

EXPLORING UNIVERSITY

UNI?

AS YOU MOVE THROUGH KEY STAGE 5 YOU MAY BEGIN TO LOOK AT UNDERSTANDING THE NEXT STAGE OF YOUR JOURNEY THROUGH EDUCATION AND EXPLORE YOUR PATHWAY OPTIONS.

University could potentially be one of these options.

In this document you will be able to understand which are the leading universities locally, the degrees which are most popular, as well as the degrees which have the highest success rates in terms of securing future employment.

We will also provide you with details of the leading universities which specialise in degrees relating to certain sectors.

Once you have decided on a subject or the course you would like to study, your next decision would be to decide on the universities you could potentially attend.

You probably have a lot of questions and getting the answers isn't always easy.

Even if it seems like a long time before you have to decide about university, the sooner you have all of the knowledge you need, the easier it will be for you to make decisions throughout your school life.

The activities below will take you through all the information you need to know and help you decide if university really is for you.



TOP TIP...

If you are feeling confused and unsure, it is okay!

[Watch this webinar](#) to learn more about why to consider university as an option for you.

THINGS TO CONSIDER ACTIVITY

Before you make your final decision, there are some things you should consider, the questions below will help you find your way:

1. What is your end goal?

Knowing what you want to do is not essential – some people choose university as their next step because they don't have any career ideas but really enjoy a particular subject and want to see where it might take them. Whichever route you choose, being clear about your motivation will help you get the most from your experience.

What careers are you most interested in pursuing?

2. What are the alternatives?

If you don't go to university, what else could you do? Some options include:

- > Higher and Degree Apprenticeships– these now provide pathways to many careers traditionally followed by graduates.
- > Getting a job – there are lots of opportunities and trainee positions for school leavers. Some people choose to work first and go to university a few years later when they have a better idea of what they really want; others find their feet at work and never look back.
- > Taking a Gap Year – doing something different is a great way to try new things and find out what you like and may help you make more focused choices.

What alternatives appeal to you?

Make a note and do some research on your other options?

THINGS TO CONSIDER

3. Do you need a degree?

Sometimes, a degree is little more than a status, employers simply want to know you have one but don't have any real interest in what you've studied. For certain careers, a degree is not necessary and work experience is considered more important. And in other careers, such as medicine, a degree in a set subject is essential.

Do you need a degree to pursue your dream career?

4. How much will going to university cost?

Fees and talk of future debt and earnings can be really scary and overwhelming, if you are considering going to university, it does pay to find out exactly what it is likely to cost, what help you can get and what student loans mean.

Explore different scenarios – what would student loan repayments look like if you went on to a well-paid, average, or low-paid job?

You may not know what you'll end up doing but at least you'll be making a decision with your eyes open.

UCAS can support you with your research into the cost of going to university:

[UCAS | At the heart of connecting people to higher education](#)

Use the space below to make notes of any payments you would need to consider and work out what your repayments might look like when you graduate?

THINGS TO CONSIDER

5. Have you done your research?

Look closely at course content. Courses can vary at different universities, the entry requirements, study requirements and expectations can massively vary so it is important you are confident that the university is a good fit, but also that the course content interests you. You may not be able to visit in person this year, but virtual open days can still help you get a feel for what you like, both in terms of courses and the wider university experience.

Which universities and course are you most interested in?

6. What about additional benefits?

As with many aspects of life, the biggest advantages of any chosen path are often the unexpected ones. In the long term, people reflecting on their university days often find the wider benefits, such as developing confidence, making connections, or involvement with clubs and societies, more important than their actual studies. These things can all be gained in other ways – and no one would suggest going to university just because you're likely to make some great friends or may write for the student paper – but what you end up valuing the most may have little to do with your course.

What additional benefits do you hope you would gain from going to university?

THINGS TO CONSIDER

7. Can you do things differently?

Going to university doesn't have to mean you need to follow the standard route of moving to a new town and becoming a full-time student – there are different and more flexible ways to get a degree which may suit you better.

Which type of studying do you think would suit you the best?

Tick the boxes next to the options which you want to consider.

- ☐ Study full-time in a university away from home
- ☐ Study at your local university and live at home
- ☐ Do a part-time degree that you can combine with work or other commitments
- ☐ Study with the Open University (distance learning courses which mean you can study at a time and place that suits you).
- ☐ Do a sponsored degree. Certain employers will pay for you to do your degree, but you may need to work for them first and/or for a certain period after you graduate.

8. What's right for you?

It can be easy to fall into doing the same as your friends or what your parents or teachers expect so it's important to consider if your next step is really right for you.

What do you think are the pros and cons of going to University?

PROS

CONS



TOP TIP...

Do you have family, friends, teachers who went to university? Why not ask them about their experiences?

For more support and information about university, visit <https://www.unitasterdays.com/ut-tuesdays.aspx> to access a wide range of informative webinars. _

UNI... USEFUL INFO:

Now you have completed your research and decided university is right for you it is now time to begin to understand the options available to you.

