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STUDENT MINDSET CONFERENCE 2023

Influence and Role Models

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Sponsored by

Influence and role models

What are students planning for their futures and what drives, and helps them make these choices?

24 interviews via Online Forum

Year 9=12 (aged 13-17)

One week-long

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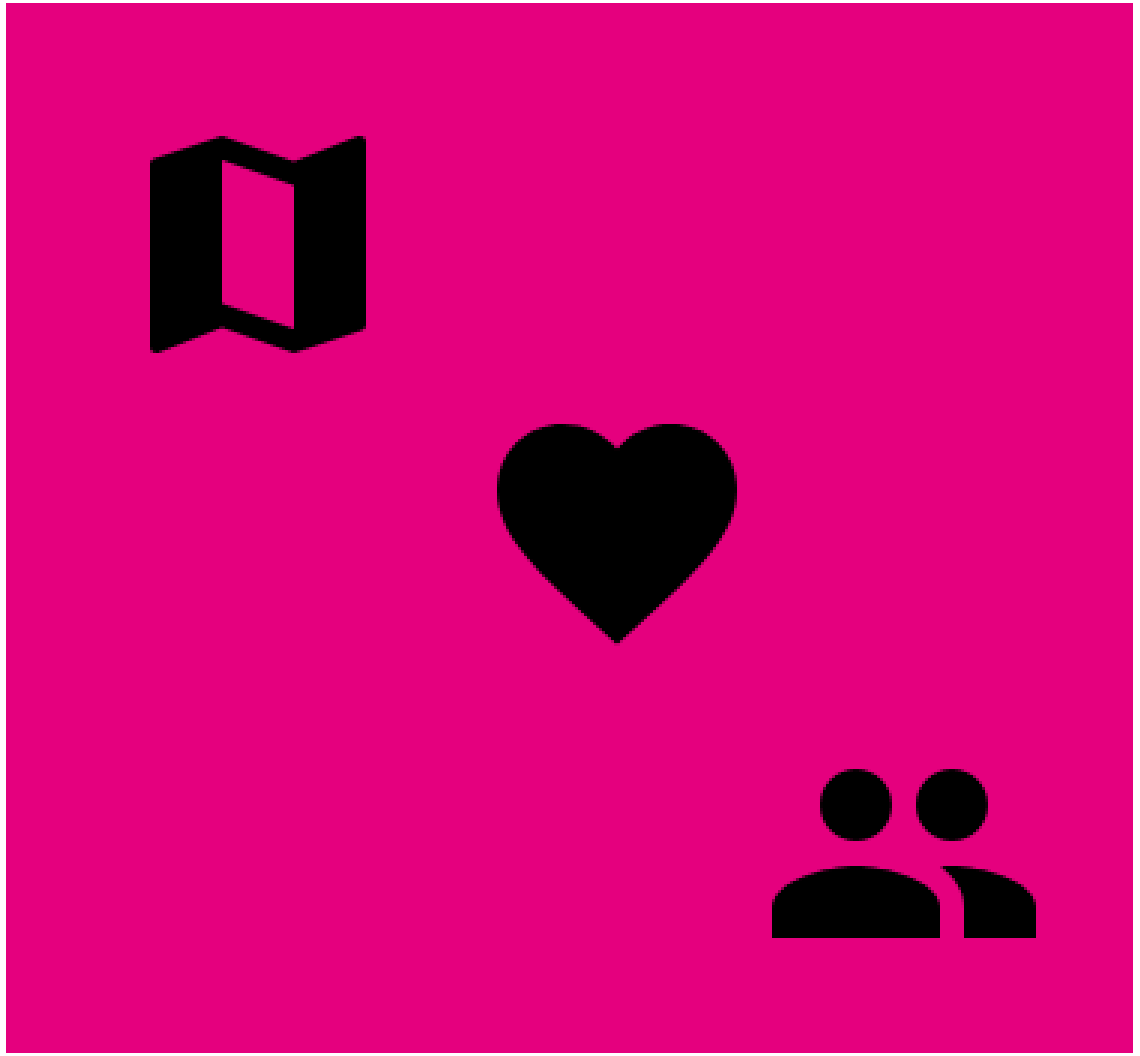
Key themes

