACTIVITIES

	10–20 minutes	20–30 minutes	30 minutes or more	Whole class	Small groups/ pairs	Individual	Page no
What is higher education and what is it really like?							
What is higher education about?			X	X			10
Help!			X	X			11
Why do people go on to higher education?	X			X			13
If I were you...			X		X		21
A day in the life...		X		X	X		25
Encouraging people to get into higher education		X		X			28
Straight from the horse's mouth			X	X			31
Careers: Skills, courses and qualifications							
Where will I be in ten years' time?			X		X	X	34
Courses galore	X			X			38
Where to study...		X			X		41
Skills and strengths		X		X	X		48
That's the job for me	X				X	X	49
Routes into a career	X				X		52
Name that job		X		X	X		53
Work it out!		X			X	X	57
Richer pickings		X			X	X	61

	10–20 minutes	20–30 minutes	30 minutes or more	Whole class	Small groups/pairs	Individual	Page no
Finances							
Where does the money come from? X					X	X	68
Spend, spend, spend...			X		X		75
Balance your budget			X		X	X	78
When a loan isn't a loan (when it is a student loan)			X		X	X	80
To work or not to work?			X		X	X	83
Payback time		X			X	X	87
Next steps: How to apply...							
Web check		X		X	X	X	92
Applying for a course X					X	X	93
Next steps checklist X				X	X	X	94
Factsheets							
Things you always wanted to know about higher education				X	X	X	100
Higher education institutions and qualifications				X	X	X	103
Jargon buster				X	X	X	106
Money matters				X	X	X	111
Salary facts and figures				X	X	X	116
Where to find out more				X	X	X	117
Choosing and applying for a higher education place				X	X	X	120



02

WHAT IS HIGHER EDUCATION AND WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

The aim of this section is for students to understand what higher education means and to start thinking about the benefits it can bring. There are also activities that help to challenge the preconceptions students might have about higher education and also to find out what to expect.

The factsheets also offer key information for students heading to university. So if you are short for time, ask your students to look at these at home.

CONTENTS

Activity	Suggested time (minutes)	Handouts	Details	Links to:
What is higher education all about?	30		Explaining higher education jargon and brainstorming options	Activity 2, 3, 6, 9, 21 and 24, Factsheet 1, 2 and 3
Help!	30		Sources useful to students wanting to apply or research their options	Activity 3, 4, 10, 17, 23 and 25, Factsheet 6
Why do people go on to higher education?	10		Reasons for and against going on to higher education	Activity 1, 2, 15, 16, 22 and 23, Factsheet 3
If I were you...	30	Handout 4a	Activity asking students to come up with suitable careers advice	Activity 2, 8, 9, 17, 20, 21, 23 and 25
A day in the life...	20	Handout 5a	What is higher education like? A couple of students share their daily schedule	Activity 10, 12, 18, 23 and 25
Encouraging people into higher education	10–20		Why does the Government encourage higher education?	Activity 12, 15, 20, 23 and 25
Straight from the horse's mouth...	30–45		Asking back former students who are now in higher education	Activity 9, 10, 17, 18, 20, 22 23, 24 and 25



ACTIVITY 1

What is higher education about?

SUGGESTED TIME: 30 minutes

RESOURCES: Factsheet 1 / Factsheet 2 / Factsheet 3



Part 1: As a quick introduction, ask students to answer the following questions, either individually, in pairs or as a whole class.

- What do BA and BSc stand for?
- What is a semester?
- What is the difference between a lecture and a seminar?
- What is a sandwich course?
- What does UCAS stand for?
- What might you do in a gap year?
- What is a fresher?
- What is a campus?
- What does Clearing mean?
- What are halls of residence?

You can choose your own selection of questions – and find the answers – from **Factsheet 3**.

Part 2: As a whole group, ask students to brainstorm their ideas about higher education.

Ask them to consider:

- The range of higher education options – what sorts and levels of courses can you take at a higher education institution? How many years does it take?
- The difference between further education and higher education – are they aimed at different types of people, different ages, different sorts of qualification?

Use **Factsheet 1** and **Factsheet 2** as handouts or as teaching notes to talk students through the options and help them get a better feel for what higher education means.



ACTIVITY 2

Help!

SUGGESTED TIME: 30 minutes

RESOURCES: Tutor's notes 2a / Factsheet 6



Ask the class to come up with six ways of finding out more about higher education. You may want to specify that they should include three types of people they can ask, and three sources.

The following might be useful as a starting point:

People

Students

Family

Friends

Teachers

Connexions Personal Advisers

Sources

Aimhigher portal: www.direct.gov.uk/uni

Connexions: www.connexions-direct.com

www.ucas.com

Schools

Workplace

Colleges and universities

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

<http://yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas>

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Put all these points on the board, including the ones which your students come up with.

What sort of advice and information can you get from different organisations?

The answers are provided in **Tutor's notes 2a**.

Make sure all the sources listed in the Tutor's notes have been mentioned and get students to think about how easy it is to access them.



TUTOR'S NOTES 2A

Help!

Page 1 of 1

Advice and information from each of the organisations are as follows*:

Information on official sources of loans and grants available to students.

- www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance
- Connexions Personal Advisers
- www.connexions-direct.com
- Colleges and Universities
- Student Finance England

Information on clubs and societies, sport and recreation, social life, accommodation, childcare, counselling, finance and other welfare services available at your university or college.

- Connexions Personal Advisers
- www.connexions-direct.com
- Colleges and Universities
- www.direct.gov.uk/uni

Individual guidance on deciding what and where to study your degree (or diploma) and on getting into university or college.

- Schools
- colleges and universities
- Connexions Personal Advisers
- www.direct.gov.uk/uni
- www.connexions-direct.com
- <http://yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas>

Information on the different courses and what you need to do if you want to apply to go to university or college.

- www.ucas.com
- Colleges and universities
- Connexions Personal Advisers
- www.direct.gov.uk/uni
- www.connexions-direct.com
- <http://yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas>

**This is not an exhaustive list of the organisations which provide information about higher education nor is this the full range of their capabilities.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni



ACTIVITY 3

Why do people go on to higher education?

SUGGESTED TIME: 10 minutes

RESOURCES: Factsheet 3 / Tutor's notes 3a / Handouts 3a and 3b



Part 1: As a whole class, get your students to give reasons why people may, or may not go on to higher education – encourage them to be as imaginative as possible. **Tutor's notes 3a** give some suggestions that could help get the brainstorm started.

Alternatively, ask the students to produce a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) of going on to higher education. This could be done as part of a group or individually.

Part 2: Ask students to describe what sort of people they think will go on to higher education and which ones wouldn't, for example brainy, sporty, rich, poor, religious? Why do they think this?

Encourage them to think about what might put certain people off, eg money, friends, freedom, hard work, lack of support from family? Are these good reasons?

As a summary, students may wish to read the examples from other students of their experiences of university on **Handouts 3a** and **3b**.



TUTOR'S NOTES 3A

Why do people go on to higher education?

Page 1 of 4

This list is not exhaustive, and your students may well come up with different suggestions. The important thing is that there is no right or wrong answer to this – people choose to go to university or college for all sorts of reasons.

Some reasons why people might go on to higher education

- To carry on studying something they enjoy and want to find out about in more depth.
- To improve their career prospects – higher education helps open up more career opportunities and a better chance of promotion.
- Those with higher education qualifications earn more on average over their lifetime compared with those who continue in education post-16 but don't then go into higher education. For example, over their working life, the average graduate will earn comfortably over £100,000 more in today's valuation, net of tax, than a similar individual who completed their education with 2 or more A-levels.
- To expand their horizons – higher education is more than just a qualification, it opens up possibilities of travel, joining new clubs, meeting people from different backgrounds and being more independent.
- Going to university or college is not just about work, work, work. It is also a chance to find out more about yourself and have fun while you are doing it.
- To make a whole load of new friends.
- Additional benefits include: cheap travel, cheap cinema discounts and student discounts on clothes, haircuts, food and drink.
- Up and coming – and big – bands play in your student union. Tickets are much cheaper than a concert!
- If you fancy learning how to kickbox, abseil, play drums in a band, tap-dance – this could be your chance. University clubs offer something for everyone.
- Opportunity to travel – many courses offer you the option of spending time abroad, studying or working, as part of your degree or higher education qualification.



TUTOR'S NOTES 3A

Why do people go on to higher education?

Page 2 of 4

Examples of how it is open to everyone

- With 50,000 different courses to choose from, there is a suitable academic or vocational course out there for everyone.
- Studying can be from home or in another town/city – it is your choice.
- You do not have to do it full-time, you could do it part-time instead.
- Higher education is accessible to everyone with the ability – regardless of background, age, gender, religion or financial circumstances.

Reasons why people may not go on to higher education

“It costs too much”

It is proposed that universities and colleges of higher education will be able to charge new full-time undergraduates fees of up to £3,225. Some may charge less than the maximum of £3,225. Financial help is available. Students study first and pay back when they are earning. A loan is available to eligible, full-time students to cover the full tuition fees. The loan is not means tested.

Students can also apply for a student loan for living costs. This will be based on household income, where the student lives while they are studying and the amount of any maintenance grant in payment. It is proposed that students from lower income households could be eligible for a non-repayable grant of up to £2,906. Students with a household income of £25,000 or less will get the full grant and students with a household income worth between £25,001 and £50,020 (approximately) are likely to get a partial maintenance grant. These figures are subject to change and students should check out the financial package they may be eligible for nearer the time. Many colleges/universities offer non-repayable bursaries – students should check out what their preferred universities or colleges are offering.

All universities and colleges charging the full £3,225 fee for a course will have to provide additional support worth at least £310 to students on those courses who receive the full grant of £2,906. Many universities and colleges have offered to do much more than this. Extra help such as that from the Access to Learning fund will continue to be available to students in financial difficulty.

For those students wishing to study part-time there is also a package of support available. The package of support is means tested and eligible part-time students can apply for a course grant of £260 and a fee grant of up to £1,210. It is up to the university or college to set the fee rate, but it is likely to differ from that charged for full-time courses and the student should check with their chosen university to find out more about the costs.



TUTOR'S NOTES 3A

Why do people go on to higher education?

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“I’m going to end up owing loads of money”

Your fee loans and maintenance loans from the Student Loan Company will be bundled together to be repaid as one package after you have left university or college. Student loans are paid back at 9% of your earnings above £15,000 a year, so someone earning a salary of £18,000 would repay around £5.19 per week.

For those who enter repayment in **April 2012** or later there is the option of a repayment holiday of up to five years. However only the loan is put on hold, the interest continues to accrue.

You could also work in the long holidays or do part-time work whilst you are at college or university to top up your money.

“It’s just like school”

University is not at all like school – though you still have to study, you have more control over what and how you study. You may choose to live away from home in university halls or shared student accommodation.

“I won’t be able to find a course for me”

There are over 50,000 HE courses available, ranging from English and chemistry to jazz and puppetry! You can study something you are already studying at sixth form or college, or try something completely new. You can also decide whether you want to study full-time or part-time, or even learn in the workplace.

Many jobs require certain qualifications, and the course you take can help you learn more about the job you want to do, for example engineering. It can also help you to get a better salary – and on average twice as many promotions as non-graduates.

“I don’t want to move away from home”

You do not necessarily need to move away from home to make the most of higher education – you could choose a course at a local college or university. If you do have to move away to do your course, it may turn out to be a great experience to make new friends and enjoy university social life.



TUTOR'S NOTES 3A

Why do people go on to higher education?

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“I’m worried about making new friends”

Higher education is a great opportunity to make new friends. You will come into contact with lots of different people – from a mixture of backgrounds and countries and a range of ages. And everyone is in the same boat as you and wants to make new friends too.

“It’s not for people like me”

All kinds of people go on to higher education – in fact, it is a great opportunity to meet and mix with a range of people from different backgrounds.

Higher education is open to everyone with ability, whatever their background.



HANDOUT 3A

Why do people go on to higher education?

Page 1 of 2

TRUE STORIES – MEET NUNONS TAGOE-BORLLONS

For most of her time spent at secondary school and sixth form college, Nunons Tagoe-Borllons did not think higher education was for her. However, thanks to some inspirational teachers and participation in a number of Aimhigher activities, she is now studying Law and Economics at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).

"No one in my immediate family had been to university and of the people I did know that had, they had hefty student loans to pay back after graduating. I was also sceptical about what a degree could offer me. I could see a degree would be valuable but I also knew that today's graduates need something more in order to achieve the very best."

It was not until Nunons became involved in the Aimhigher programme and received encouragement from her teachers that she began to realise how much she could gain from going to university.

"At secondary school I was able to go on an Aimhigher summer school and speak to students and lecturers to find out what going to university is really like and what opportunities it might offer me."

"Once I had started at sixth form, the head encouraged me to think seriously about higher education and the various options available. At the very least he wanted me to apply, in order for that door to be opened."

"I realised that going to university wasn't just about getting a degree, although that was important, it was also about meeting new people, developing new interests through clubs and societies and learning transferable skills that would help me throughout my career. These are opportunities that I don't think I would have had if I'd decided not to progress to higher education."



HANDOUT 3A

Why do people go on to higher education?

Page 2 of 2

So, what was it like?

Like many students, Nunons was nervous about making new friends when she first started at university.

"As I am the first in my family to go to university, I was able to go on a one week introductory course at SOAS. I met people during that week that I am still friends with now and it gave me the confidence to approach other undergraduate students when the semester began."

"It is challenging to make friends when you first arrive but eventually everyone mixes together and friendship groups form."

Nunons has taken advantage of the student finance measures available to her in the form of loans and grants.

"There's a lot of help available so I would advise prospective students to apply early."

And what's next?

"I'm now considering what career path to take and I'm looking at the Civil Service, accountancy, finance and teaching. I'm currently applying for a position as a teaching assistant to find out more about what it's like to be a teacher."

"I'm also a student ambassador so I am able to go back into schools and explain to pupils who are in a similar position to me what university is like."

"I think university was definitely the right choice for me. I have learnt so much, not just through my course but from the many other opportunities that higher education offers."



HANDOUT 3B

Why do people go on to higher education?

Page 1 of 1

TRUE STORIES – MEET ADAM BRETT

Despite the fact that no one else in his family had been, Adam's family always encouraged him to go to university. Being dyslexic did not hinder him; rather it spurred him on to aim higher.

"Most of my teachers were very supportive and believed in my capabilities. And now I have received a disability support allowance at university, I have access to a greater range of resources to help me with my studies. I have also received one to one support which I have found really useful when writing my essays and preparing presentations. This isn't just with my lectures but also with study skills as well."

Adam is in his second year of studying Physical Education and Sport at the University of Greenwich.

"I'm a pretty lively person so I found it easy to make friends. Freshers' Week really helped too as there were loads of different events to go to and clubs to join. The whole university experience so far has been fantastic. I have found my lecturers, friends and work colleagues really supportive. Everyone has found different options for me to do so I am able to follow my future career which is teaching."

Adam receives a student loan and also a disability support allowance for his dyslexia which helps towards the cost of books and IT equipment.

"I found out about the disability support allowance when I applied for a student loan. I was sent an information booklet about all the different types of grants and allowances available and information on how to apply."

"There are many opportunities that I have been able to take advantage of since being at university that I don't think I would've come across if I'd chosen a different path. I'm really enjoying my course, I'm part of the rugby and athletics clubs and I'm also an Aimhigher student ambassador."

What's next?

"When I graduate I want to become a PE teacher and move to Australia. Most of all, I want to make sure the children that I teach are given every opportunity to succeed."



ACTIVITY 4

If I were you...

SUGGESTED TIME: 30 minutes

RESOURCES: Handouts 4a and 4b / Tutor's notes 4a



As an introductory exercise, ask students to fill in the missing words from **Handout 4a** and match the quotes to the people.

