



PROJECT NEXT GENERATION

THE KEY THEMES INFLUENCING FUTURE STUDENT DECISIONS

UCAS

INTRODUCTION

The start of the decision-making process for post-secondary planning has been slowly but surely taking place earlier and earlier. But the younger the audience, the less likely they are to receive the interventions they need to make informed decisions. We wanted to do something about that.

Project Next Generation was an integrated quantitative and qualitative study, with the aim of understanding what young people are planning for their futures, how they choose their subjects and careers, and how they assess the different pathways to get there. We wanted to find out what they needed, when, and from who – so we can help universities, colleges, and employers to design their information, resource, and outreach strategies to deliver exactly what's needed at the right time.

This report is the first of many, uncovering what's important to students as they make crucial choices about their future.

The findings of this report, which took place with more than 1,000 participants aged 13 - 17, will help universities, colleges, and employers to inspire, educate, upskill, and improve the decision making of young people across the UK.

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CHAPTER ONE: INSPIRATION & DISCOVERY

Defined as **'discovering options for their future and the need to be inspired'**.
Inspiration & Discovery is at the forefront of the decisions young people make.

**DON'T LEAVE
ASPIRATION
UP TO THE
IMAGINATION.**

**BUILD A
FRAMEWORK
TO INSPIRE.**

For the students of tomorrow, it's exposure to new subjects, stories, and interests that first sparks their passions.

From inspiration rooted in reality, like what their friends and family are doing, to the things they see happening in the media and online – the more they experience, the wider their eyes are opened. It's these formative years, toward the end of secondary school, where young people are most alert to the possibilities of the future.

Especially memorable are moments of sacrifice, success, resilience, determination, and social responsibility. But even these can be trumped by the everyday realities of their ongoing transition from childhood to young adulthood. They're still very much at play. So fun, freedom, and enjoyment remain key drivers of decision making – with carefree interests just as important a source of discovery as big acts of selflessness and charity.

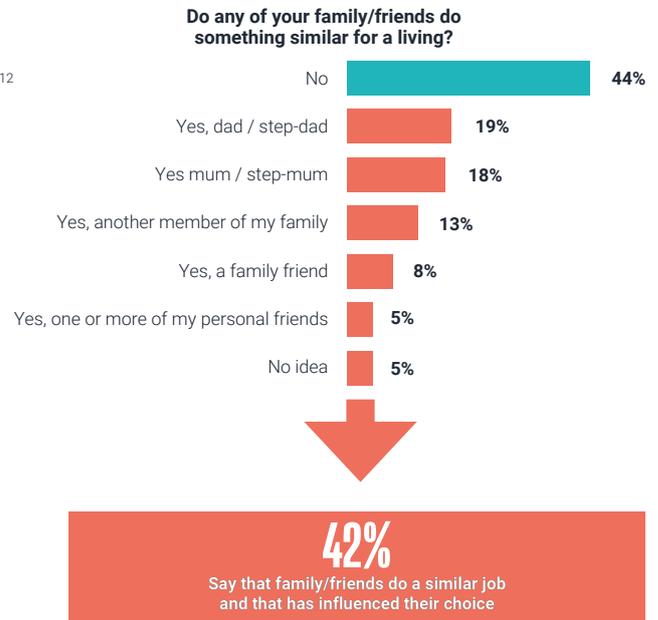
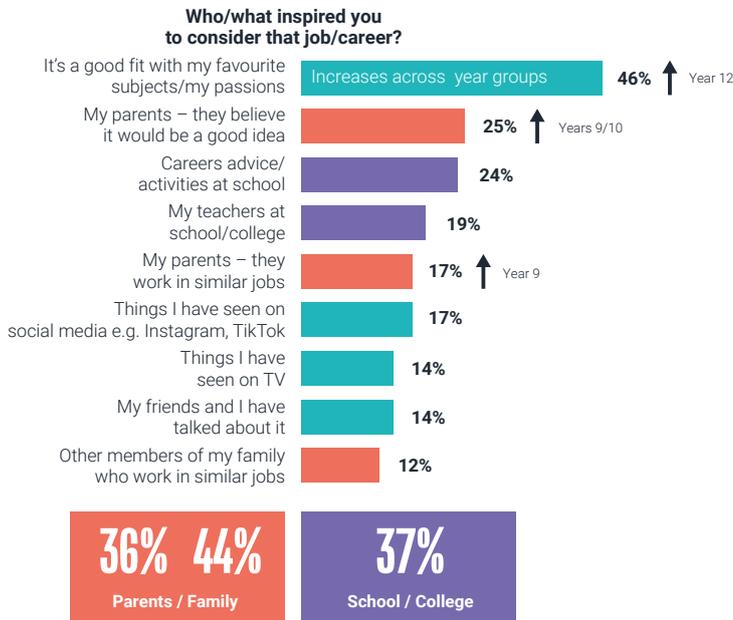
59% see the benefits of simply sticking with what they enjoy, and think that "the rest will take care of itself."