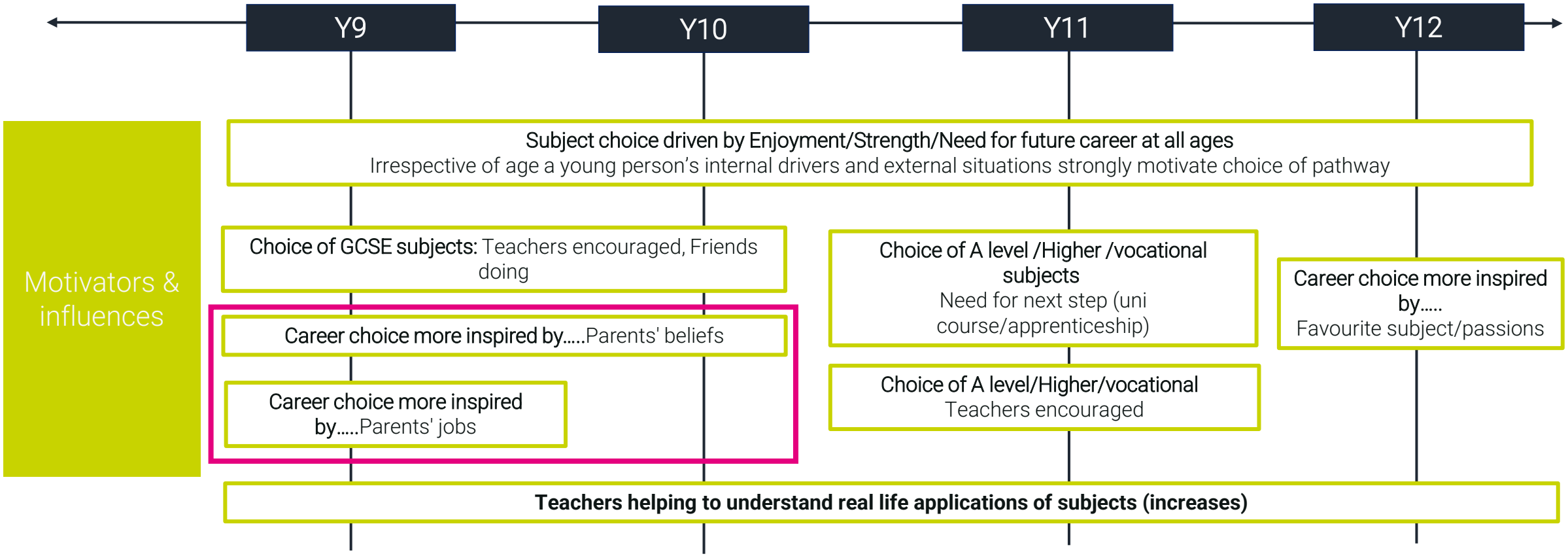
- What are their plans?

- What/who is influencing them?

- Who are their role models?