To consolidate what has been covered in the previous activity, students now need to act as a Connexions Personal Adviser for three young people using **Handout 4b**. If you have not used Activity 3, **Tutor's notes 4a** may be useful.

Split the class into three groups and ask each group to choose Katrina, Mark or Narinder. Each group needs a volunteer to 'play' their character. The other members are there to encourage Katrina, Mark or Narinder to plan for their future and to come up with answers to their questions.

They need to think about:

- What sort of job Katrina, Mark or Narinder want to do
- How much they would like to earn
- The qualifications they will need to get that job
- Where they can get them
- How they will fund their time in higher education
- Issues around being away from home or not, leaving family and friends
- Making new friends

Ask each group to summarise to the whole group how Katrina, Mark or Narinder felt at the beginning of the exercise, how they felt at the end and what made the difference. If there were no differences, ask students to explain what the obstacles were.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com



HANDOUT 4A

How I got where I am today

Page 1 of 1

Mike Thomson (Paediatrician – Royal Free Hospital)

Alex Onyeador (Technology Graduate Trainee – Royal Bank of Scotland Group)

Gemma O’Keeffe (Marketing – learn.co.uk)

Gordon Banks (Sports Development – NSPCC)

Richard Spalding (Regional Account Manager – Dell Computers)

Cate Miller (Multinational Sales – American Express)

“University was the best thing that ever happened to me. Without it I would now be working in a bottle top factory in my local town with my aunts, uncles and grandparents. Those four years showed me my own potential and the opportunities available to me if I work hard enough.”

“Without my degree in Sports Science I wouldn’t have got into the interview room – never mind get the job I wanted. University also gave me some of my most treasured memories – what a great time!”

“Without my degree, I wouldn’t have got onto the graduate training programme with the Royal Bank of Scotland Group. I joined in October 2002, and haven’t looked back since! I met all the other graduates on the induction programme in Edinburgh and have learned loads of things on the training programme. It’s great. My job always provides new and exciting challenges. I’m so glad that I carried on with my education, otherwise I might not have the opportunities I have now.”

“Doing a degree gave me loads of confidence – it was the best time of my life. Qualifications aren’t everything, but I wanted a good job that was challenging, interesting and, more importantly, paid well! Without my degree I wouldn’t have managed that.”

University was great. Three years of fun and then, as a graduate employee, I’ve had fast-track opportunities which have really boosted my career progress. Being at university taught me how to be self-reliant and to decide on the career I really wanted. Without my degree, it would have been much harder to get into the IT industry, and my career certainly wouldn’t have progressed as fast as it has.”

“Medical school life really did live up to my expectations. It is a place to make friends and keep them, and to learn independence and the value of things in life. It’s given me a ticket to travel all over the world, to pursue a career with a job which makes me actually want to get out of bed in the morning, and to do it all with a balanced perspective.”



TUTOR'S NOTES 4A

How I got where I am today

Page 1 of 1

"University was the best thing that ever happened to me. Without it I would now be working in a bottle top factory in my local town with my aunts, uncles and grandparents. Those four years showed me my own potential and the opportunities available to me if I work hard enough."

Gemma O'Keeffe (Marketing – learn.co.uk)

"Without my degree in Sports Science I wouldn't have got into the interview room – never mind get the job I wanted. University also gave me some of my most treasured memories – what a great time!"

**Gordon Banks
(Sports Development – NSPCC)**

"Without my degree, I wouldn't have got onto the graduate training programme with the Royal Bank of Scotland Group. I joined in October 2002, and haven't looked back since! I met all the other graduates on the induction programme in Edinburgh and have learned loads of things on the training programme. It's great. My job always provides new and exciting challenges. I'm so glad that I carried on with my education, otherwise I might not have the opportunities I have now."

Alex Onyeador (Technology Graduate Trainee – Royal Bank of Scotland Group)

"Doing a degree gave me loads of confidence – it was the best time of my life. Qualifications aren't everything, but I wanted a good job that was challenging, interesting and, more importantly, paid well! Without my degree I wouldn't have managed that."

Cate Miller (Multinational Sales – American Express)

University was great. Three years of fun and then, as a graduate employee, I've had fast-track opportunities which have really boosted my career progress. Being at university taught me how to be self-reliant and to decide on the career I really wanted. Without my degree, it would have been much harder to get into the IT industry, and my career certainly wouldn't have progressed as fast as it has."

**Richard Spalding
(Regional Account Manager –
Dell Computers)**

"Medical school life really did live up to my expectations. It is a place to make friends and keep them, and to learn independence and the value of things in life. It's given me a ticket to travel all over the world, to pursue a career with a job which makes me actually want to get out of bed in the morning, and to do it all with a balanced perspective."

**Mike Thomson
(Paediatrician – Royal Free Hospital)**



HANDOUT 4B

If I were you...

Page 1 of 1

KATRINA

Katrina is doing three A-levels – English, Maths and Psychology – at a further education college. She knows she'd like to work with people, but doesn't have much confidence and has no idea of what to do next. She plays for a local football team, has a part-time bar job and lives with her mum and two sisters. Her older sister has just lost her job and though her mum hasn't said anything yet, Katrina knows that they could do with someone else bringing in the money. None of her college friends are planning to go on to higher education, but her best friend is going to do an art foundation course locally.

MARK

Mark is doing a BTEC in Computing at a further education college. He's really into computers and the internet and has just helped design a website for his brother's business. He can't wait to finish his course so he can spend more time with his mates. Though he's enjoyed the course, he's fed up with sitting in lessons and spending what seems like all his evenings on homework – he wants to get stuck into the practical side of things and says he can become a website designer just by practising and doing some unpaid sites for friends.

NARINDER

Narinder had a struggle to persuade her parents that she should go to further education college to study for a BTEC in Business. She thinks it'll be even harder to persuade them to let her go on to do a degree – especially as she'd like to go to a university 150 miles from home. No one in her family has ever gone to university. Her older brother went to the local higher education college but left after his first year, saying he did not feel he was being taught anything useful. He now works with their dad in the family business.



ACTIVITY 5

A day in the life...

SUGGESTED TIME: 20 minutes

RESOURCES: Handout 5a



Ask your students to write down details of how they spend a typical college day – from leaving home to going to bed. Get them to break the day into two-hour chunks and give as much detail as possible.

Then give them one of the two “A day in the life...” handouts. In groups of three or four, ask them to come up with a list of differences they can spot between a further education college and a higher education institution.

Feed back in a whole group discussion.



HANDOUT 5A

A day in the life...

Page 1 of 1

LISA SWALES

After completing a nursing diploma and an access course, Lisa went on to Sunderland University to do an Honours degree in Early Childhood Studies. She gets on well with people on her course and loves the fact that Sunderland combines beach and city.

When she graduates she'd like to work in social services or child welfare.

“The university is great and I’m really enjoying my course.”

8.45

Leave for uni



9.00

Get to university



9.30

First lecture



10.15

Seminar group



12.00

Lunch with friends



13.00

Private study



16.00

Go to sports club



19.00

Go out with friends



HANDOUT 5B

A day in the life...

Page 1 of 1

DAVID LANGLANDS

David has 11 GCSEs and 3 A-levels and wants to work in medical research. He's studying biology and chose Durham because it was a leading university for that subject. He lives in halls to make the most of university social life.

David has lectures and practical work most days from 9am–5pm but still has time to go to the cinema and go clubbing with friends!

“For me, Durham offered something different to other universities and more opportunities to get a better job.”

8.40

Leave halls



8.50

Arrive at university



9.00

Practical lab work



12.30

Lunch with friends



14.00

Lectures



17.00

Cycle to the gym



18.30

Meet with friends



20.00

Private study



ACTIVITY 6

Encouraging people to get into higher education

SUGGESTED TIME: 10–20 minutes

RESOURCES: Tutor's notes 6a



This activity is partly to recap the content covered earlier in the pack and also to raise awareness about Government policy and why the Government is encouraging more people to go on to higher education.

Throw this question out to the class:

“Now you’ve found out more about higher education and explored some of the benefits, why do you think the Government wants to encourage more people – like yourselves – to go to university or college?”

Get the class to work in small groups to come up with three reasons each.

The **Tutor's notes 6a** should give you some ideas of possible answers.



TUTOR'S NOTES 6A

Encouraging people to get into higher education

Page 1 of 2

Why does the Government want more people to go on to higher education?

Widening access to higher education is a crucial priority for the Government. Our aim is to promote and provide the opportunity of successful participation in higher education to everyone who can benefit from it. Achieving this is vital for social justice and economic competitiveness.

Jointly funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE: www.hefce.ac.uk) and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS: www.dius.gov.uk), Aimhigher is a national programme which aims to widen participation in higher education by raising higher education awareness, aspirations and educational attainment amongst young people from under-represented groups. The Aimhigher programme operates nationally across 44 area partnerships throughout England.

Ten reasons for encouraging more students to study for higher education qualifications

- To raise young people's aspirations and help them make the most of their talent and potential.
- To give people from all different social or financial backgrounds the opportunity to access higher education – to show that higher education is accessible to everyone with the ability.
- To improve young people's career prospects – higher education can help open up a wider range of opportunities and a more rewarding career.
- To help young people get better jobs and earn more money. On average, people with a higher education qualification tend to earn substantially more than people with A-levels who did not go to university (approximately £100,000 before tax over a working lifetime).
- To expand the horizons of more young people – higher education is fun and offers a lot more than just a qualification.
- University or college lets you experience a rich cultural and social scene, meeting a variety of people while studying something you love.
- There are over 50,000 different courses on offer nationally, so there is a suitable academic or vocational course out there for everyone.
- Having a higher education qualification means you are less likely to be unemployed.
- To develop important life skills such as responsibility, dealing with money and bills, and organising time.
- To benefit the UK economy and help us compete globally against other countries in Europe, the United States and Asia.

Forecasts by the Institute for Employment Research show that of the 18 million jobs expected to become vacant between 2004 and 2020, half will be in the occupations most likely to employ graduates.



TUTOR'S NOTES 6A

Encouraging people to get into higher education

Page 2 of 2

About Aimhigher

Most Aimhigher activities are developed and delivered at an area level, which allows them to be tailored to the needs of specific communities. Ask the Careers Coordinator or Connexions Personal Adviser at your school or college whether they're hosting an Aimhigher event or other activities to do with applying for higher education.

The following activities take place in all areas of the country:

- Campus visits
- Mentoring
- Master classes, including subject enrichment or revision sessions
- Student ambassadors
- Information, advice and guidance (IAG)
- Summer schools and HE-related residential experiences
- School or college based interventions

Activities delivered at an area level are supported by national Aimhigher activity: the Aimhigher roadshow, the largest of its kind in Europe, tours schools and colleges across the country and encourages young people to consider the benefits of higher education and the different options available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.aimhigher.ac.uk/practitioner



ACTIVITY 7

Straight from the horse's mouth

SUGGESTED TIME: 30–45 minutes



Invite former students, who are now in higher education, back into college for a question and answer session with the group.

This can be an excellent way for the group to find out more about life in higher education and how real people coped with issues such as being away from home for the first time, new ways of studying, or money problems.



03

CAREERS: SKILLS, COURSES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The section is designed to help students think about what job they want to do, and how to achieve that goal. The activities have been structured in a way which makes students think about how they can get to their chosen career: skills and strengths, career options, courses and qualifications.

The factsheets also offer key information for students heading to university. So if you are short for time, ask your students to look at these at home.

CONTENTS

Activity	Suggested time (minutes)	Handouts	Details	Links to:
Where will I be in ten years' time?	30	Handout 8a	This activity encourages forward thinking and provides details of different types of qualifications	Activity 1, 4, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16
Courses galore	10	Handout 9a	This quick quiz involves all the the class answering questions about courses	Activity 4, 7, 8, 10, 13 and 14
Where to study	20	Handout 10a and 10b	Options of where to study: home, move out? Live close to home or far away?	Activity 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 17 and 18
Skills and strengths	30		What skills and attributes are needed for certain jobs?	Activity 9, 12, 13, 14 and 15
That's the job for me	20	Handout 12a	What do employers look for in their employees? This activity discusses this issue	Activity 6, 8 and 11
Routes into a career	15–20		Without going into higher education, how do you get into certain jobs?	Activity 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 22 and 25
Name that job!	20	Handout 14a	This shows students the varying jobs available within one organisation	Activity 3, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 13
Work it out!	20–30	Handout 15a	How higher education has a direct effect upon salary	Activity 3, 8, 13 and 16
Richer pickings	30	Handout 16a	Comparing salary figures of two people: one with a higher education qualification and another without	Activity 3, 8, 11, 13 and 15



ACTIVITY 8

Where will I be in ten years' time?

SUGGESTED TIME: 30 minutes

RESOURCES: Handout 8a



Ask your students to draw up two scenarios – one ideal and one more realistic.

They can ask themselves:

- What job will I be doing?
- How much will I be earning?
- Where will I be living?
- Will I need qualifications? If so, what sort?
- Do I need to speak a foreign language?
- Will I need to travel?
- How much work experience will I need?
- How will my career develop?
- Will I stay with the same company?
- Will I stay in the same area, or country?

Using these lists, ask them to design their own route map of how they will get from where they are now to their ideal choice and to their realistic goal.

Get pairs of students to swap their route maps and review them, suggesting alternatives to each other, or highlighting missing 'links'.

Use **Handout 8a** to show the different routes and options available for getting into higher education.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

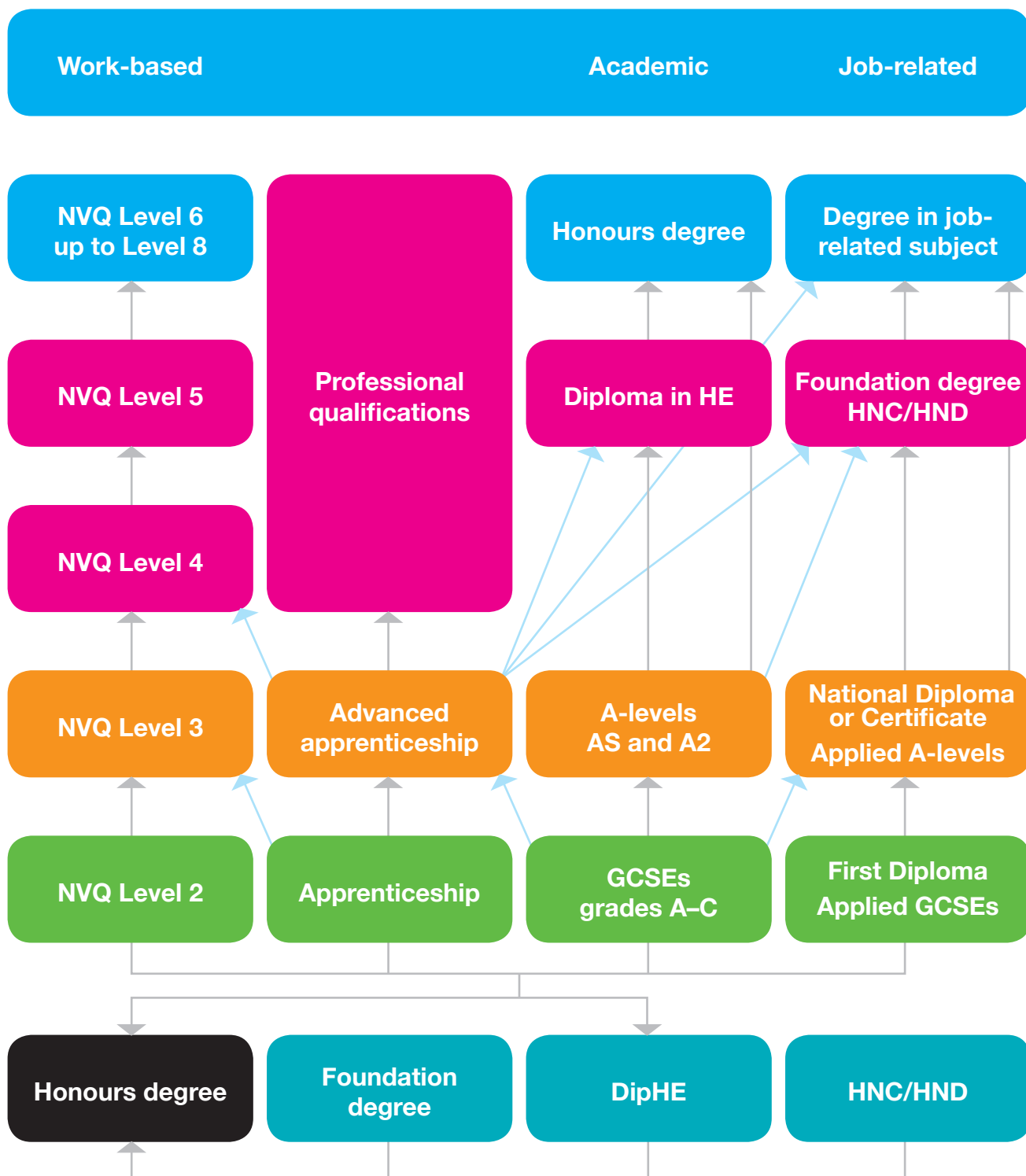
www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com



HANDOUT 8A

Possible routes into higher education

Page 1 of 3





HANDOUT 8A

Possible routes into higher education

Page 2 of 3

There are many different routes to getting a degree, some direct and some involving a combination of qualifications.