46% are considering careers that fit with the subjects they enjoy and with their personal interests.

Both of these drivers are more pronounced as they age, especially as they finish their GCSEs and enter sixth form.

"A lot of YouTubers inspired me, for example Baylen, Levine Dani, Duncan etc. Also, my parents have inspired me. When I see rich people it makes me want to work and also people who have come from nothing and are now something big."

"Natacha Oceane is such a positive individual who does many events for charity and is also a really great role model with a positive mindset and approach to things."



BASE: all with some idea (710)

"My mom and aunts are all my role models. They work hard and support each other and their family and friends." (age 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." (age 16)

"My friend always pushes me to be my best." (age, 15)

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

But if we leave it up to chance, without a more structured feed of information designed to help ignite those passions, how can they be sure they're making the right choice? The majority of them (57%) say that they only know 'a little' when it comes to post-secondary options, meaning most young people are currently making choices without all the information. Without knowledge of what's possible, they're choosing from a restricted list.

"We haven't been offered much support/advice, but we were given a booklet which contained some useful advice about post-career options by our head of year. We were also given a few PowerPoints (also from our head of year) but it contained limited information. In addition, our school offered a careers meeting with a careers adviser, but spaces were limited so not everyone could receive this information."

Action points

1. Give young people real sources of inspiration and discovery. They're bombarded with plenty of information, and spend a lot of time being talked at – they need the chance to talk with someone, to ask questions, discover what they love, and what it'll actually be like.
2. Show them the ins and outs of day-to-day life studying a subject, applying for a place, or working in a profession. Offer visits to universities and employers, demonstrative workshops, or real life stories in video format via social.
3. Address questions around the different options available, how to achieve their goals, earning and progression potential, financial management and concerns, nerves and uncertainty (relating to confidence and preparedness), and finding the path that best suits their skills and personality.





CHAPTER TWO: FEELINGS & HAPPINESS

Defined as **'current enjoyment and future happiness'**.

What happiness looks like and how universities and employers can demonstrate how their opportunities can help young people achieve this.

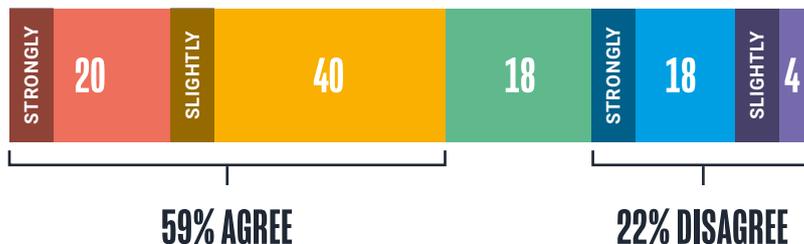
**LIVE IN THE
MOMENT AND
PLAN FOR THE
FUTURE.**

**STRIKE THE
BALANCE BETWEEN
CURRENT
ENJOYMENT AND
CAREER PLANNING.**

The majority of young people trust their gut. By simply focusing on what they're good at or enjoying today, they trust that good things will follow tomorrow.