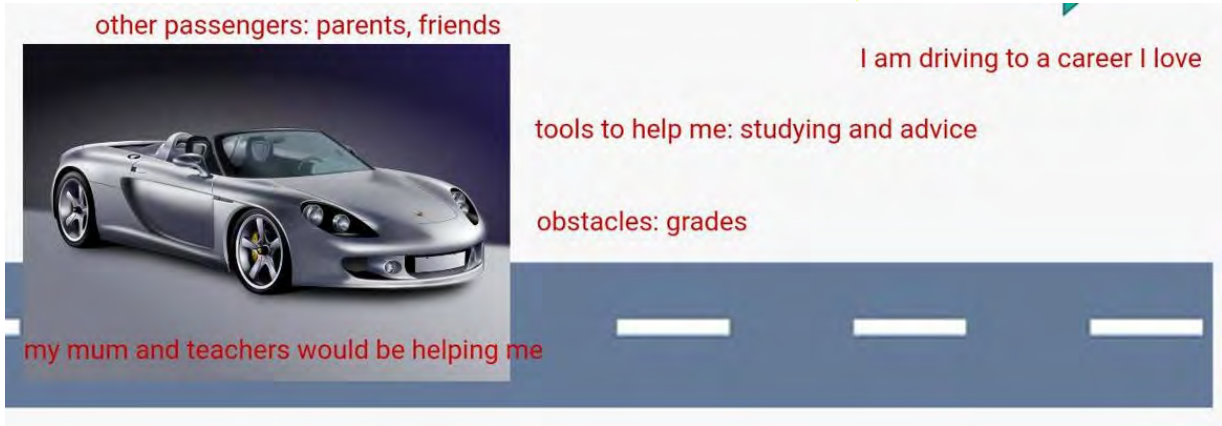


University decision making timeline*



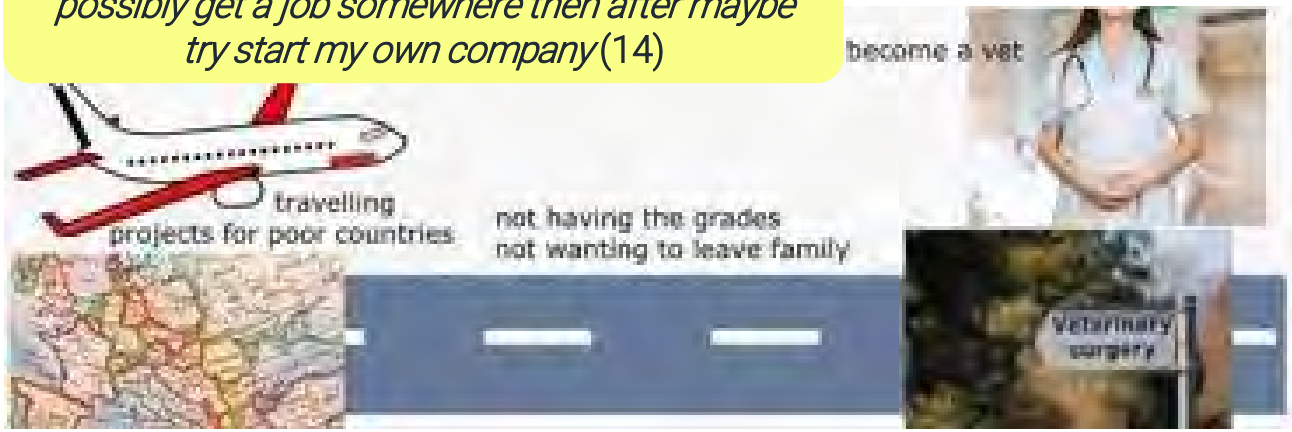
What are their plans?

I am going to get an apprenticeship then after that possibly get a job somewhere then after maybe try start my own company (14)



My parents [could come with me] since they could help guide me and also Harry Styles since he would make it fun! (14)

I am going to get an apprenticeship then after that possibly get a job somewhere then after maybe try start my own company (14)



In the next few years I will focus solely on getting good GCSEs. Then I will work towards my future career; nursing. To do this I am planning on doing an apprenticeship which will help me get the experience I need for becoming a nurse. Before this I will do a summer job to get skills employers will look for in the future.

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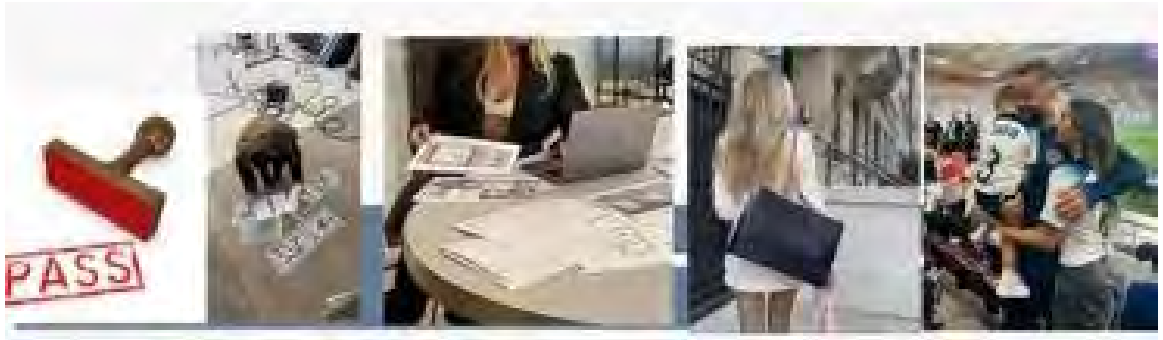
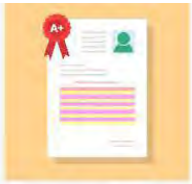
What are their plans?





I will finish my GCSEs next year

I will get a job and consider what fits my needs

Buy first home

Whatever comes next

I'm not sure what I want to do for a job but I like helping younger children. Maybe I might be a teacher (14)

In my future I see travel, helping out in the community/doing environmental work, also since I'm interested in science I may study this at university. My parents are very supportive of me and helping me with what I want to do in the future. Also I hope teachers at college will be supportive when looking into different universities.