In this section we will share details with you of the Top 10 Universities in the West Midlands and what are the most popular degree course being undertaken in the UK.

TOP 10

University Rankings 2020 – West Midlands

From the Complete University Guide published by the Independent

WM RANKING	UNIVERSITY NAME	NATIONAL RANKING
1	The University of Warwick	11
2	University of Birmingham	13
3	Harper Adams University	27
4	Aston University	34
5	Keele University	52
6	Coventry University	53
7	Staffordshire University	58
8	Birmingham City University	91
9	University of Worcester	108
10	University of Wolverhampton	124

TOP 10

Most Popular UK degree courses 2020

From data provided by Apply to Uni.

RANKING	SUBJECT
1	Business Management
2	Law
3	Sociology and Social Studies
4	Art and Design
5	IT and Computer Science
6	Psychology
7	Education
8	Nursing
9	Bio Sciences
10	History

It is also useful to know if your degree will potentially lead to employment. Here are the Top 10 degrees which were considered most useful in terms of securing employment in 2020.

TOP 10

Most Employable Degrees 2020

From the HESA Destinations of Leavers Report

WM RANKING	COURSE	EMPLOYABILITY %
1	Dentistry	99%
2	Veterinary	98%
3	Medicine	95%
4	Architecture, Building and Planning	90%
5	Education	90%
6	Engineering	85%
7	Computer Science	80%
8	Mathematics	79%
9	Business and Admin Studies	75%
10	Law	74%

VIRTUAL TOURS

Many of you will take a journey and go and visit the university in person to undertake a tour, learn more about your course and/or meet some of the staff and students from the university.

Before you take that journey or if you are unable to travel, there is always the option for you to take a Virtual Tour of the universities to help assist you in your decision-making process.

There are many positives about undertaking virtual tours.

- You can gain more understanding and knowledge about universities from the comfort of home and be able to undertake more tours in one day than if you needed to travel to many different universities around the country in person.
- You can take the time to discuss any questions you may have with family members or your school careers team prior to making the journey to visit a university in person
- Many universities will offer some virtual Q & A sessions with course leads. These sessions are really useful for you to have any of your questions answered or your concerns dealt with as early as possible.
- You can also re-visit a university many times through a virtual tour if you feel you have missed anything or wish to make sure you are making the right choice.



VIRTUAL TOURS

Why not start by taking some “Virtual Tours” of our local universities.

These universities may well offer the course you are looking for and could provide you with a more local option rather than re-locating somewhere else within the United Kingdom.

We have listed below some of our leading local universities and provided you with the links to their virtual tours.

ASTON UNIVERSITY, BIRMINGHAM

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZGrXEUoSGc>

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFHijpdG2dl>

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE BIRMINGHAM

<https://www.ucb.ac.uk/about-us/virtual-tours/>

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/study/birmingham/campus/your-campus-experience.aspx>

COVENTRY UNIVERSITY

<https://virtualtours.coventry.ac.uk/welcome>

UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE

<https://virtualtours.glos.ac.uk/>

HARTPURY UNIVERSITY

<https://www.hartpury.ac.uk/University/facilities/life-at-hartpury/virtual-tour/>

UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

<https://www.wlv.ac.uk/University-life/virtual-tour/>

UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amS2peBmKD8&list=UU7EjuHlzg2dR0qzHBIDzcXw>

If you find that the local universities are not quite what you had in mind or feel you would like to explore the universities which have a successful track record of degrees linked to specific industry sectors then feel free to explore the next few pages.

VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY TOURS LINKED TO INDUSTRY SECTORS

PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS SERVICES

TOP 5 UNI'S: ACCOUNTANCY AND FINANCE

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of Leeds	Virtual tour
2	University of Glasgow	Virtual tour
3	University of Bath	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
4	University of Strathclyde (Glasgow)	Virtual tour
5	Loughborough University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2

TOP 5 UNIVERSITIES: BUSINESS, MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of St. Andrews	Virtual tour
2	University of Bath	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
3	University of Warwick	Virtual tour
4	University College London	Virtual tour
5	Loughborough University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2

VIRTUAL TOURS – PROFESSIONAL

TOP 5 UNI'S: LAW

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of Oxford	Virtual tour
2	University of Central Lancashire	Virtual tour
3	University of Cambridge	Virtual tour
4	London School of Economics	Virtual tour
5	University of Glasgow	Virtual tour



VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY TOURS LINKED TO INDUSTRY SECTORS

CREATIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

TOP 5 UNI'S: ART

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of Oxford	Virtual tour
2	University College, London	Virtual tour
3	Goldsmiths, University of London	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
4	Newcastle University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
5	University of Wales, Trinity Saint David	Virtual tour

TOP 5 UNIVERSITIES: DESIGN AND CRAFTS

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	Kingston University, London	n/a
2	Loughborough University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
3	University of Wales, Trinity Saint David	Virtual tour
4	University of Dundee	Virtual tour
5	Goldsmiths, University of London	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2