Some might see this as a lack of strategy and forward planning, some might see this as authentic and passion-driven – but whichever it is, it's the preferred direction for almost 60% of our survey pool. Less than a quarter actively disagreed with the approach.

I'm not trying to map out my future – I'm sticking to what I enjoy / what I am good at and the rest will take of itself



Expecting them to have clearly developed senses of long-term gratification, and an iron discipline to pursue subjects based on outcomes which won't manifest for a decade or more, is likely to be unrealistic in most cases.

And whilst we're certainly seeing levels of maturity, strategy, and planning rise – we can't forget that these are young people only very recently out of childhood.

Enjoyment and happiness are always going to be key drivers of choice.

Faced with decisions about their future, the natural starting point is to find a career they'll be happy in:

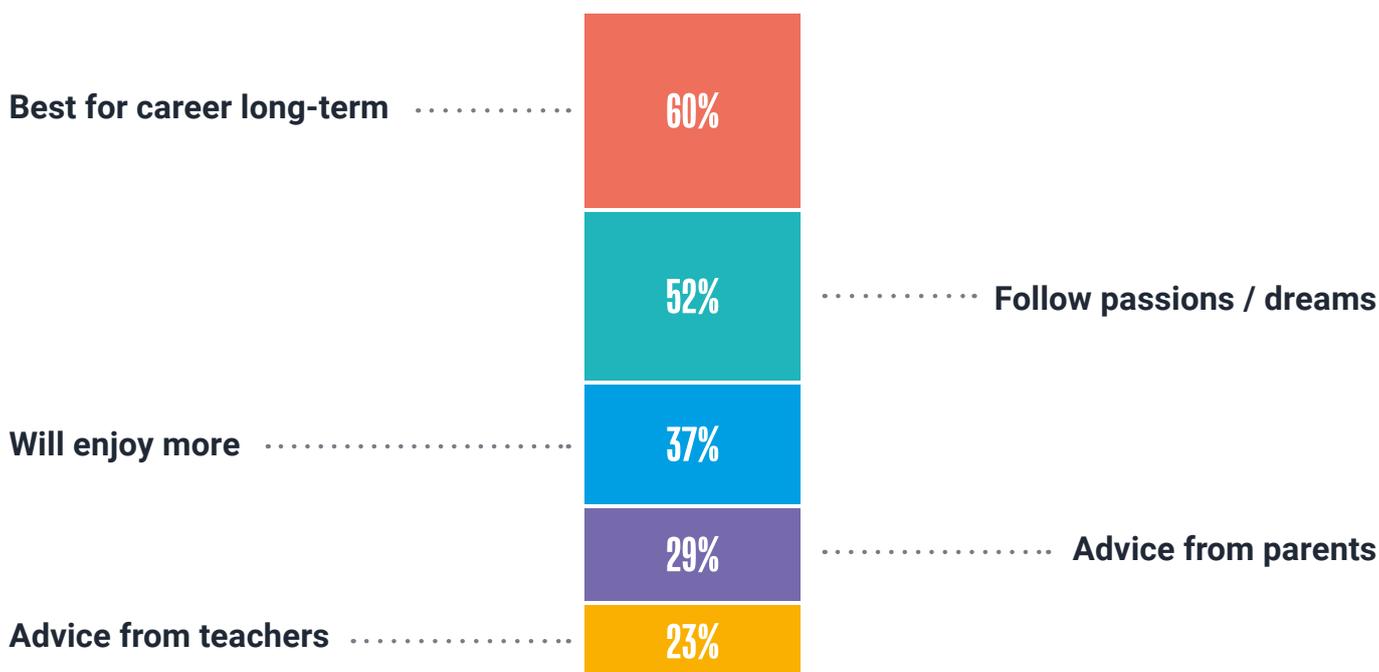
<p>47% choose 'enjoying my job' as the number one factor when thinking about what they want to do in the future.</p>	<p>And despite thinking that this might become more practical as they get older, it only becomes more solidified – from 42% in Year 9 to 50% in Year 12.</p>	<p>And when asked about why they're set on choosing university, 52% cite 'following my passions or dreams' – another point for happiness.</p>
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But that doesn't mean they're not thinking ahead. Young people today are astute and forward thinking, able to live in the moment without forgetting to plan for the future. And future happiness also comes from opportunities to explore and develop their independence; **36% said they were looking forward to getting to travel and explore the world.**