Some students choose to do an HNC/HND, Foundation degree or DipHE whilst others choose to go directly on to an Honours degree course.

There is no 'right' way into higher education – get advice and further information from your Connexions Personal Adviser, careers teacher or your tutor, especially to discuss the pros and cons of the different routes to HE and what's best for you. For more impartial information, advice and guidance about your choices and options, take a look at www.connexions-direct.com

Routes from further education

- **Vocational courses** such as NVQs and Applied GCSEs, Applied A-levels and BTECs
- **General education courses** cover A-levels, AS levels, and Applied A-levels
- **Access courses** are a route for mature students and can lead to study at a higher level. Courses are offered at different levels and accredited to open colleges.

Higher education options

There is a whole range of higher education options available – both general and vocational. Almost all higher education courses allow you to progress directly on to an Honours degree programme, if you want to, course requirements permitting.

Honours degrees tend to be full-time (with some institutions offering a part-time option) and most last three years – though courses such as medicine can take up to six years to complete. Some, for example in science or engineering, last four years and include a year in industry. An Honours degree in languages is likely to include a placement abroad. You could choose to continue with a subject you are already studying or do something new. You will usually need a minimum of two A-levels or the equivalent, for example an Applied A-level double award, access level 3, or BTEC National Diploma, and supporting GCSEs. But, to be sure of the qualifications and subjects you need, it is best to check entry requirements with individual higher education institutions and at www.ucas.com



HANDOUT 8A

Possible routes into higher education

Page 3 of 3

Foundation degrees combine academic and work-based learning and take two years of full-time study to complete. You can also do them part-time, whilst working. With further study you could convert to a full Honours degree. Entry requirements are usually one A-level, an Applied A-level, BTEC National or NVQ Level 3.

DipHEs last two years and can be combined with professional or vocational qualifications. Entry requirements are similar to those for a degree and often you can convert your DipHE to a degree with further study.

HND courses cover a variety of work-related subjects, such as travel and tourism, or business studies. Courses last two years – or three if you include a sandwich year in industry. Entry requirements are usually one A-level, an Applied A-level, BTEC National or NVQ Level 3.

Other options

A gap year can be used to travel, to develop your skills, to earn money to fund future study or to think about your future. You could use this time to gain experience – voluntary or paid – in a particular occupation. Some schemes offer a year of paid work in business or industry. This could lead to vacation work when you're in higher education or maybe to a permanent job once you've graduated.



ACTIVITY 9

Courses galore

SUGGESTED TIME: 10 minutes

RESOURCES: UCAS course guide / Handout 9a



This activity is designed to give students a feel for the variety of courses available.

PART 1: Ask students to stand up. Work your way through the alphabet, asking each student in turn to come up with a course title for the letter that falls to them.

Any student who can't think of a course sits down. Bear in mind there is no course beginning with X.

Give your students **Handout 9a** so they can get an idea of the range of courses on offer. If you have internet access at your school or college, get your students to have a look at the UCAS website for a full range of courses: www.ucas.com

Part 2: Courses within courses

Explain to the students that within each subject there are different courses that they could study. For instance, a history degree could be in modern history, history of art, social history etc, or an English degree could be English literature, English language, linguistics, creative writing etc.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com
www.ucas.com



HANDOUT 9A

Courses galore

Page 1 of 2

There are an amazing 50,000 HE courses to choose from, at around 300 colleges and universities.

These range from the ordinary, such as English, to the extraordinary, such as puppetry. They cover traditional academic subjects such as philosophy to vocational courses on subjects such as cars, farming and nursing.

You can study things you have already covered at further education level, such as geography, maths or history as well as things you may never have heard about: like biodiversity, jurisprudence and homeopathy!

This is just a selection of the courses on offer – for a full list take a look at www.ucas.com

A

Acoustics
Acupuncture
Advertising
Aerodynamics
Aerospace
Anatomy
Animation
Artificial Intelligence
Astronomy

B

Beauty
Blacksmithing
Brewing
Business Studies

C

Cars
Catering
Childhood
Clothing
Computing

D

Dance
Dentistry
Drama

E

Education
Engineering

F

Farming
Fashion
Film
Food Science
Football
Forestry

G

Gambling
Genetics
Graphic Design

H

Hairdressing
Hebrew
Housing
Hotel Management

I

IT
Illustration

J

Jazz
Jewellery
Journalism

K

Knitwear
Korean

L

Law
Library
Logistics



HANDOUT 9A

Courses galore

Page 2 of 2

M

Machinery
Manufacturing
Medicine
Midwifery
Motorsports
Music

N

Nursing
Nutrition

O

Oceanography
Optometry
Oriental Languages

P

Painting
PE
Philosophy
Plants
Police
Primary Education
Puppetry

Q

Quality
Quantum Physics

R

Religious Studies
Retail
Robotics
Russian

S

Social Work
Space
Sport
Surf
Swahili

T

Teaching
Technology
Television
Textiles
Tourism
Travel

U

Universe

V

Vehicles
Veterinary
Video

W

Welding
Welsh
Wildlife
Wood

Y

Yachts
Youth

Z

Zoology



ACTIVITY 10

Where to study...

SUGGESTED TIME: 20 minutes

RESOURCES: Handouts 10a and 10b



Give groups of four students a copy of the UK map, **Handout 10a**, and descriptions of the universities. The locations of Aberdeen, Aberystwyth, London, Loughborough, Manchester and Plymouth have been marked with dots. Ask students to match the university to the dot on the map.

Discuss the distance and length of time it would take to get to each location. Would students live at home or would they need to/want to move?

Split the group into threes or fours and give each group one or two of the university descriptions on **Handout 10b** to read.

Ask them to discuss the pros and cons of choosing this university.

- Do they think it would suit them?
- Would they be able to live at home?
- What would make them want to go there?
- What would stop them from going there?
- Is it better to live at home or to move to a new area?
- How would they go about finding somewhere to live?
- How would they find their way about?
- Where would they go to find out about clubs, shops or sports facilities?

Ask each group to describe their universities to the whole group.

Find out if any students know the areas, have friends or family who went to any of the universities. Open the discussion further by asking questions to bring out knowledge – and misconceptions – about particular towns/cities and what being at university or college there would be like.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com
www.ucas.com
www.push.co.uk



HANDOUT 10A

Where to study

Page 1 of 1





HANDOUT 10B

Mapping your future

Page 1 of 5

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

The first university the alphabet has to offer is way, way up north in the affectionately named Granite City. Aberdeen lies on the east coast of Scotland, suitably placed to be the oil capital of Europe and spanned all round by spectacular castles, coastline, beaches and lochs and the majesty of the Grampian Highlands. The city itself is a pretty place too with flowers, parks and great architecture. The University is based on three sites which once made up two separate universities. In fact, Aberdeen had two universities back when that was the total number in the whole of England. The larger, main site is King's College in Old Aberdeen, a satisfying eyeful of 15th-century buildings, modern blocks, green space and cobbled streets, 1,200m north of the city centre. The Medical School at Foresterhill is a mile and a half from the main campus. The concretey Hilton campus houses the School of Education, a theatre, a library and various accommodation blocks.

The Push Guide to Which University says: "Most Aberdonian students enjoy the beautiful and relaxed environment for their four years of study. A strong sporting ethos and an exciting nightlife complement the academic end of the tunnel and town/gown relations couldn't be cosier."

Famous Alumni: Nicky Campbell (DJ); Iain Crichton-Smith (poet); Iain Cuthbertson (actor); Alistair Darling MP (Lab, Trade and Industry Secretary); Sandy Gall (veteran journalist); Denys Henderson (Chair of ICI); Kenneth McKellar (singer); David McLean MP (Conservative); James Naughtie (BBC Radio 4 'Today' presenter).

UNIVERSITY OF ABERYSTWYTH

Aberystwyth – or 'Aber' as it's known to those in the know – is sitting pretty on the mid-Wales coast. It's a quiet, seafront market town, miles away from...well everywhere, really, except the main Penglais campus (1–2 miles from the town centre). The not-quite-mountains, the bay and the river Rheidol trickling through the town make for an inspiring backdrop to the college. The campus is a hotchpotch of classic Victorian constructions and blocky 60s beasts. The Llanbadarn campus is a mile from Penglais campus in a village of the same name and is a pleasant, secluded spot, even by Aber's standards.



HANDOUT 10B

Mapping your future

Page 2 of 5

The Push Guide to Which University says: “In a town relatively dominated by students it’s hard to get around without running into friends and arch-nemeses. Having said that, friendliness and fellow-feeling fills the air (when it’s not raining at least – then it’s usually water) and many love the cosy community atmosphere so much they have to be unglued from the campus after graduation. At such distance from the rest of the world there are few who make the effort to go home regularly, so the campus is just as humming during weekends and vacations as during term time.”

Famous Alumni: Neil Hamilton (ex-MP, TV personality and panto star); Mel Jones (actor and writer); Ahmad Kabbah (President of Sierra Leone); Dr Jeremy Leggat (Greenpeace); Sharon McGuire (Bridget Jones director); John Morris QC (Attorney General); David Prosser (CE of Legal & General plc); Tom Singh (founder of New Look); Simon Thorpe (editor, Viz). Prince Charles studied Welsh here for three months before his investiture.

CITY UNIVERSITY, LONDON

City University sits at the point where Islington hip hits City slick, with achingly edgy Hoxton and Shoreditch to the east. If picking a university is like buying a house – location, location, location – then City has it all. Of course, like anywhere in London, wealth and splendour butt up against poverty and crime and the rich/poor divide is obvious in Islington. But this is a student-dominated hotspot, which provides something of a buffer to the rougher side of London life. £20m has been spent on the impressive Social Sciences building and the glass-fronted Cass Business School near Finsbury Square seems rather swanky.

The Push Guide to Which University says: “The syllabus is dominated by business and technology and an appropriate work ethic has been instilled in students. Fun comes second to getting a good degree and student politics take a sorry third. A popular group study space was opened recently – although it probably would have been more popular had one of the Union’s two bars not been closed to house it. The University is divvied up across three main sites and can feel fragmented, especially with the high proportion of postgrads and the rival attraction of city life over City life. The diversity of the local area is reflected in a rich mixture of social and ethnic backgrounds and City draws almost three-quarters of students from state schools. There’s a bustling, friendly atmosphere to halls of residence and college corridors, although things on the main site calm down as soon as the working day is done.”

Famous Alumni: Brendan Barber (TUC president); Michael Fish (veteran ex-weatherman); Stelios Haji-Ionnau (Easy group); Ruby Hammer (Ruby & Millie make-up); Dermot Murnaghan (newsreader); Sophie Raworth (BBC newsreader); Jack Warner (Dixon of Dock Green – ask your gran).



HANDOUT 10B

Mapping your future

Page 3 of 5

LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

Loughborough, pronounced 'Lufbra' by the locals and 'Loogabarooga' by the crazy and/or drunk, is a middleweight market town, set among the wandering countryside and small suburban villages of the East Midlands. Loughborough University sits a mile west of the town centre in green and pleasant parkland and keeps students just enough distance away from the locals to prevent most upsets. Town/gown relationships, therefore are good and regular meets between SU reps and the locals, keep it that way – and with some members of staff at the uni assigned an area of town to liaise with as well, Loughborough uni is in danger of becoming a right teacher's pet. The campus buildings are largely inoffensive, low-rise blocks on a landscaped, 410-acre site with sports facilities sprinkled over the campus more generously than hundreds and thousands on a fat kid's sundae. Sport is Loughborough University's favourite hobby horse and she sure rides it well.

The Push Guide to Which University says: "Someone once said 'It's not the winning, but the taking part that counts.' Push can promise you, whoever said that didn't go to Loughborough. It's definitely the winning that matters here. Along with the training beforehand and the celebration, analysis, recriminations and loud and liver-bothering drinking games afterwards. Loughborough uni still has plenty on for non-sports orientated types with the mean, well-oiled charitable machine that is Rags, fairly decent music acts at the union and more arty types thanks to the merger with Loughborough College of Art & Design. However, for those who are allergic to track suits and become apoplectic at the hint of exertion, applying here could be construed as a little perverse and the atmosphere, though generally good on a social level, is sometimes a little divided."

Famous Alumni: Steve Backley (javelin chucker); Sebastian Coe (former runner, ex-MP, now Lord in charge of London's Olympic bid); Michael Fabricant MP (Conservative); Tanni Grey-Thompson (Paralympic athlete); Barry Hines (writer, 'Kes'); Jason Lee (England hockey player); David Moorcroft (athlete); Carole Tongue MEP (Lab); Bob Wilson (commentator, ex-Arsenal goalie).



HANDOUT 10B

Mapping your future

Page 4 of 5

MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

Welcome to the 25-hour party town, the battered but mad-for-it sprawl of Britain's second-largest city and the capital of the north-west. The tail-end of the Pennines divides Manchester's Lancashire setting from the posse of Yorkshire counties, and Liverpool's only 30 minutes' drive away. It's a big place with over a quarter of a million students loitering in the Greater Manchester area, including surrounding Salford and Oldham. The main bit of Manchester Metropolitan at All Saints is part of the biggest educational complex in Western Europe, along with its neighbour the University of Manchester.

There are also sites further up the A34 in the Didsbury area and even further away in Cheshire. This critical mass of students is one reason why Manchester is such a vibrant, artistic place. It's also why so many rock bands from the city have gone in for student favourites like wearing long overcoats and writing songs about topping yourself.

The University's other claim to fame is that they were banned from University Challenge for many years in the 70s after a team answered every question 'Lenin' or 'Marx' as a protest against Oxbridge teams being allowed to enter as individual colleges. Since being allowed back in the 90s they've done very well and, under Paxman's iron rule, no such society-threatening anarchy has occurred.

The Push Guide to Which University says: "Manchester Met's a bit like Ab Fab's Saffy to Manchester University's Edina: a young upstart that's calmer and more grown-up than its older relation, probably partly due to a high number of local and mature (and local, mature) students. That's testament to how people feel about the place – they don't want to leave – and there's still yet a large number of students attracted by the party-till-you-puke atmosphere of the 'Madchester' of old, and the sophisticated city of new. Town-gown relations are good – but with the largest student population in Europe locals don't really have a choice bar moving somewhere else (or enrolling as students themselves)."