My friends and family will help me get to where I want to be and my first step will be to go to college and do a course I want to do then get a car and a job and earn as much money as I can

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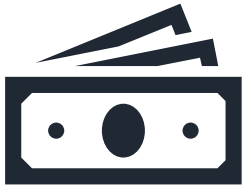
Focus group life goals: job security/satisfaction, travel and decent wages

"I don't want a job that can easily go wrong as I want a job that is permanent" (15)

"Getting to travel (to see the world and meet new people)" (16)



"This is important so I have enough money to help out my parents and be able to do the things that I love" (16)

"One that makes a positive difference and that I enjoy. I think it's important to help people or animals or the environment in my job." (16)

"Because I want to be known as someone who can impact others positively "(13)

"I feel being happy is a combination of all the priorities below so that why I ranked it first." (15)

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This is a running theme for current applicants:

Courses and career paths are being thoughtfully chosen.

Top two reasons given when asked - “Why do you want to go to university?”:
To help me pursue a particular career (71%)
Because I am passionate about the subject I want to study (74.6%)

Subject passion is driving decision making.

72% of said that enjoyment of the subject is what influenced their choice of subject to study at university.

Q: Why do you want to go to university? UCAS NAPDS 2023
Q: Which of the following influenced your choice of subject(s)?
UCAS NAP 2023 - *based on factors rated either ‘extremely important’ or ‘important*

Who is influencing them?

Family

Parents, grandparents, siblings, uncles & aunties

- Young people see first-hand the work they put in
- Admired for selflessness & the support they show to others
- Challenge & support them

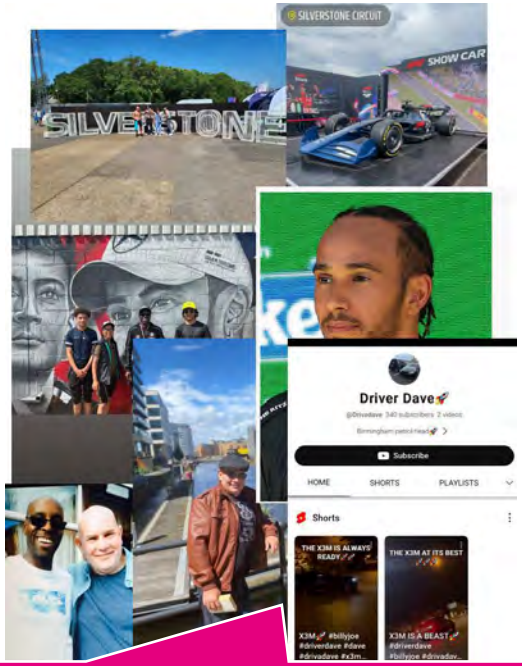
Celebrities & Public Figures

Singers, sportspeople, YouTubers/influencers, politicians (e.g. Michelle Obama), charitable people

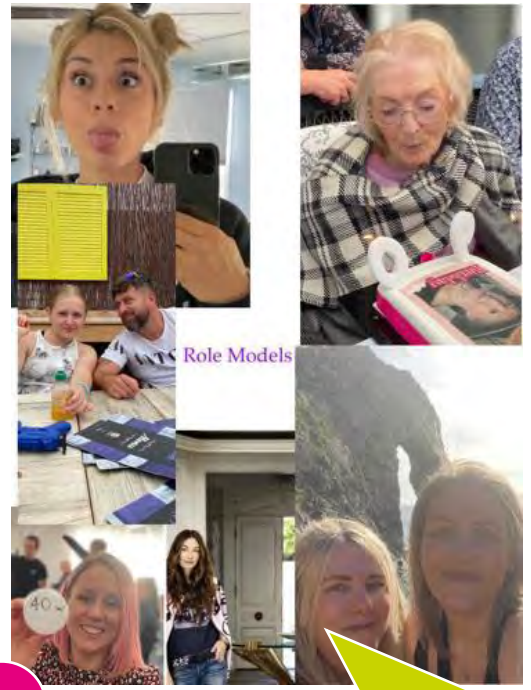
- Admired for using their platform to empower others
- Relatable / 'like me'

Who are their role models?

