

New UCAS research shows strong demand for apprenticeships from students keen to keep learning in the autumn

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More than three quarters (78%) of students who are getting their results next week, but do not plan to immediately start a three year full-time undergraduate degree, are interested in starting an apprenticeship.

New research published today by UCAS shows 56% of 17-19 year olds who are receiving their grades next Tuesday (10 August 2021), but are not intending to start a traditional degree course in the autumn, have considered an apprenticeship. A further 22% said their main plan is an apprenticeship (16% higher/degree level, 6% advanced level).

In 2020, 37% of UK 18 year olds progressed from secondary education onto university or college through UCAS. The new report *'Where next? Who doesn't plan to start a full-time undergraduate degree in autumn?'* sheds new light on the thoughts and plans of remainder of young people choosing to take a different route:

- The main features of apprenticeships are attractive to young people, including choosing options that “earn money” (50%), to continue learning but in “a different way” (43%), and to do something “new and different” (42%).
- Almost nine in 10 (88%) of students are either “fairly committed” or “very committed” to their chosen route despite being largely unable to visit or attend interviews in person.
- Of all the survey respondents (of which 38% had a live UCAS application but had not accepted any offers, and 62% who had not applied through UCAS at all), only 11% say they had received enough careers information, advice, and guidance and did not require any more, while 9% state they did not receive any at all*.
- Just under a fifth of students (18%) who are not planning to go to university or college in autumn feel they do not have many options for next year.

These latest findings come after UCAS revealed in its *Where Next? Improving the journey to becoming an apprentice* report in May that over half of students looking to apply to higher education in 2022 said they are interested in apprenticeships, but many find it hard to get the information they need about them.

UCAS is supporting students discover more about their potential futures and make informed decisions about their next steps with personalised, high-quality careers advice, information, and guidance. UCAS' goal is for its service to be as strong for would-be apprentices as it is for prospective undergraduates, allowing students to explore their options in a truly comparable manner.

UCAS's apprenticeship platform [CareerFinder](#), which helps students find degree and higher apprenticeships, saw a record 1.35 million searches in the last 12 months, up 37% in 2020. These searches have resulted in 225,000 applications, an increase from 181,000 last year (+24%).

UCAS Chief Executive Clare Marchant said: "With results day coming up, it is crucial for us to understand the plans and motivations of all students so that we can provide relevant, timely and personalised support covering all their potential pathways.

"Our latest insight sheds new light on the importance of making sure all students have access to excellent careers information, advice and guidance, especially as there is such strong demand for apprenticeships. It's clear that many students don't plan to start a three year degree straight from school, and are beginning to welcome the opportunities of learning in a different way and developing new skills while earning through an apprenticeship.

"There is an opportunity through the government's Skills and Post-16 Education Bill to ensure young people have the ability to make truly informed decisions about their futures. We are already enriching our services so that students can discover more about their futures, whether their chosen path leads them to an apprenticeship, a higher technical qualification, a part-time, flexible course, full-time undergraduate study or employment."

Ends

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Notes for editors

*These latest findings come after UCAS revealed in its *Where Next? Improving the journey to becoming an apprentice* [report](#) in May that over half of students looking to apply to HE in 2022 said they are interested in apprenticeships. Also, as noted in our *Where Next? What influences the choices school leavers make?* [report](#), one in three students do not receive any information about apprenticeships from their school or college.

A total of 630 17 to 19 year olds (216 males, 396 females, 18 other gender) responded to the survey. All participants were sourced via schools and UCAS circulated the survey link. All these students are expecting to receive qualification results on 10 August

2021. None of the sample had accepted an offer via UCAS between 25 June 2021 and 14 July 2021.

UCAS, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, is an independent charity, and the UK's shared admissions service for higher education.

Our services support young people making post-18 choices, as well as mature learners, by providing information, advice, and guidance to inspire and facilitate educational progression to university, college, or an apprenticeship. We manage almost three million applications, from around 700,000 people each year, for full-time undergraduate courses at over 380 universities and colleges across the UK.

We also provide a wide range of research, consultancy and advisory services to schools, colleges, careers services, professional bodies, and employers, including apprenticeships.