Famous Alumni: Terry Christian (ex-Word presenter, Oasis biographer and Big Brother Star); Steve Coogan and John Thompson (comedians); Bernard Hill, David Threlfall and Julie Walters (actors); Mick Hucknall (Simply Red soul dwarf); L S Lowry (painter); Min Patel (cricketer); Bryan Robson (ex-footballer, pundit and deeply unsuccessful manager).



HANDOUT 10B

Mapping your future

Page 5 of 5

UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

If Plymouth were any further south-west, it would be Cornwall. If it were any further south it'd be in the English Channel. As it is, it's a port around the Plymouth Sound (the bay) on the south coast of Devon near wild and windy Dartmoor. Plymouth has a claim to founding the USA – the Pilgrim Fathers set off in the Mayflower from Plymouth Harbour (arriving Stateside in Plymouth Harbour).

The University's got a number of sites, but centralisation is the buzz word at the mo', which means there's going to be an almighty upheaval over the next few years as Plymouth gathers all its darlings together in one place instead of littering students across the south-west. Applications for courses formerly held at Seale have doubled since moving back to Plymouth, so it's clearly a good idea.

The Push Guide to Which University says: "The south-west as a whole is a pretty mellow place and although Plymouth students are largely laid-back, they are capable of perking up when it comes to work (there's lots of careerist zeal) and drinking unfeasible quantities of beer. The smaller sites have their own quirks, but the Plymouth campus is a haven for surfer dudes and dudettes – why else would anyone wear Bermuda shorts in March? Loads of voluntary projects help bridge town/gown divides. The University's won some Centre of Excellence Awards, which meant a total £18m prize – it sure beats a scratchcard. The money's going to prettify the place up a bit and make it taller. That and the 'big move' mean the main campus resounds to the tune of hammers and buzz saws rather than larks and nightingales. A bit like in town really – the whole place is having a Changing Rooms moment, though Carol Smillie is thankfully absent."

Famous Alumni: David Braine (BBC weather); Jules Leaver (founded Fat Face clothing company); Clare Nasir (GMTV weather); Pam St Clement (Eastenders' Pat); Michael Underwood (TV presenter); Peter Winterbottom (rugby player).

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com



ACTIVITY 11

Skills and strengths

SUGGESTED TIME: 30 minutes



Part 1: Working with the whole group, choose a profession or job (examples can be found in **Activity 13**). Write this up on the board and ask the group to brainstorm a list of skills and attributes needed for this job. What are the top three most important skills or attributes?

Part 2: Split the group into twos or threes and give each group a number of different occupations.

- Ask them to decide between themselves what three main skills or attributes would be needed for each job.
- Feed back to the whole group.

Part 3: Ask the students to keep a diary for one week. They need to keep a record of all the things they enjoy doing. Encourage them to be as specific as possible and to think as broadly as possible about the things they do.

For example, as well as including activities such as hockey or cycling or going to the cinema, get them to think about what part of the activity they enjoy, ie organising the event; socialising with new people; tackling problems or challenges.

Place the students into groups to work out how the things they love can be turned into careers.

Make sure they think about how the things they enjoy doing relate to the skills and attributes needed for a job; for example if they love socialising, meeting new people and organising things, perhaps PR or event management might suit them.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com



ACTIVITY 12

That's the job for me

SUGGESTED TIME: 20 minutes

RESOURCES: Handout 12a / Tutor's notes 12a



A quiz activity to match employers to the skills and experience they look for in their employees.

Get students to work in small teams or pairs to fill in the gaps in the quotes on **Handout 12a** and to work out who said what. The answers are provided in **Tutor's Notes 12a**.

- Get students to talk about which organisation they think is being described and what sorts of jobs they might have available.

Ask them to feed back their answers.

- Ask students which employers – based on their quotes – they think they'd prefer to work for, and in what sort of job.
- Ask students for their ideas on the qualifications they think they'd need to get that job.

As an alternative to these jobs you could ask local businesses to supply quotes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u



HANDOUT 12A

That's the job for me

Page 1 of 1

"Education is the doorway to a better future. The future may seem a long way off, but your best opportunity for learning is now. What you have learnt from your education, how you have used the opportunity, will set you apart from the rest. _____ only wants those people who stand apart in that way."

"I believe that _____ is the key to fulfilling individual and collective potential, and meeting the challenge of raising yourself to the highest level possible."

"We are committed to offering graduates a focused and challenging training programme and we have an incredibly wide range of jobs within our organisation. We look at your career ambitions and, with such a diverse business, the opportunities for the right people are huge. Of course, we need our people to have the qualities and attributes that will help us grow our business. Going on to higher education will give you _____ and _____ far beyond your course of study, making you stand out among prospective employees."

"We are very keen to employ people who can combine their passion for _____ with a high level of education. We run our own graduate programme. Those who are successful in getting a place will find themselves on a fast track to managerial responsibility at a young age."

"Higher education is not about accumulating and committing to memory vast quantities of data. It is about providing a framework to sift and analyse the almost relentless flow of data. There are great opportunities in higher education today and it is vital that young people grasp those opportunities to provide themselves with the tools for a fulfilled life in the _____ economy."

"Working in _____ offers the chance of an exciting and varied career in a challenging, fast-paced and innovative environment. Competition on the high street is fierce and to stay ahead we need to recruit the best people who have the right skills and qualities to make the most of the opportunities that will come their way. _____ offers several training programmes and direct entry routes for young people with higher education qualifications. This will enable you to fast track to great _____ positions including store management, fashion, marketing, design and many other functions."

Group Human Resources Director, HMV,
General Manager (Education), Apple Computer (UK) Ltd
Chief Executive Officer, Cadbury Schweppes
Chief Executive, Football Association
Chief Executive, Arcadia Group (includes Burton, Miss Selfridge, Topshop and Topman)
Group Director, Human Resources, the Royal Bank of Scotland Group

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

aimhigher...

www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u



TUTOR'S NOTES 12A

That's the job for me

Page 1 of 1

“Education is the doorway to a better future. The future may seem a long way off, but your best opportunity for learning is now. What you have learnt from your education, how you have used the opportunity, will set you apart from the rest. **Cadbury Schweppes** only want those people who stand apart in that way.”

Chief Executive Officer, Cadbury Schweppes

“I believe that **education** is the key to fulfilling individual and collective potential, and meeting the challenge of raising yourself to the highest level possible.”

Chief Executive, Football Association

“We are committed to offering graduates a focused and challenging training programme and we have an incredibly wide range of jobs within our organisation. We look at your career ambitions and, with such a diverse business the opportunities for the right people are huge. Of course, we need our people to have the qualities and attributes that will help us grow our business. Going on to higher education will give you **experiences** and **knowledge** far beyond your course of study, making you stand out among prospective employees.”

Group Director, Human Resources, The Royal Bank of Scotland Group

“We are very keen to employ people who can combine their passion for **music** with a high level of education. We run our own graduate programme. Those who are successful in getting a place will find themselves on a fast track to managerial responsibility at a young age.”

Group Human Resources Director, HMV

“Higher education is not about accumulating and committing to memory vast quantities of data. It is about providing a framework to sift and analyse the almost relentless flow of data. There are great opportunities in higher education today and it is vital that young people grasp those opportunities to provide themselves with the tools for a fulfilled life in the **knowledge** economy.”

General Manager (Education), Apple Computer (UK) Ltd

“Working in **retail** offers the chance of an exciting and varied career in a challenging, fast-paced and innovative environment. Competition on the high street is fierce and to stay ahead we need to recruit the best people who have the right skills and qualities to make the most of the opportunities that will come their way. **Arcadia** offers several training programmes and direct entry routes for young people with higher education qualifications. This will enable you to fast track to great **retail management** positions including store management, fashion, marketing, design and many other functions.”

Chief Executive, Arcadia Group

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

aimhigher...

www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u



ACTIVITY 13

Routes into a career

SUGGESTED TIME: 15–20 minutes



Split the class into groups. They have 10 minutes to work out how they would get the following jobs, if they could not go into higher education.

These jobs are suggestions only, feel free to substitute your own if you would rather use them:

- Nurse
- Formula 1 car designer
- Lawyer
- Teacher

The groups need to answer these questions:

- How much of a difference would going into higher education make?
For example, in terms of salary, or how quickly they could get into that career?
- Could they take up higher education later? For example, once they have already started doing that job?
- How else could they train?

Get them to report back and discuss their answers. Try to include what effect having a higher education qualification makes on choice of job, prospects etc and what the alternatives are.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com



ACTIVITY 14

Name that job

SUGGESTED TIME: 20 minutes

RESOURCES: Handout 14a



There are thousands of different types of careers out there. This activity is to get your students to focus on some of the less obvious choices.

Split your students into two groups. Ask them to think about a large organisation – a hospital. Give them 5–10 minutes to think of as many different types of jobs people can do in hospitals. Encourage them to think as broadly as possible – not just about doctors and nurses, for example, but speech therapists, dieticians, and also business managers, human resources, accountants etc.

Get them to feed back their suggestions and pick up any that have been missed out.

During discussions, if a number of students have an interest in any of the careers, pick out these job titles for further work.

Pick some of the jobs from **Handout 14a** and split the group into smaller groups to discuss:

- How these people spend their working day
- Where else they might work
- What qualifications they might need

Discuss any issues that have been raised.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com



HANDOUT 14A

Name that job

Page 1 of 3

SPORTS PHYSIOTHERAPIST

- Helps people at all levels to reach their top performance levels, to prevent injuries and help them to recover from injuries.
- Sports physios work closely with coaches, doctors, nurses and sports psychologists.
- They must also keep accurate records of treatments and progress.
- You must have a degree in physiotherapy to register with the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, which allows you to practise.
- The minimum entry requirements are the same as for most Honours degree courses – five GCSEs (Grades A–C), with two A-levels or equivalent.

DIETICIAN

- Dietitians specialise in the science of nutrition, in other words how the food we eat affects our health.
- A dietitian plans and prescribes special diets to help treat illness and advises on healthy diets to prevent illness.
- The majority of dietitians are employed in the NHS – in hospitals and in outpatient departments. Jobs also exist in the sports world, spas and health clubs.
- Entry is by a degree in dietetics. Entry requirements are five GCSEs (A–C) and two or three A-levels (A–C), including chemistry and another science subject, usually biology. Equivalent A-level qualifications can be considered.

ACCOUNTANT

- Work is varied, from keeping accounting records and giving advice on tax and loans, to checking accounts, or giving advice on financial matters, to helping a company improve their performance.
- Accountants can work in a private practice or move into industry and commerce, as a manager or financial director.
- Every industry sector, including sport, requires accountancy staff, so the opportunities to work in interesting fields are good.
- The majority of entrants are graduates of any discipline. Finance and accountancy degrees help, but are not essential.
- Minimum entry requirements for an Honours degree course are usually two A-levels (including maths), together with five GCSEs (A–C). NVQs in accounting are another possible entry route.



HANDOUT 14A

Name that job

Page 2 of 3

PSYCHOLOGIST

- Gathers information about how people act and why. They use therapy and counselling to help people understand, overcome or control their problems.
 - They attend meetings and case conferences and have to write reports.
 - Psychologists can work in hospitals, clinics, schools, businesses and prisons, and often specialise in one area, for example sports or child psychology.
 - A psychology degree (or equivalent) accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) is essential.
 - Minimum entry requirements for Honours degree courses are usually five GCSEs (A–C), with two A-levels or AVCE equivalent.
-

DENTIST

- Dentists are concerned with the health of teeth and gums and treat problems when they occur. They also provide advice on dental care.
 - Dentists can work independently, as part of a practice, for a hospital or for large organisations.
 - A dentist needs to have patience and good personal skills to enjoy helping people who may find the treatment difficult or painful.
 - A degree in dentistry is essential. Three good A-levels, including chemistry and other sciences, along with five GCSEs (A–C) (including English and maths) are required.
 - Students with non-science A-levels may be accepted to a pre-dental course and then be able to follow an Honours degree course. Equivalent qualifications may also be considered.
-

HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER

- Human resources officers are responsible for looking after staff needs. This can include recruitment, training and development, reporting and health.
- They do not manage the staff or workforce directly, but liaise closely with them and advise managers and supervisors on relevant areas.
- The day-to-day work may include analysing data, collating statistics, drawing up plans, policies and reports, interviewing, taking part in meetings, training, discussions, negotiations, and addressing large meetings.
- Minimum entry requirements for an Honours degree course in human resources or personnel management is typically five GCSEs (A–C) with two A-levels or equivalent. Alternatively you could do an Institute of Personnel and Development course following A-levels.



HANDOUT 14A

Name that job

Page 3 of 3

SPEECH THERAPIST

- A speech therapist helps adults and children who have difficulties speaking due to illness, accident or disability.
- The therapist needs to assess a problem and devise a suitable course of treatment.
- Work is often with children, for example with those who have stammers and learning difficulties.
- Work with adult clients often involves rehabilitation therapy following an accident or illness. For example, a patient who has suffered a stroke may have to relearn how to speak.
- The minimum entry requirements for an Honours degree in speech therapy are five GCSEs plus two A-levels or equivalent. Some courses require A-levels in science subjects.



ACTIVITY 15

Work it out!

SUGGESTED TIME: Option 1: 20 minutes / Option 2: 30 minutes

RESOURCES: Handout 15a



This activity gives students the chance to find out the level of qualifications they need for different jobs.

OPTION 1: This involves looking at real-life job adverts and does need some preparation on your part:

- Either find your own selection of job adverts to bring into the lesson
- Or bring a selection of papers – local or national – and get students to pick ones from there
- Alternatively you could get students to look online at a variety of different job sites, such as:

www.workthing.com / www.monster.co.uk / www.totaljobs.com / www.jobs.guardian.co.uk

Ask the class to discuss in small groups what effect different levels of qualification can have on your job choices and the amount you can expect to earn. What kind of jobs can you do at each qualification level?

You may want to extend the discussion to cover why certain jobs require more training; have better career prospects, or are better paid, for example why the more glamorous, interesting or media-related ones are likely to pay less at a junior level.

OPTION 2: Give each student a sample job ad from **Handout 15a**. Ask each student to imagine they are being interviewed for that job. Before the interview starts, they need to think of three aspects of their character or their experience that would make them an ideal candidate for the job.

In pairs, ask one student to be interviewer and one to be interviewee.

The main question they need to find the answer to is:

- “Why should we consider you for this job?”

Ask the pairs to swap roles.

Feed back whether they have ‘appointed’ their partner, giving reasons for their decision.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u



HANDOUT 15A

Job ads

Page 1 of 3

FOODMART – GREAT PEOPLE, GREAT SERVICE

Customer Delivery Assistants

£attractive + bonus + pension plan + healthcare fund + subsidised canteen

We're dedicated to great customer service. That's why we go one step further and deliver our products to the customer's door! Our customer delivery assistants are pivotal as the face of our home delivery service. As an assistant you'll work flexible hours throughout the week, enjoy working alone and have a clean driver's licence. You'll also need a good sense of navigation and be able to get on with a wide variety of people (our customers!). If you'd like to be part of our delivery network, please pick up an application form from your nearest Foodmart or send us your CV and covering letter.

HUMANITIES TEACHER £21–35K PA

High School and Sixth Form College

The ideal candidate for this science teacher position must have experience teaching key stage 3 and 4 RE and History as well as A-level History. The successful teacher will be working in a well resourced and organised Humanities department. A commitment to extra-curricular activities is essential. Interested candidates for Humanities Teacher should contact us at their earliest opportunity to discuss this role in more detail.