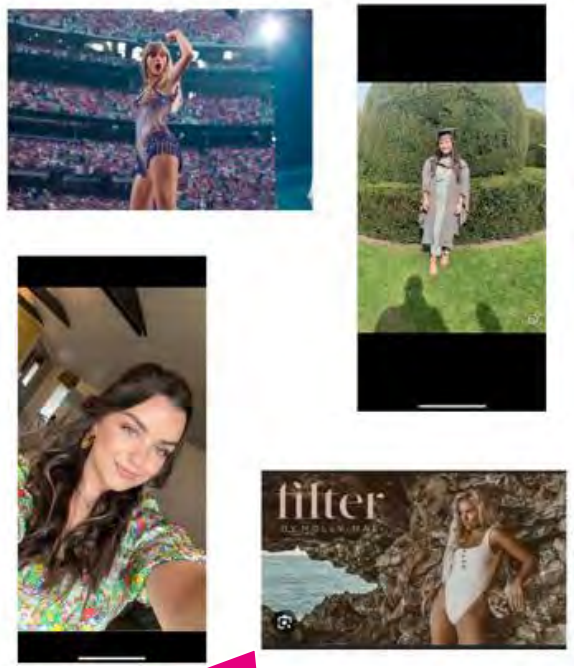
My mom and Aunts are all my role models they work hard and support each other and their family and friends. (16)



Lewis Hamilton being the first black driver as I love watching and following him…it's good to see someone of ethnicity in such a great sport (16)



My friend always pushes me to be my best
(15)



Taylor Swift doesn't let hate stop her from doing what she loves. (15)

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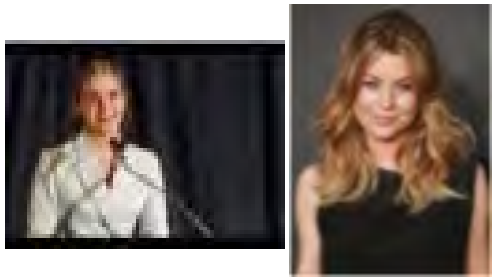
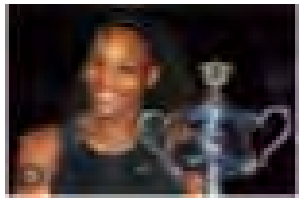
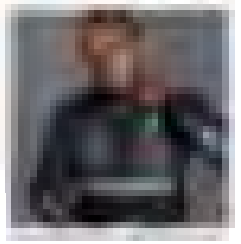
Other role models also include:







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These known role models have similar traits

FAMILY

- ✓ Hard working & successful
- ✓ Caring
- ✓ Helping out – at their own or other's sports activities
- ✓ Positive outlook and influence
- ✓ Independence
- ✓ Supporting
- ✓ Loving
- ✓ Look after themselves – body & mind
- ✓ Inspirational – achieving their goals
- ✓ Having their own business
- ✓ Show that you can achieve anything if you put your mind to it
- ✓ Resilience

CELEBRITIES / PUBLIC FIGURES

- ✓ Hard working
- ✓ Driven
- ✓ Reflect who they are / are relatable
- ✓ Winning mentality
- ✓ Overcome adversity – beaten the odds – come from 'poorer' background / eating disorders
- ✓ Use their SM platform positively
  - ✓ Speak out about: equality / feminism
- ✓ Positive outlook
- ✓ Successful
- ✓ Kind
- ✓ Doing something they LOVE
- ✓ Can do anything if you put your mind to it
- ✓ Wealth
- ✓ Charity involvement

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Comments from free text

When it comes to choosing firm/insurance replies, the influence of friends/family is evident from the SDR free text comments:

"[I replied firm] because my family have been to the same uni."

"I have family members that know the area."

"I've had really good reviews from friends that studied there."

"Amazing standards, family have recommended this university and excitement of travelling to different places for an education."

"One of the top unis for my course. My mother and some of my friends encouraged me to accept the offer."

"Visited friends at the uni and liked it. They have also positive things to say about the uni."

"It had great reviews within my own family as well as past students and teachers that i have talked to. [...]"

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This is a running theme for current applicants:

Nearly a third (32%) of applicants placed in Clearing 2022 said they first heard about the provider through friends or family.

This was even higher for applicants placed direct to Clearing (39%).

Key takeaways

- Job security, salary and satisfaction are primary drivers for many young people
- Decisions are made on both rational (money, security) and emotional (enjoyment, happiness) needs
- Experience – and experiences – shape their decision-making
- Role mole models play a part in helping them making positive and aspirational choices
- Family/friends are influential throughout the application process – reviews and experiences matter long-term