VIRTUAL TOURS - ARTS

TOP 5 UNI'S: FASHION AND TEXTILES

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	Loughborough University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
2	University of Central Lancashire	Virtual tour
3	Kingston University, London	Virtual tour
4	The University of Edinburgh	Virtual tour
5	Staffordshire University	Virtual tour



VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY TOURS LINKED TO INDUSTRY SECTORS

ENGINEERING

TOP 5 UNI'S: ENGINEERING

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of Bristol	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
2	University of Cambridge	Virtual tour
3	Imperial College, London	Virtual tour
4	University of Oxford	Virtual tour
5	University of Warwick	Virtual tour



VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY TOURS LINKED TO INDUSTRY SECTORS

HEALTHCARE

TOP 5 UNI'S: HEALTH PROFESSIONS

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of Nottingham	Virtual tour
2	University of South Wales	Virtual tour
3	Cardiff University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
4	Keele University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
5	Northumbria University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2

TOP 5 UNI'S: MEDICINE

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of Dundee	Virtual tour
2	University of Aberdeen	Virtual tour
3	University of Edinburgh	Virtual tour
4	University of Oxford	Virtual tour
5	Brighton and Sussex Medical School	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2

VIRTUAL TOURS - HEALTHCARE

TOP 5 UNI'S: HEALTH NURSING

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of Edinburgh	Virtual tour
2	Cardiff University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
3	University of Liverpool	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2 Virtual tour 3
4	University of Glasgow	Virtual tour
5	University of York	Virtual tour

TOP 5 UNI'S: MIDWIFERY

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	Northumbria University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
2	Swansea University	Virtual tour
3	Kingston University	Virtual tour
4	Staffordshire University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
5	Keele University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2

**VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY TOURS
LINKED TO INDUSTRY SECTORS**

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

TOP 5 UNI'S: COMPUTER SCIENCE & INFORMATION SYSTEMS

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of St. Andrews	Virtual tour
2	University of Cambridge	Virtual tour
3	Imperial College, London	Virtual tour
4	University of Manchester	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
5	Lancaster University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2



VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY TOURS LINKED TO INDUSTRY SECTORS

AGRICULTURE

TOP 5 UNI'S: AGRICULTURE

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of Nottingham	Virtual tour
2	Queen's University, Belfast	Virtual tour
3	University of Reading	Virtual tour
4	Writtle University College	Virtual tour
5	Aberystwyth University	Virtual tour



**VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY TOURS
LINKED TO INDUSTRY SECTORS**

HOSPITALITY, EVENT MANAGEMENT AND TOURISM

TOP 5 UNI'S: HOSPITALITY, EVENT MANAGEMENT AND TOURISM

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	Coventry University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
2	Edinburgh Napier University	Virtual tour
3	Ulster University	Virtual tour
4	Bournemouth University	Virtual tour
5	University of Essex	Virtual tour



VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY TOURS LINKED TO INDUSTRY SECTORS

SPORT

TOP 5 UNI'S: SPORT

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	Anglia Ruskin University	Virtual tour
2	University of Nottingham	Virtual tour
3	Loughborough University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
4	University of Birmingham	Virtual tour
5	Durham University	Virtual tour



VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY TOURS LINKED TO INDUSTRY SECTORS

SCIENCE

TOP 5 UNI'S: PHYSICS

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of Oxford	Virtual tour
2	University of St. Andrews	Virtual tour
3	Royal Holloway, University of London	Virtual tour
4	Lancaster University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
5	Durham University	Virtual tour

TOP 5 UNI'S: CHEMISTRY

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	Durham University	Virtual tour
2	University of Lincoln	Virtual tour
3	University of St. Andrews	Virtual tour
4	University of Bristol	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2
5	University of York	Virtual tour

SCIENCE

TOP 5 UNI'S: BIOSCIENCES

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	University of St. Andrews	Virtual tour
2	University of Cambridge	Virtual tour
3	University of Oxford	Virtual tour
4	University of Portsmouth	Virtual tour
5	Lancaster University	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2



VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY TOURS LINKED TO INDUSTRY SECTORS

TEACHER TRAINING / EDUCATION

TOP 5 UNI'S: TEACHER TRAINING / EDUCATION

RANK	UNIVERSITY NAME	GO TO TOUR
1	Anglia Ruskin University	Virtual tour
2	University of the West England, Bristol	Virtual tour 1 Virtual tour 2 Virtual tour 3
3	Kingston University, London	Virtual tour
4	University of Dundee	Virtual tour
5	University of Central Lancashire	Virtual tour

If you haven't found the university or course you are interested in then visit:

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/what-and-where-study/open-days-and-events/virtual-tours>

Now you have completed one or more university tours you should consider making some notes on what you have learnt about the university. Don't forget to include your thoughts and feelings about the course you are considering and any questions you may have.

Discuss this information with family, friends and consider talking to your school careers team who are best placed to answer any questions you may have.

MY VIRTUAL TOURS NOTES & Q's

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