NHS NURSES P/T 22HRS PER WEEK

£25,424 pro rata

We want to recruit experienced, enthusiastic and motivated registered District Nurses and Community Nurses to join the community-based team in the Manchester area. Commitment to personal development, high standards and excellent interpersonal skills are essential for this post.



HANDOUT 15A

Job ads

Page 2 of 3

JUNIOR ONLINE GRAPHIC DESIGNER

£14k–£18k (depending on experience)

We have a fantastic opportunity for a Junior Designer within our online sales team. As a Junior Designer you'd be involved with helping out the managers of the team with site promotions and updates, email marketing, Flash developments, and marketing campaigns. The ideal candidate will be a graduate in design or graphic design and understand the principles of design and typography. You will have a working knowledge of:

- Photoshop CS2/3
- Flash CS2/3
- Illustrator CS2/3
- Dreamweaver CS2/3 and HTML experience
- AfterEffects and 3D rendering applications a plus.

All candidates must have either an online folio or examples in a pdf.

CHANNEL 1 TV

Junior Broadcast Journalist – Technology

Starting salary: £18k

Required for top digital TV channel. Degree in English Literature/Languages or Journalism essential. Any experience in broadcast journalism a huge bonus. If you've got the above then you've got the first essential requirements for joining our team. But you'll also need the following;

- Some knowledge about latest technology trends
- A fresh approach to generating news on the technology industry
- To be great at working within a large team and also on your own
- To be able to keep a cool head in the fast pace of a newsroom
- A portfolio of news-related items

If you still think you've got what it takes, then fill in our online application form and submit your CV and the reasons why you are the ideal candidate for this job.



HANDOUT 15A

Job ads

Page 3 of 3

TECHNICIAN

£25,000 pa

Responsible for surveying and drawing for modifications and renovations to public buildings and housing, including plans for central heating and rewiring schemes. Good opportunities to progress within a large, international company. Attention to detail and the ability to work to tight deadlines are vital. You need to be good with people and prepared to travel. A clean driver's licence is essential. In return, we offer a comprehensive training package and excellent career development opportunities. Applicants should possess a relevant architectural qualification.

TELESALES

£big money – big car – great benefits

OTE £30k (Basic Salary £16,000 + commission)

Do people listen to you?!

Are you a natural talker, with the gift of the gab, who can sell a bikini to your grandma? Then this is the job for you. We are a fast-growing company looking for people like you. We can offer a highly attractive salary package along with a company car, and the opportunity to work in a dynamic fast-paced role with excellent career prospects. With your strong communication skills and sharp intellect, you're guaranteed success. You don't need a degree but you do need to demonstrate great communication skills, as well as a passionate attitude to selling.

E-mail your CV and a covering letter to: topdog@telesales.co.uk No agencies.



ACTIVITY 16

Richer pickings

SUGGESTED TIME: 30 minutes

RESOURCES: Handout 16a / Tutor's notes 16a



Get students to compare the incomes of two people: one who went straight from school to work, and one who went to university.

Give students **Handout 16a**. These show the career paths of two people working in retail. Give the students about 10 minutes to work through the figures, in pairs, and calculate the earnings.

Get them to report back on their answers. Ask the group what they think about this:

- Does it make them think differently about higher education?
- Would they rather earn more now or in the future?

Tutor's notes 16a provide the answers to this exercise.



HANDOUT 16A

Richer pickings

Page 1 of 2

Meera went straight from school, aged 16 and with 9 GCSEs, to work as a sales assistant in a large retail company. This is how her career progressed for the next 10 years.

Round the figures up or down to the nearest pound.

Role		Salary
Sales assistant	Starting salary	£14,500
	One year later – 6% salary increase	
Senior sales assistant	One year later – promotion 10% salary increase	
	One year later £1,200 salary increase	
	One year later 5% salary increase (£905.35)	
Sales supervisor	One year later, promotion 10% salary increase	
	One year later 7% salary increase	
Assistant sales manager	Six months later, promotion 5% salary increase	
	Six months later, £1,000 bonus	
	One year later 3% salary increase	
Sales manager	18 months later promoted to sales manager, 10% salary increase	
	One year later 9% salary increase	



HANDOUT 16A

Richer pickings

Page 2 of 2

Dane went to university where he studied Business Studies for three years. This is how his career progressed for the next four years.

Round the figures up or down to the nearest pound.

Role		Salary
Graduate trainee	Starting salary	£18,000
Purchasing assistant	Six months later – 10% salary increase	
Senior purchasing assistant	Six months later, promotion 10% salary increase	
	Six months later, £1,000 bonus	
Buyer	12 months later, promotion 12% salary increase	
	One year later, 11% salary increase	
Senior buyer	Six months later, promotion, £3,000 salary increase.	



TUTOR'S NOTES 16A

Richer pickings

Page 1 of 2

Salary figures for Meera, who went straight from school, aged 16, with 9 GCSEs, to work as a sales assistant in a large retail company.

Role		Salary
Sales assistant	Starting salary	£14,500
	One year later – 6% salary increase	£15,370
Senior sales assistant	One year later – promotion 10% salary increase	£16,907
	One year later £1,200 salary increase	£18,107
	One year later 5% salary increase (£905.35)	£19,012
Sales supervisor	One year later, promotion, 10% salary increase	£20,913
	One year later 7% salary increase	£22,377
Assistant sales manager	Six months later, promotion 5% salary increase	£23,496
	Six months later, £1,000 bonus	£24,496
	One year later 3% salary increase	£25,231
Sales manager	18 months later promoted to sales manager, 10% salary increase	£27,754
	One year later 9% salary increase	£30,252



TUTOR'S NOTES 16A

Richer pickings

Page 2 of 2

Salary figures for Dane, who went to University.

Role		Salary
Graduate trainee	Starting salary	£18,000
Purchasing assistant	Six months later – 10% salary increase	£19,800
Senior purchasing assistant	Six months later, promotion 10% salary increase	£21,780
	Six months later, £1,000 bonus	£22,780
Buyer	12 months later, promotion 12% salary increase	£25,514
	One year later, 11% salary increase	£28,321
Senior buyer	Six months later, promotion, £3,000 salary increase.	£31,321

Students may note that the graduate is likely to have loans to pay back, which will reduce their actual income once employed. However, as discussed elsewhere in the pack, the repayment figure may be as low as £5.19 per week. The object of this exercise is to show that graduates give themselves the potential to command a higher salary than non-graduates. After four years in the workplace, Dane is earning as much as Meera does after 10 years.



04

FINANCES

This section addresses key financial worries which students may face. The activities look at budgeting, what their money may be spent on and how to get financial support.

The factsheets also offer key information for students heading to university. So if you are short for time, ask your students to look at these at home.

CONTENTS

Activity	Suggested time (minutes)	Handouts	Details	Links to:
Where does the money come from?	10–20	Handout 17a and 17b	Overcoming the financial barriers of higher education – where to find further information and advice	Activity 2, 4, 7, 10, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25
Spend, spend, spend	30	Handout 18a	How much will accommodation cost?	Activity 5, 7, 10, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25
Balance your budget	40		Teaching students how to balance their budget, ensuring they have money for the first and last week of term	Activity 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25
When a loan isn't a loan (when it is a student loan)	30	Handout 20a	What is the difference between a regular loan and a student loan? This activity asks students to research all their loan options	Activity 1, 4, 6, 7, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25
To work or not to work?	45	Handout 21a and 21b	Students to discuss whether a part-time job is a good idea around their studies	Activity 4, 7, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24 and 25
Payback time	20–30	Handout 22a and 22b	Repaying a student loan – facts, figures and general information	Activity 3, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25



ACTIVITY 17

Where does the money come from?

SUGGESTED TIME: 10–20 minutes

RESOURCES: Handouts 17a and 17b / Tutor's notes 17a, 17b and 17c / Factsheet 4



As an introductory discussion, talk with your group about the financial problems they might encounter as higher education students – paying for tuition fees, books, rent, food, clothes and so on. Together, draw up a list of the perceived barriers and then look at the reality of graduate versus non-graduate earnings.

Then, get the students to work in small groups or pairs to work out the answers to the short quiz on **Handouts 17a and 17b** about the sources of funding for higher education.

Make sure your students are clear about all the phrases and terms that are used.

Once they have completed the quiz, get the pairs or groups to call out the answers and go through it as a whole class. **Tutor's notes 17a and 17b** gives the answers to the quiz.

There is also a factsheet – **Tutor's notes 17c** – which gives the latest information on the financial help available to students.



HANDOUT 17A

Where does the money come from?

Page 1 of 1

Match the following statements to the right source of help or advice.

(You can use the same source more than once):

STATEMENT

Where can I find out more about tuition fees?

I want to join the armed forces.

I'm disabled.

I've left school/college and need help with money while I decide what course to do/look for a job.

Where can I get extra spending money?

I'm 13–19 years old and want to find out about help with money.

I need general advice on student finance.

I want to be a teacher.

I want to be a doctor or nurse.

I'd like to try for a scholarship.

I need help with living costs.

SOURCE

www.connexions-direct.com

www.tda.gov.uk (Training and Development Agency)

www.nhs.uk

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

www.skill.org.uk (Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities)

www.studentmoney.org

www.armedforces.co.uk

Part-time work

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk



HANDOUT 17B

Where does the money come from?

Page 1 of 1

Multiple choice

1. You (or your parents) may be eligible to receive money from the Government if:

- a) You are studying for A-levels
- b) You are doing a higher education course like a degree or an HND
- c) You are studying for Applied A-levels
- d) All of the above

2. Student loans are available to:

- a) PGCE students (studying to be teachers)
- b) Students doing degrees at university or college
- c) Students doing vocational (job-related) courses (such as HNDs)
- d) People studying at specified NHS or private institutions
- e) All of the above

3. EMA payments are available for some students who stay on in learning beyond Year 11. What does EMA stand for?

- a) Education Maintenance Allowance
- b) Education Money Allowance
- c) Earning Money Academically
- d) Extra Maintenance Amount

4. The funding arrangements mean that tuition fees will be paid:

- a) in Euros
- b) in your final year
- c) in advance using a Tuition Fee Loan

5. From September 2008, new full-time undergraduate students will benefit from the new funding package because:

- a) The Government will pay for their first year of study
- b) Non-repayable grants of around £2,906 will be available to students with household incomes up to £50,020 per annum
- c) Other students will contribute towards their costs
- d) The EU will pay the costs



TUTOR'S NOTES 17A

Where does the money come from?

Page 1 of 2

Sources that offer information and help with money to students going into higher education.

Correct matches are shown here:

Where can I find out more about tuition fees?

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Where can I get extra spending money?

Part-time work

www.connexions-direct.com

I need help with living costs

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Support and welfare services in universities and colleges

www.connexions-direct.com

I want to be doctor or nurse

NHS

www.connexions-direct.com

I'm 13–19 years old and want to find out about help with money

www.connexions-direct.com

I want to be a teacher

Teacher Training Agency

www.connexions-direct.com



TUTOR'S NOTES 17A

Where does the money come from?

Page 2 of 2

I'm disabled

Skill (National Bureau for Students with Disabilities)

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

www.connexions-direct.com

I've left school/college and need help with money while I decide what course to do/look for a job

DWP/Jobcentre Plus office

www.connexions-direct.com

I want to join the armed forces

Armed forces

www.connexions-direct.com

I need general advice on student finance

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

I'd like to try for a scholarship

www.studentmoney.org

www.connexions-direct.com



TUTOR'S NOTES 17B

Where does the money come from?

Page 1 of 1

1. You (or your parents) may be eligible to receive money from the Government if:

- a) You are studying for A-levels
- b) You are doing a higher education course like a degree or an HND
- c) You are studying for Applied A-levels
- d) All of the above**

2. Student loans are available to:

- a) PGCE students (studying to be teachers)
- b) Students doing degrees at university or college
- c) Students doing vocational (job-related) courses (such as HNDs)
- d) People studying at specified NHS or private institutions
- e) All of the above**

3. EMA payments are available for some students who stay on in learning beyond Year 11. What does EMA stand for?

- a) Education Maintenance Allowance**
- b) Education Money Allowance
- c) Earning Money Academically
- d) Extra Maintenance Amount

4. The funding arrangements mean that tuition fees will be paid:

- a) in Euros
- b) in your final year
- c) in advance using a Tuition Fee Loan**

5. From September 2008, new full-time undergraduate students will benefit from the new funding package because:

- a) The Government will pay for their first year of study
- b) Non-repayable grants of around £2,906 will be available to students with household incomes up to £50,020 per annum**
- c) Other students will contribute towards their costs
- d) The EU will pay the costs



TUTOR'S NOTES 17C

Where does the money come from?

Page 1 of 1

Student Finance England

General

Universities and colleges of higher education can charge new full-time undergraduates fees of up to £3,225. Some may charge less than the maximum. Financial help is available in the form of tuition fee loans.

Government student support

- Around one third of new full-time students with household incomes up to £25,000 could qualify for the **full** Maintenance Grant of £2,906.
- Another third of new full-time students with household incomes between £25,001 and **£50,020** could qualify for a partial grant.
- Higher Education Student Support Guarantee for all 16 year olds receiving EMA for the first time in 2008 if they continue into higher education.
- Student loans are available for living costs as well as for tuition fees.
- In addition many universities and colleges offer non-repayable bursaries.

Students should check out what individual institutions are offering.

Higher education bursary for care leavers

- Care leavers who go on to take a recognised course of higher education are entitled to a minimum bursary of £2,000 payable by the Local Authority that looked after them.
- This bursary is payable over the duration of the higher education course and it is for Local Authorities to decide, in consultation with the student, the pattern of payment.

Repaying student loans

- Student loans are not repaid until you have left university and are earning over £15,000 when you pay back 9% of your earnings above that amount.
- Also for students who started in 2006 or later the Government will write off all student loan balances (except arrears) which are left unpaid 25 years after you have left your course.

Rates quoted are at the 2009/2010 rates and may vary in future years.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance
www.connexions-direct.com/index.cfm?go=money



ACTIVITY 18

Spend, spend, spend

SUGGESTED TIME: 30 minutes

RESOURCES: Handout 18a / Tutor's notes 18a



Give each group an accommodation brief for either a hall of residence or a student flat/house.

Ask them to read it and think about their moving-in costs using **Handout 18a**, "Alex role play brief" as a guide.

- What will you need to take with you?
- Will you need to make any special purchases? How much will they cost?

Ask them to list the spending they would make and then to decide which are needs and which are wants.

Now ask students to list everything they would buy on a day-to-day basis – again, ask them to mark whether they are needs or wants.

Tutor's notes 18a provide details about the grants which are available to students.

In a whole group, feed back the findings.

This could lead to an interesting discussion on which items are essential and which are luxuries.



HANDOUT 18A

Accommodation briefs

Page 1 of 1

Alex role play brief

Alex is a new student living in a hall of residence outside London for the first year at a cost of £930 per term. In addition, she has to pay a deposit of £150 at the beginning of the first term.

This will be refunded at the end of the summer term if there has been no damage to hall property.

Alex's parents' residual income has been assessed at £40,000 pa. Based on this, Alex will get a new maintenance grant worth around £711* and a student loan for living costs of £4,595*.

There is no upfront cost for tuition fees. Instead Alex can take out a loan for tuition fees. She will only have to start repaying this loan when she's earning over £15,000.

Alex has saved £750 from holiday jobs.

Alex does not have a car or TV.

Hall of residence

This hall of residence provides accommodation in individual study bedrooms, with shared bathroom, kitchen, dining and lounge facilities. Breakfast is provided daily and dinner on weekday evenings. Lunch is not provided.

Students are required to prepare their own meals at weekends. Additional facilities include the provision and laundering of bed linen and cleaning of rooms as well. Hall fees, paid at the beginning of each term, cover the inclusive cost of the facilities provided. A deposit will need to be paid in advance to cover any damage or loss of property associated with the hall.

Student flat/house

This student flat/house requires sharing the responsibilities for running the flat or house with other students. Students are responsible for paying the bills associated with the flat/house, cleaning the accommodation as well as their own clothes etc, and feeding themselves. The bills arrive separately and at different times. Some things need to be paid for immediately, whereas others are billed at quarterly intervals. Rent is collected a month in advance.

A deposit will need to be paid in advance to cover any damage or loss of property associated with the flat/house. The landlord supplies an inventory of items in the flat/house at the beginning of the tenancy. This inventory should be checked carefully before signing it to make sure that it is accurate.

**The figures used in this activity are based on those for 2009/10 and are subject to change.*



TUTOR'S NOTES 18A

Accommodation briefs

Page 1 of 1

Alex role play brief

Current situation

Student loans and grants are currently paid in three instalments – each one at the start of term.

The examples of tuition fee and loan payments shown in the **Alex role play brief** are for illustration only. The actual pattern of payments is split 33%, 33%, 34% which gives slightly different figures to those shown.

Help with living costs

Household income	£25,000	£40,000	£50,020	£50,778
Maintenance grant	£2,906	£711	£50	Nil
Student loan for maintenance	£3,497	£4,595	£4,925	£4,950
Total each year	£6,403	£5,306	£4,975	£4,950
Help from universities /colleges	Many colleges and universities offer non-repayable bursaries – contact your preferred institution to see what they are offering!			

** These figures are for students living away from home but not in London. A higher rate of student loan for maintenance is payable for students living away from home in London and a lower rate applies to students living at home.*



ACTIVITY 19

Balance your budget

Page 1 of 2

SUGGESTED TIME: 40 minutes in total



This activity introduces students to the likely cost of being in higher education and managing funds through budgeting.

Explain to the students that they will be looking at a typical first-year student budget.

PART 1: Get the students to work in pairs. First of all, get them to think about their current outgoings and spending. Ask them to estimate how much they spend per month on the following:

- Books
- Clothes
- CDs
- Food
- Going out
- Leisure
- Travel
- Other things

Get some of the pairs to feed back to the class:

- Roughly how much do they spend per month?
- Are they surprised by how much or little they spend?
- When they go to college or university they'll need to think about other costs, such as rent and bills. Do any of the students currently contribute to these things?

PART 2: Using the results from part 1, encourage students to think about spending in terms of 'needs' and 'wants', for example:

- Which things are essentials, and which are 'wants', ie what could be done without?
- What expenditure could they reduce?
- Are there any other ways to make some savings?
- Are there any kinds of additional expenditure that should be planned for?
- Ask the students to suggest ways to gain some additional income to cover costs. Discuss the different options, for example sorting out an overdraft or a part-time job.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance



ACTIVITY 19

Balance your budget

Page 2 of 2

SUGGESTED TIME: 40 minutes in total

PART 3: In groups of four, ask them to discuss how they would cope with the following if they were at university or college:

- Getting a letter from the bank saying that you are overdrawn and demanding repayment with interest
- Building up a credit card bill that your income will not cover
- You need to put down a deposit for a flat for your second year, but you do not have the deposit back yet from the first year

Get them to feed back to the whole group and suggest any possibilities students may have missed.



ACTIVITY 20

When a loan isn't a loan (when it's a student loan)

SUGGESTED TIME: At least 30 minutes

RESOURCES: Handout 20a



Give each group an accommodation brief for either a hall of residence or a student flat/house.

This activity gets students to use the internet to explore the range of personal loans available – including student loans.

Give the students **Handout 20a**, which suggests some websites to look at for loans and explains some of the jargon that they will come across. Encourage them to look at other sites as well as the ones that are listed. Putting the phrase “personal loan” into a search engine, such as google.co.uk or yahoo.co.uk, will return a number of relevant sites.

Suggest that they compare three or four loans, including the student loan.

Get them to consider:

- The amount they can borrow
- How much they have to pay back
- What – if any – penalties there are
- How much time you have to pay the money back



HANDOUT 20A

When a loan isn't a loan (when it's a student loan)

Page 1 of 2

Loan factsheet

This is generally how loans work:

- A UK loans provider gives you a sum of money – normally a lump sum.
- You are expected to pay that amount back using regular payments over a defined period.
- Your loan payments go partly towards repaying the capital on the loan and partly towards paying off the interest on the loan.

There are lots of different loans to choose from; what you need to think about is:

- The amount you want to borrow
- The amount of time you need to pay the loan back
- Whether you are unemployed or self-employed or own a home

Repayments

You can keep monthly repayments low by spreading the loan over a longer period, but if you want to pay back as little as possible in the long run, pay the loan back as quickly as you can afford to. This will mean that the total amount of interest paid is kept to a minimum, therefore you pay back less.

Loan providers

There are many types of loan providers. Banks and building societies offer loans, as do more specialised finance companies.

How a student loan differs

It acts just like a normal loan, except that the interest paid on it is linked to the inflation rate. Thus, over time, the student loan borrowers are repaying the same amount that they borrowed in real terms.

Students do not have to begin repaying their loan until they have left university and are earning at least £15,000 in employment. How much they pay back is directly linked to how much they earn.

With a student loan there is little point in making overpayments since the interest payments on them are so low, you could make more money from putting the same amount in a savings account than you could save from paying off the student loan.



HANDOUT 20A

When a loan isn't a loan (when it's a student loan)

Page 2 of 2

Jargon

APR – Annual percentage rate of interest charge. The true rate of interest charged on a loan, taking into account the total cost of interest and other charges eg legal fees. In general terms, the lower the APR is on the loan, the better the deal is.

Capped rate – Usually for a set number of months/years where the interest rate can go up and down but there is a maximum (capped) interest rate which it cannot go above.

Lender – The company/organisation that provides the finance to satisfy a loan or mortgage request.

Mortgage/finance broker – An intermediary who identifies, and places, customers requiring a loan or mortgage etc with a company (lender) able to provide it. The broker often carries out the administration to do with processing the loan.

Secured loans – A secured loan, sometimes referred to as a homeowner loan, is only available to people who own their own home, and means that you use the value of your property to secure the loan. Because these loans pose less of a risk to lenders, secured loans are generally offered at far better rates than other types of loans.

Unsecured loans – An unsecured loan means that you are not securing the value of the loan against your property. This means that the lender is at a much greater risk of not getting his money back. Therefore rates reflect this risk by tending to be relatively high in interest.

Variable rate – A rate of interest which may vary up or down during the lifetime of a loan. The circumstances causing any change are outlined in the loan conditions.



ACTIVITY 21

To work or not to work?

SUGGESTED TIME: 45 minutes

RESOURCES: Handouts 21a and 21b



One option for coping with a tight budget is to get a part-time job. In a full group, brainstorm as many ways as possible of supplementing your income before going into higher education or whilst at college or university.

Ideas could be: vacation work, a gap year, paid work experience, part-time work. Get them to think about the pros and cons of working and studying. Ask students to think about how they would manage their time.

Give them **Handout 21a** to read through. Discuss any issues raised from this.

Divide into groups of four. Give the groups Jo's timetable in **Handout 21b**. When the groups have read it, give them three part-time job options:

- Three early mornings a week
- Three nights a week
- Lunchtimes and evenings at the weekend

Now ask the groups to plan Jo's time for the term and come up with a recommendation for Jo on which job to take and how to organise study time.

Part way through the exercise, you could give each group an 'issue' to deal with:

- Jo gets flu and is laid up in bed for four days
- Jo is asked to do more hours at work
- Jo is asked to do an extra assignment before the end of term



HANDOUT 21A

Part-time jobs

Page 1 of 2

These days a high percentage of students have some sort of part-time job. It might be anything from working a few evenings in a supermarket or behind a bar, to dog walking or babysitting. Working for a reasonable number of hours a week (between 10 and 15) shouldn't harm your studies. Some research suggests it may even help develop work skills which employers value.

"I decided to go to a local university and continue to live with my parents. They are supporting me through the course as the loan that I have just about covers fees and books and the tram fare into Manchester each day. Another way I addressed the financial aspect of higher education was by getting a job – I work at UMIST and also work for an IT field marketing company, demonstrating PCs."

Claire Beck, BSc Computing, UMIST

In your first term, you'll be getting used to lots of new things so don't take on too much too soon. Wait until you've got a feel for your course and how much study time you need before committing yourself to a job. There's no point earning extra cash if it means you're too worn out to get your university or college work done or spend time with your mates.

Go to your college or university careers service to find out about part-time work. Many higher education institutions and student unions now have one stop 'job shops' which advertise jobs specifically for students. These are a good starting-point in your job search.

"I had to get a job to support myself and worked at the student union in the Entertainments Department. It was my job to help organise the weekly entertainments and various balls and look after the bands and DJs that came to perform at Keele. I ended up becoming a resident DJ there myself, playing to 1,800 students, and I've also played at local clubs in the area."

Jayne Winstanley, BSc Biochemistry and Neuroscience, Keele University

The small ads in local newspapers are a good place to look for part-time work. Jobcentres will also be able to tell you about local vacancies and many now have touch screen terminals with access to thousands of vacancies to make your job search as quick and easy as possible. You can also try Jobcentre Plus by calling Jobseeker Direct on 0845 606 0234.



HANDOUT 21A

Part-time jobs

Page 2 of 2

Once you've got a job, make sure you talk to your employer in good time if you want to work or have time off in the Christmas or summer holidays. If you want a holiday job back home, try contacting employers before the end of the summer term for Christmas positions and in Easter for the summer, so that you're not competing with all the other thousands of returning students.

As an employee – even a part-time one – you've got rights which are designed to protect you from being treated unfairly. For example, you should be paid at least the national minimum wage of £3.53 per hour for 16–17 year olds, £4.77 per hour if you are between 18 and 21, and £5.73 if you are 22 or over. For more information, visit: www.businesslink.gov.uk

Before you start any job make sure that you agree the basics with your employer – things like working hours, holidays, etc – and try to get it in writing. If you ever feel that your employer isn't sticking to their side of the agreement, talk to your human resources adviser as soon as you can. If that doesn't work, you can try your local Citizens Advice Bureau or the firm's trade union representative.



HANDOUT 21B

To work or not to work?

Page 1 of 1

Jo's timetable										
		10–11	11–12	12–1	1–2	2–3	3–4	4–5	5 onwards	
MON	BREAKFAST			Cognitive psychology	LUNCH	Artificial intelligence	Social psychology	Linguistics	Chill out in hall bar	
TUES		Catch up on study							Swimming Go to cinema	
WED		Psychology labs – fortnightly No write up				Catch up on study			Football practice	
THUR		Cognitive psychology		Linguistics		Psychology labs – fortnightly with 2,500 word write up			Uni night club	
FRI		Social psychology	Fortnightly tutorial	Fortnightly linguistics		Catch up on study			Student union	
SAT		Football							Pub, club or party	
SUN		Write up essays and lab reports							Swimming	

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance



ACTIVITY 22

Payback time

SUGGESTED TIME: 20–30 minutes

RESOURCES: Handout 22a / Tutor's notes 22a



This activity looks at the repayments students would have to make on a student loan, depending on how much they are earning.

To give them some context, start with a short whole-class activity where they have to guess the approximate average salaries of a number of jobs. Put these job names up on the board and get the students to call out how much they think this profession earns, on average.

- Automotive engineer
- Accountant
- Web designer
- Architect
- Police
- Doctor
- Chef

Once you have established the correct answers (see **Tutor's notes 22a**), explain that you are going to look at how much of your loan you would have to pay back each week, depending on your loan and what you earn.

Give out **Handout 22a**, which gives some generic information about the loans.

Discuss in class what they think about the repayments.

- Are they more than expected?
- Less than expected?
- How does it make them feel about making repayments?
- How does it relate to the jobs you talked about earlier?
- Has it made them think differently about the sort of job they might want to get?

Deal with any questions they might have.



HANDOUT 22A

Payback time

Page 1 of 1

Get the repayments facts

1. You would only start paying back your loan after you left university and when you started earning over £15,000 a year.
2. Your repayments would be linked to earnings – the less you earn, the less you would pay; the more you earn, the more you would pay. If you didn't work or your salary dropped below £15,000 a year, you would not pay back anything.
3. Payments would be made through the tax system like National Insurance or pension contributions.
4. Payments would not be based on what you owed; they would be based on what you earned.
5. Also for students who started in 2006 or later, the Government will write off all student loan balances (except arrears) which are left unpaid 25 years after you have left your course.

Repayments for students entering HE in 2006 or later

Gross salary	Weekly income	Weekly (gross) repayments
£10,000	£192	£0.00
£15,000	£288	£0.00
£16,000	£308	£1.73
£17,000	£327	£3.46
£18,000	£346	£5.19
£19,000	£365	£6.92
£20,000	£385	£8.65
£25,000	£481	£17.30
£30,000	£577	£25.96



TUTOR'S NOTES 22A

Payback time

Page 1 of 1

These salaries are from <http://salarytrack.co.uk> which calculates the average salary from various careers. Each one is for any industry, in any location.

For the purpose of comparison with the repayments charts, round these figures up or down.

Automotive engineer	£30,000
Accountant	£35,000
Web designer	£27,000
Architect	£60,000
Police	£24,120
Doctor	£26,532
Chef	£20,000

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05

NEXT STEPS: HOW TO APPLY...

This section provides vital information, from initial research to beginning a course, of how to get into higher education.

The factsheets also offer key information for students heading to university. So if you are short for time, ask your students to look at these at home.

CONTENTS

Activity	Suggested time (minutes)	Handouts	Details	Links to:
Web check	20		Initial research vital for all students	Activity: All Factsheet 6
Applying for a course	30		This activity asks students to create a time plan of things they need to do – from research to applying to starting the higher education course	Activity: All Factsheet 7
Next steps checklist	10	Handout 25a	This provides an invaluable checklist approved by UCAS. The handout shows vital dates and contacts for applications of courses, institutions and loans	Activity: All



ACTIVITY 23

Web check

SUGGESTED TIME: 20 minutes

RESOURCES: Factsheet 6



Using **Factsheet 6**, ask students to research their options – from careers to higher education courses, to universities to types of learning. Prior to starting, mention that each student can make applications for up to five different courses initially.

Open a discussion with the group about the choices that are available to students.



ACTIVITY 24

Applying for a course

SUGGESTED TIME: 30 minutes

RESOURCES: Factsheet 7 / UCAS application



Use **Factsheet 7** as the basis for an explanation of the application process. You could either present information to the group and take questions or use the factsheet as a handout.

Ask students, working in groups of four, to design and produce a forward plan chart with milestones, key dates and activities. Take one important element from that plan, for example completing the UCAS application online at www.ucas.com using UCAS Apply.

UCAS applicants can submit their applications, monitor their progress and accept or decline offers online.

Brainstorm as a group ideas on how to make applying for a course as painless as possible.

These could include printing it off and practising, for example, or making sure you have made your five choices and have all the personal information you need to hand.

Using downloadable sample forms, give students a chance to practise and help each other by answering any questions that come up.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.ucas.com



ACTIVITY 25

Next steps checklist

SUGGESTED TIME: 10 minutes

RESOURCES: Handout 25a



To help your students take their next steps towards higher education, run through the checklist in **Handout 25a.**

This provides some practical details about applying to college or university and about how to apply for financial help.

You could do this activity in groups, or give students their own copies to take away with them.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

aimhigher...

www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.connexions-direct.com
www.ucas.com



HANDOUT 25A

Next steps checklist

Page 1 of 3

Once you have decided that you're going to apply for higher education, look through this checklist to come to grips with the key things that you need to do.

Make sure you have the most up-to-date information on courses and deadlines etc from UCAS.

SPRING/SUMMER YEAR 1

Think about the courses you might want to study:

- What qualifications are needed for the job or career you're aiming for?
- Make a list of subjects or qualifications they mention.
- Speak to your Connexions Personal Adviser or look at: www.connexions.com or speak to a Connexions helpline adviser on: **080 800 13 219**.
- Now search for courses. Visit the UCAS website: www.ucas.com and make a note of all the ones of interest, including course name and code, establishment name and address and contact details (you will be able to print all this out!).
- Look at the course Entry Profiles to see what qualifications they advise for entry to the course.
- Speak to your Connexions Personal Adviser, tutor or careers adviser to work out if these are the right ones for you.

SUMMER YEAR 1/AUTUMN YEAR 2

Narrow down your choices:

- Get hold of the college or university prospectus and check out the course details – which courses cover the topics that interest you most or are relevant to the job you are aiming for.
- If you can, try to visit the universities or colleges that offer these courses – call them for details of when they are holding open days.
- If you can't visit, call the admissions office to discuss your plans.
- Narrow down your choices to five or less (if you want to study full-time). There's no limit on how many you can apply for if they are part-time or flexible learning.
- Check deadlines for applications!



HANDOUT 25A

Next steps checklist

Page 2 of 3

AUTUMN/WINTER YEAR 2

Apply for your courses:

- To UCAS for full-time degrees, HNDs etc (deadline: mid January).
- Direct for part-time or flexible learning (varying deadlines: check with UCAS or institution for exact dates).

Apply to Student Finance England for financial help:

- Student Finance England issues student loans and grants on behalf of the Government. There are loans to help with fees and living costs and non-repayable grants for maintenance (living costs).

For more information log on to www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

SPRING YEAR 2

Interviews:

- Attend any interviews you're called for.
- Interview them as well! It's your chance to find out more about the course and the place.

Offers:

- Wait for offers. Each of your choices will reply with one of the following: an unconditional offer, where you are accepted whatever grades you get; a conditional offer, where you will get a place if you get the necessary grades; or a rejection.
- If you don't get any offers don't panic, you may be able to use the Extra process. In Extra you can apply for further courses one at a time using the Track service at www.ucas.com. If you are not eligible for Extra, you can apply for further courses in the Clearing system, which starts in August.
- If you receive offers, you must reply online through the Track service at www.ucas.com. If you firmly accept an unconditional offer, you cannot accept any other offers. If you firmly accept a conditional offer as your first choice, you may also accept one other offer as a second or insurance choice.
- Make sure you reply to your offers on Track at www.ucas.com by the due date.
- If you don't get the grades you need you may still be accepted by the college or university of your choice if there are spaces available. If they reject you, you can still go into the Clearing system in August.
- Accept the offer you most want.



HANDOUT 25A

Next steps checklist

Page 3 of 3

SUMMER YEAR 2

Finances:

- Don't wait until you get an offer of a place to apply for your student finance.
- You can apply at the same time as you apply for your course.
- You can check the progress of your application online.
- Go over your finances again.

Planning:

- Make sure you respond to any letters or forms from the university or college you'll be going to.

AUTUMN YEAR 3

This is the bit when you realise it's all been worth the effort!

Begin your course:

- Don't forget to register when you get there!
- Collect your student loan. This will be paid directly into your bank/building society account.
- Plan your study. Make sure you fit in some social time.
- Get books. (Don't go mad – only get the vital ones at first. Try second-hand and check what's available in the library.)
- Get started! Enjoy your time, and don't forget what you're aiming for...

This guide is intended to support your research and discussion with the relevant organisations. It should not be used as a substitute for the detailed guidance and advice that they provide and should not be seen as exhaustive.

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06 FACTSHEETS

This section includes factsheets to hand out to your students that contain important contact information for routes into higher education.

CONTENTS

Factsheet	Number of pages	Details
1. Things you always wanted to know about higher education	2	Answers to common questions about higher education
2. Higher education institutions and qualifications	2	Defining what each qualification is and what it entails
3. Jargon buster	4	Glossary of higher education terms
4. Money matters	3	The definition of loans and grants
5. Salary facts and figures	1	What do employers look for?
6. Where to find out more	2	Key contact information
7. Choosing and applying for a higher education place	2	Information about applying, including key dates and contacts



FACTSHEET 1

Things you always wanted to know about higher education

Page 1 of 3

What exactly is higher education?

Higher education – sometimes abbreviated to HE – means courses at a higher level than A-levels, NVQ Level 3s, Applied A-levels and BTECs. You can do a higher education course at a university, a higher education college and at many further education (FE) colleges.

Give me some good reasons for bothering with higher education

Here are just a few things to be thinking about:

- Graduates are less likely to be unemployed.
- Those with a higher education qualification can expect to earn more over the course of their working life than those without.
- Over the last five years, graduates had double the average number of promotions at work than non-graduates.
- You get to meet new people and see new places and it's likely to be the best investment you ever make.
- Whatever you want to do in life, your career opportunities will be improved if you have a degree or diploma from a university or college. If you want to work in some professions (such as law or medicine) you'll need a relevant degree.

None of my mates are thinking of higher education. What if I don't make any new friends?

In the first few weeks of term, there'll be all sorts of social events laid on, for example Freshers' Week parties and college or uni club meetings. You'll meet lots of new people and soon make friends. In fact, you'll be so busy you probably won't have time to feel lonely.

Is higher education just for rich people?

Definitely not! Around 720,000 18–20 year olds are currently doing an undergraduate course in the UK. Colleges and universities are full of students from a wide range of backgrounds, age ranges and ethnic origins.

Will my family have to pay out lots of money?

Universities can now charge fees of up to £3,225* per year. However, full-time students will be able to apply for a loan to cover the cost of the tuition fees. The loan is not repaid until the student has left their course and is earning over £15,000 a year. For the most up-to-date information check on www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

**This figure is for the academic year 2009/10 and may change in subsequent years.*



FACTSHEET 1

Things you always wanted to know about higher education

Page 2 of 3

How long does a higher education course take?

The majority of courses last between two and four years, depending on the qualification, though some, such as medicine, can be up to six years long. You can sometimes take a higher education course as a part-time student over a longer period.

What kinds of higher education courses are available?

With 50,000 different courses there is a suitable academic or vocational course out there for you. In some popular subjects, such as business studies or computing, there are literally hundreds of courses on offer.

What kind of qualifications can I get?

As a higher education student you'll probably be working towards one of these qualifications:

- An Honours degree leading to a Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BSc). These are usually three-year courses (four years in Scotland and degrees are named differently in Scotland).
- An Honours degree course including one year in industry or a year abroad. These are usually four-year courses and are sometimes called sandwich courses.
- A two-year Higher National Diploma or Diploma of Higher Education course. These are both popular qualifications in their own right and there's always the option to top them up and turn them into a degree if you want to.
- A Foundation degree is a full or part-time two-year qualification that is geared towards a specific job. This could be anything from forensic science or creative arts to police studies or tourism.

Do I have to leave home to study on a higher education course?

No. Lots of students choose to study at a local higher education college or a local university because it suits them better. Others prefer to study away from home and benefit from the experience of leaving home and meeting new people.



FACTSHEET 1

Things you always wanted to know about higher education

Page 3 of 3

How is college or uni different to school?

On a higher education course you are responsible for your own learning. No one makes you do anything but you have to work hard if you want to make a success of it. If you are a full-time student, you may have to go to the university campus each day for lectures or tutorials. On practical courses, some of your time will be spent in laboratories or studios, computer labs or media centres, or perhaps sometimes in a workplace. Each student has his or her own timetable. If you are a part-time student, you might go to university on one or two days a week or even in the evenings, but that depends on your course. On many courses you will be assessed on a combination of coursework and exams.

So, am I going to have to sit through another three or four years of lessons?

No. If you want good grades, you are certainly going to have to put some work in, but it is not about listening to a tutor all day. You will have lectures, seminars and tutorials; you will probably use the library and spend time studying on your own, doing research, reading or preparing work for assessment. You can often fit this around your other commitments.

Should I take a year out first?

A gap year can be a chance to work and make some money, an opportunity to travel, or a way of getting experience, perhaps by volunteering. Most universities will offer a place for the following year to any student who would gain from the experience of a year out.



FACTSHEET 2

Higher education institutions and qualifications

Page 1 of 3

There are an amazing 50,000 courses to choose from at around 300 colleges and universities – everything from Art and Design to Astronomy, Engineering to English and Sociology to Zoology.

The main places to take higher education courses are universities, specialist colleges and higher education colleges. They all offer a different range of courses and qualifications and have different facilities, both for studying and for sports and enjoying yourself.

Check individual prospectuses, official and unofficial websites to find out more about a particular university or college.

Wherever you go, you will probably take an Honours degree, a Foundation degree, a Higher National Diploma or Certificate (HND/HNC) or a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE).

No two courses are the same. Your work may be assessed differently and the particular areas of study will vary too. You might be able to take the course part-time. So you need to compare courses as well as colleges.

What is an Honours degree?

There are hundreds of subjects to choose from, but whatever subject you choose, you will usually be working towards a Bachelor of Arts (BA), a Bachelor of Science (BSc) or a Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) degree. There's also an option to take a combined Honours degree where you choose two main subject areas.

A full-time Honours degree normally takes three years. You need to study a certain number of courses or modules – some compulsory and some optional.

Sometimes you can study your choices at a level that will give you an ordinary degree. For a degree with honours, you need to study at a more complex level.



FACTSHEET 2

Higher education institutions and qualifications

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What is a Foundation degree?

Foundation degrees are full or part-time vocational degrees. They take two years full-time and are one level below an Honours degree. They focus on the knowledge and skills that employers look for, and include practical work experience. All Foundation degrees offer guaranteed progression to higher level study and there may be options to continue for an Honours degree. Find out more from the website at www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/QualificationsExplained/DG_10039022 or www.ucas.com

What is a Higher National Certificate (HNC) and a Higher National Diploma (HND)?

HNCs and HNDs are offered in a wide range of subjects, which tend to be related to specific careers – from business to engineering. HNCs can often be studied full-time for one year or part-time for two. HNDs take two years full-time and there are often options to top up your studies by transferring to a degree course for a third year.

What is a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)?

DipHEs usually take two years full-time or three years part-time. They are often linked to specific careers and include work experience.

Professional qualifications

Some professions, like social work or teaching, have specific study and course requirements. For others, such as psychology or law, you need to study a certain type of degree before you can take the postgraduate qualifications you need. It is only possible to join these professions if you have passed specific courses approved by them. Talk to course advisers or careers guidance staff before you choose your course to make sure it will suit the career you have in mind.

What are sandwich courses?

For some subjects, experience of working or studying in industry or abroad is a real advantage. These courses ‘sandwich’ a work or study placement between the first and second, or second and third years.

The university or college will help you find an individual placement that enhances your studies and gives you a better chance of a job once you have gained your qualification. If you choose to study languages, or a subject such as European business, your course will probably include some time – up to a year – abroad. Your university or college will help you find somewhere to live, and organise a study or work placement for you.



FACTSHEET 2

Higher education institutions and qualifications

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What is postgraduate study?

There are a number of qualifications you can take at a level higher than a first degree. These include master's degrees (MSc, MA or MPhil), postgraduate diplomas and certificates. You usually need to have completed a degree before taking a postgraduate course. These are often a chance to focus on a subject in more depth and higher qualifications can give you an advantage.

What is distance learning?

Distance learning is done part-time and usually from home. You probably will not attend classes and you will get your materials in the post or by email. You complete assignments and send them back for marking. At the end of the course, you might have to sit an exam. Not all universities offer distance learning as an option and it is not available for all subjects. The most famous example is the Open University, where courses can be studied at home or work, with some residential components. Courses are open to all – regardless of educational qualifications. For more details take a look at www.open.ac.uk



FACTSHEET 3

Jargon buster

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Access to Learning Fund

The Access to Learning Fund is available through your college or university and provides help for students on low incomes who may need extra financial support for their course and to stay in higher education. Contact your university or college for more information. This help is usually given as a grant.

BA

Bachelor of Arts degree.

BEng

Bachelor of Engineering degree.

BSc

Bachelor of Science degree.

Bursary

Many universities and colleges offer non-repayable bursaries – see what is available as you might benefit.

Campus

This usually refers to the buildings and surroundings of a university or college.

CATS

Credit Accumulation Transfer Scheme. Sometimes it is possible to gain credit for completing parts of a degree. If you have already studied to HND level, on a degree programme, or for relevant professional qualifications before you start your degree, you may be able to transfer credits under the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme, CATS. This means that if you change course, move to another institution, or take a break from study or change from full to part-time, you can take the credits with you.

Clearing

This is the system operated by UCAS at the end of the application cycle that enables unplaced applicants to apply for courses with vacancies. It is used by applicants who have not managed to secure a place at university or college, and can allow for last-minute applications.

Honours degree

A qualification awarded by a higher education institution after the satisfactory completion of the equivalent of three years of full-time study at university level.



FACTSHEET 3

Jargon buster

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Diploma of Higher Education

A qualification awarded by some higher education institutions, after two years' study.

DSA

Disabled Students' Allowance. This covers extra costs associated with your disability.

Faculty

A faculty is a group of academic departments – Faculty of Science, Faculty of Law and so on. Sometimes they are called schools, such as School of Health Studies.

Finals

The final exams taken by students at the end of their study. Most degrees or higher education qualifications today rely far less on the results from finals and tend to combine final exams with assessment throughout the course.

Foundation degree

A full or part-time job-related higher education course. Foundation degrees may be awarded after two years of study.

Freshers

Students beginning their time at a university are often referred to as 'Freshers' and a Freshers' Week may be organised to introduce them to university or college life. This can include social events as well as introduction to libraries and other resources.

Gap year

A year out between school or further education and higher education – a chance to travel, work, get experience and expand your horizons.

Graduate

A graduate is a person who has been awarded a degree from a higher education institution. Whilst studying for a degree or other higher education qualification you are known as an undergraduate.

Halls

Halls of residence are blocks of student accommodation, which either provide meals or self-catering facilities. Priority for places in halls is usually given to first-year students. There are usually a variety of other facilities like launderettes, common rooms, TVs and cleaners.



FACTSHEET 3

Jargon buster

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HNC/HND

Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma.

Lecture

A teaching class led by a lecturer where you take notes and ask questions.

Maintenance grant

Full-time students from lower income households can apply for a non-repayable maintenance grant of up to £2,906 depending on their income and that of their household.

Master's degree

A postgraduate degree. This can be either a Master of Science (MSc), a Master of Arts (MA) or Master of Philosophy (MPhil), depending on the subject. Master's degrees usually take a year full-time or two years part-time.

Modular courses

Some courses are divided into modules and you have to pass a number of compulsory and optional modules to complete a degree programme.

Nightline

If you are ever unhappy about anything while you are a student, many universities and colleges have a Nightline service. Nightline is a confidential listening and information service run by students, for students.

NUS

National Union of Students – the organisation that represents students and looks after their interests.

PhD

Doctor of Philosophy. A person who has a degree and has undertaken years of research, published their work and been assessed. They can use the title Dr.

PGCE

Postgraduate Certificate in Education. A one or two-year teacher training course taken after your first degree.



FACTSHEET 3

Jargon buster

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Postgraduate courses

Courses at a higher level, usually only available if you have already passed your degree. Postgraduate study can lead to a master's degree or a Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma.

Reading week

A period during a semester or term when students can concentrate on their individual learning and research.

Redbrick

A term often applied to city universities usually established before 1992 – the universities of Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Leeds, Newcastle and Birmingham, for example.

Research

Research is a key feature of most higher education courses. Research involves collecting information about a subject from a variety of sources including books, journals and the internet or by carrying out experiments or talking to people, and analysis of this information.

Sandwich course

Any course that includes a year in industry or abroad.

Scholarship

Financial help given by some organisations for specific courses.
Check out www.studentmoney.org

Semester

Some universities or colleges divide the student year into three terms, some divide it into two semesters. A semester is half a study year.

Seminar

A group of students meet to discuss a subject with a tutor. Someone (or a group) may prepare a paper for discussion and share the research they have done and their opinions on the subject. Seminars are more interactive than a lecture and are often student-led.



FACTSHEET 3

Jargon buster

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Student loan for living costs

A loan to help you pay for your accommodation, food, travel and so on. There are also additional loans to cover the cost of your tuition fees (see below). You pay these back when you have left your course and are earning over £15,000. You only pay back 9% of your earnings above £15,000 a year, so someone earning a salary of £18,000 would repay around £5.19 per week.

Tuition fees

Universities and colleges of higher education can charge new full-time undergraduates fees of up to £3,225*. Some may charge less than the maximum of £3,225*. Students study first and pay back when they are earning. A loan is available to eligible, full-time students to cover tuition fees.

Part-time students can find information at

www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/FinanceForNewStudents/DG_10034860

Tutorial

A one-to-one or small group session to discuss work or course issues with your tutor.

UCAS

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. Pronounced Yew-Cass. Most students applying for full-time courses apply through UCAS.

UCAS Extra

If you applied for courses but have not received an offer, UCAS Extra allows you to apply to additional universities and colleges that have vacancies.

Vocational course

A work-related programme of study designed to help you into a specific career.

**In academic year 2009/10.*



FACTSHEET 4

Money matters

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When you go to university or college, you have to think about tuition fees and how you will pay for accommodation, travel, food, books, going out and so on.

The good news is that there is plenty of help available – though you should not expect to be living a life of luxury! Most people think it is well worth investing in higher education even if it means being a bit hard up for a few years, because they are more likely to get a bigger salary at the end of it.

The Government helps by giving all full-time students the option to apply for a loan to cover tuition fees, and eligible students the option to apply for a loan for living costs, so you can study first and pay back when you're earning. Non-repayable grants are also available to students from lower income households.

To apply for student finance, go online at www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Fees from September 2008

Universities and colleges in England can vary the tuition fees they charge for new starters from £0 to £3,225 per year. However, full-time students can apply for a loan to cover the cost of their tuition fees.

Any maintenance loans will be added to the tuition fee loans and the student will not have to make any repayments until they have left university and are earning more than £15,000 a year. Repayments linked to income mean the more you earn, the more you repay, and the less you earn, the less you repay. The actual cost of fees will depend on which college or university you decide to go to and which course you take. The most that any university or college will be able to charge for fees (until 2010 or later) will be £3,225 a year.

Also for students who started in 2006 or later, the Government will write off all student loan balances (except arrears) which are left unpaid 25 years after you have left your course (or up to 30 years if you have taken a repayment break).

Student loans

There are two sorts of student loan: loans for maintenance and loans for fees.



FACTSHEET 4

Money matters

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Loans for maintenance

Student maintenance loans can help towards the costs of your general living expenses. These are not commercial loans like those offered by high street banks or building societies who aim to make a profit. It has an interest rate linked to inflation so that the money you repay is the same in real terms as the money you originally borrowed. This means that the Student Loans Company does not make any profit from the loans.

The loan amount depends on your own circumstances, as well as where you live while you study. The loan is less for students who live at home. Students on part-time, initial teacher training courses are eligible for the full student loan as well as the other support available to full-time students.

Loans for fees

Students can take a loan out to cover their fees if they need to. They will then be able to defer paying this loan until after they have left their course and are earning over £15,000.

If a student decides to take out a fee loan to cover their tuition fees, Student Finance England will make any fee payment straight to their university or college. The amount of fee loan a student can take out will be linked directly to how much their college or university charges for their chosen course.

Paying back the fee loan works in much the same way as the maintenance loan, this means that students will not have to pay anything back until after they've left their course and are earning over £15,000 a year.

When students have left higher education, any loans for maintenance will be added to any loans for fees into a single amount. Students only start to repay when they are earning above £15,000. They will pay back 9% of their earnings over £15,000 a year, so someone earning £18,000 a year would repay around £5.19 per week.



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Part-time students

If you are planning to study part-time – including with the Open University – for the equivalent of 50% or more of a full-time course, you may qualify for a fee grant of up to £1,210 a year and a course grant of up to £260 a year depending on the intensity of your course and your household income. The maximum you can get through the fee grant will depend on the intensity of your course – how long it takes to complete compared to the equivalent full-time course.

If you and your course qualify you'll get the maximum course grant and maximum fee grant available for your course's intensity (up to the actual amount you're charged for tuition fees) if you're receiving any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Local Housing Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- New Deal Allowance

Otherwise, how much you can get is based on an assessment of your income – and usually, if you live with a partner, their income too. If your household income is less than £16,510 you will receive the maximum fee grant allowed for your course intensity (or the tuition fees charged for your course if these are lower) plus the full course grant of £260.

If you already get benefits, becoming a student can be seen as a 'change of circumstances'. Check with your local DWP or Jobcentre Plus to see if studying at university might affect your benefit. Those on higher incomes may get partial support.



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Money matters

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What other help is available?

Grants

More students could be eligible for a non-repayable grant of up to £2,906 a year. Students with a household income of up to £25,000 could qualify for the full amount and those with household incomes between £25,001 and £50,020 could qualify for a partial grant.

University bursaries, grants and sponsorships

Any university that charges the maximum fee of £3,225 a year will have to provide financial support, such as bursaries, worth at least £319 to students on those courses who are receiving the full £2,906 maintenance grant. Many universities and colleges are offering more. It is worth contacting your university or college to see what is available.

Teacher training incentives

Apply for funding from your Local Authority (LA) if you are going to do initial teacher training (ITT) full-time or part-time. There are reduced fees for undergraduate ITT courses and there are no fees for postgraduate teacher training. For more information on this call the Teacher Training Agency's Information Line on 0845 6000 991. Or visit the website at www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit.aspx

National Health Service Bursaries

Students with a National Health Service (NHS) funded place on a full-time or part-time pre-registration health professional course can apply for NHS bursaries. If you register for a course of this kind, you will automatically be sent information about how to apply. For some students studying medical or dental courses, these NHS bursaries should be available for your later years of study. For more information check out the NHS careers website at www.nhs.uk/careers

Access to Learning Fund

The Access to Learning Fund is available through your college or university and provides help for students on low incomes who may need extra financial support for their course and to stay in higher education. Contact your college or university for more information. The good news is that this money does not usually have to be repaid.



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Money matters

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Career Development Loans

Career Development Loans are backed by the Government and available through three high street banks. They're loans of between £300 and £8,000 to pay for up to two years of vocational education or training. Study can be full-time, part-time or by distance learning. No repayments are made during the period of training and for one month afterwards. After this you have to pay the loan and any further interest. Go to www.direct.gov.uk/cdl for more information.

If you have children or dependants

If you're studying full-time and have children in registered and approved childcare, you could get a Childcare Grant. You may be able to get up to £148.75 a week for one child or up to £255 a week for two or more children. How much help you get will depend on your circumstances. You may also be able to get a Parents' Learning Allowance if you have dependent children. How much you get will depend on your income and that of your dependants. If you have an adult who depends on you, you may also be able to get an Adult Dependant's Grant worth up to £2,642 a year. None of the help mentioned here has to be repaid. Get more information from the booklet 'Childcare Grant and other support for full-time student parents in higher education' in 2008/09. You can get this by calling 0800 731 9133.

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs)

These help with the extra costs you have as a result of attending your course and as direct result of your disability. Get more from the booklet [Bridging the Gap](#), which provides information about these allowances. Call 0800 731 9133 for a copy. Copies are also available in audio, Braille, and large print.

Young people leaving care

The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 came into force on 1 October 2001. Young people who are eligible for leaving care services since that date will have a pathway plan and a personal adviser. The Local Authority responsible for their pathway plan will have a duty to meet their needs in relation to education, training or employment. If necessary this will include helping these students with the costs of accommodation during the holidays. Students should speak to their social worker or personal adviser to find out more.

Higher education bursary for care leavers

- Care leavers who go on to take a recognised course of higher education are entitled to a minimum bursary of £2,000 payable by the Local Authority that looked after them.
- This bursary is payable over the duration of the higher education course and it is for Local Authorities to decide, in consultation with the student, the pattern of payment.

The figures discussed are for the academic year 2009/10 and may vary in future years.



FACTSHEET 5

Salary facts and figures

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Did you know that the qualifications you achieve are likely to have a direct effect on how much you earn?

Employers pay most for skills that:

- Are specialised
- Have required lots of training
- Are particularly important to their business
- Are in short supply

Employers pay least to:

- Unskilled workers
- Semi-skilled workers

Employers place a greater value on some qualifications than others and are willing to pay people more as a result. So what can you expect from investing in your own education and training?

There is a lot of competition for jobs today, and if you do not have qualifications, you will find it increasingly difficult to get a job you want.

People with few or no qualifications are:

- Likely to earn less than people with better skills
- Less likely to own their own home

Remember, though, that even graduates do not simply walk into high-paying jobs. Higher education can certainly help, but you will still need to build up experience and work-related skills. Postgraduate and professional qualifications can also help you progress in your career.



FACTSHEET 6

Where to find out more

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For more information on student life, higher education and finances, have a look at the following websites and resources.

Aimhigher materials

www.direct.gov.uk/uni

The Direct Gov website is a 'gateway' where you and your students can find out all the information they need when it comes to higher education.

Supported by case studies and useful links, the site provides information on the following:

- Student finance – in this section, students can find out more about the cost of higher education and the various types of financial help that is available to them.
- Student life – this section shows students what life will be like in higher education, including accommodation and the various clubs and societies that students can join.

Linking to the various sources of information, Aimhigher will help guide students through the pathway to higher education and will help clarify the role of each of the various organisations that students may encounter, including UCAS and Student Finance England.

General information

learndirect

For information about fitting learning into your life.

Website: www.learndirect.co.uk

www.uni4me.co.uk

An easy-to-use site with questions and answers, case studies and lots of information on what university life is really like.

NUS – National Union of Students

Information on money, health, housing, and legal advice.

Website: www.nusonline.co.uk

StudentZone

Careers advice and services, links to other student information sites.

Website: www.studentzone.org.uk



FACTSHEET 6

Where to find out more

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Applying to higher education

UCAS – Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

Information on universities and courses and all aspects of the applications process.

Website: www.ucas.com

www.HERO.ac.uk

Links to all higher education institutions, news on higher education issues and a course search are all available. It is suitable for students and teaching and careers professionals.

Careers

www.connexions-direct.com

Connexions Direct www.connexions-direct.com is a comprehensive service offering accurate, up-to-date, impartial advice to support young people – and those who guide them – on a range of teenage issues, including their career and learning choices, relationships, finance and peer to peer commentary. The website is supported by a national helpline with trained advisers available from 8am–2am daily. Young people are able to self-help by accessing information from the website. Those young people with additional needs can contact an adviser via telephone, minicom, webchat, SMS text message or email.

The Jobs4u careers database www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u contains over 800 job profiles, which are regularly updated.

From April 2008 Local Authorities have been responsible for providing local Connexions services. Contact details for each local provider can be found within Connexions Direct website Local Services.

www.careerssoft.co.uk

A database of careers information, advice on going into higher education, how to find a job and lots of resources for teachers and tutors.

www.prospects.ac.uk

Information about graduate careers.

www.careers-gateway.co.uk

This is a useful starting point, bringing together links to relevant websites.



FACTSHEET 6

Where to find out more

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Students with disabilities

SKILL

Information for students with disabilities.

Website: www.skill.org.uk

Money matters

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Provides comprehensive information and guidance on all aspects of financial help available to students.

www.studentmoney.org

This is a really useful site that offers lots of practical advice and information to help students with finances and higher education funding. This site provides a freely searchable database of scholarships and other sources of funding, such as competitions and prizes and help with childcare costs.

Career Development Loans

Information about the loans and how to apply.

Tel: 0800 585 505

Website: www.direct.gov.uk/cdl

Benefits Enquiry Line

Help with benefits in the UK.

Tel (England, Scotland, Wales): 0800 88 22 00

Tel (Northern Ireland): 0800 220 674

Website: www.dwp.gov.uk



FACTSHEET 7

Choosing and applying for a higher education place

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If you are applying for a full-time or sandwich undergraduate degree, higher education (HE) foundation course or Higher National Diploma (HND), you will need the current UCAS application form and handbook. These are free from your college, from libraries or direct from UCAS (www.ucas.ac.uk).

For other full-time further education or teacher education courses, or for part-time courses, including all Open University courses, contact the university or college directly and ask for a prospectus and application form.

Making your choices

Draw up a shortlist of about ten colleges or universities that really appeal to you and ask each of them to send you their prospectus. Read them all carefully. Make a list of priorities – the things that really matter to you, such as location, assessment method, and course content. Score each place against these, add up the totals and see which place comes out top.

Universities hold open days for prospective students to have a look around. Tours of the campus and facilities let you see if the place is right for you, and there will be people available to answer your questions. Once you have narrowed your shortlist down, try to check out as many of them as you can. Lots of colleges produce 'unofficial' prospectuses on the web, or you can ask for one to be posted to you. UCAS lets you choose five possible colleges or universities.

You will also need to check if you are required to take an entrance test for acceptance on some courses. Check the UCAS website (www.ucas.com) for information about these tests.



FACTSHEET 7

Choosing and applying for a higher education place

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Disabled students

There will be extra issues to think about if you are disabled – things like access to lecture theatres, bars and canteens and so on, whether there will be a room for your personal assistant if you have one, the number of other disabled students etc.

You will be asked to state whether you have a disability on the application form. This will help them to arrange the support you need in time for when you start your course. From September 2002, university education became covered by the amended Part IV of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

This means universities and colleges are not allowed to treat a disabled applicant 'less favourably' than a non-disabled applicant for reasons related to his or her disability, without 'justification'. Skill (The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities) can provide lots more information about this. Visit the website at www.skill.org.uk

Applying through UCAS

You apply online through the UCAS website www.ucas.com using the Apply system. You need to apply by the following deadlines.

15 October Application deadline for the receipt at UCAS of applications for all medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and veterinary science courses and for all courses at Oxford University and the University of Cambridge.

15 January Application deadline for the receipt at UCAS of applications for all courses except those listed above with a 15 October deadline and **some** art and design courses.

Visit Course Search at www.ucas.com to find out whether art and design courses have a 15 January or 24 March deadline.

24 March Application deadline for the receipt at UCAS of applications for **some** art and design courses. Visit Course Search at www.ucas.com to find out whether art and design courses have a 15 January or 24 March deadline.



FACTSHEET 7

Choosing and applying for a higher education place

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Getting a place

UCAS will send your form to the colleges or universities you have chosen and each will decide whether to make you an offer.

You might be invited for an interview so that admissions staff can meet you and discuss your application. This gives you a great opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the course and about the university or college generally – so make the most of it.

You will then be sent a Statement of Decisions letter and a reply slip. Offers will be either conditional or unconditional. A conditional offer means that you have to get certain grades to take up your place.

You must then reply to each offer using the following categories:

- Firm acceptance (F) – remember you can only accept one offer firmly
- Insurance acceptance (I) – a back-up in case you don't get the grades you need for your first choice
- Decline (D) – a definite no.

Send your reply slip to UCAS as soon as you can but make sure it is not later than the date on the form. You will be on the course if you make the grades you have been asked for – and even sometimes if you do not (if enough places are available).

The UCAS admissions process is fully electronic, allowing you to submit your applications, monitor their progress, and accept or decline offers online.

Do not panic if you do not get an offer or get the grades you need. You can apply for additional places through UCAS Extra or go into the 'Clearing' system, which starts in August.