This is especially important for universities, because this fits very neatly into the higher education paradigm:

37% believe that uni is linked to enjoyment, and **52%** believe it helps them follow passions and dreams. **60%** believe that uni is positive for their long-term career, and **39%** a career with high wages.

Main reasons for being most likely to apply to university:



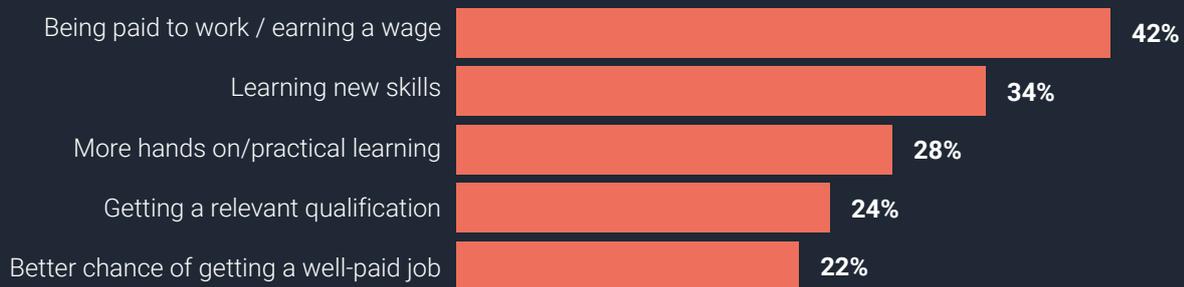
BASE: most likely to apply to university (382)

Main advantages / positives of different routes

University



Apprenticeship



Employment



In your opinion, what are the main advantages/positives of University/Apprenticeships/Employment.
Max 5 responses. BASE: All Respondents (1000)

Action points

- Don't forget to highlight opportunities to travel and the potential for career independence (e.g. entrepreneurship or business ownership) in your resources.
- Give them access to real people who have followed different paths – determined planning/carefree enjoyment – so they can interpret which is best for them.



CHAPTER THREE: EXPERIENCE

Defined as ‘**direct, indirect, and past experiences**’.

How experiences shape their thinking, and how they are important to help with their future and choices.

USE EXPERIENCE TO EMPOWER CHOICES.

ENABLE YOUNG PEOPLE TO MAKE FULLY INFORMED DECISIONS.

When young people are making decisions about their future, they rely on three types of experience:

Direct experience

- Work experience, placement years etc.
- Hands-on practical & employability skills development

Indirect experience

- Engagement with mentors, employers, or people who have taken a particular pathway

Drawing on past experiences

- Experiences of parents/family friends that have influenced their thoughts/exposure & experience of particular careers or pathways

Direct experience is important in two ways.

1. It gives them confidence and preparation.
2. It confirms their interests.

No matter what path they're on, 97% agree direct experience is essential for university, a apprenticeship or a job. But only 39% of them actually had any.

Indirect experience is important in two ways.

1. It gives them confidence and empowerment.
2. It exposes them to alternative options and can soothe anxieties of wondering what happens if things don't go to plan.

Past experiences are important for future decisions.

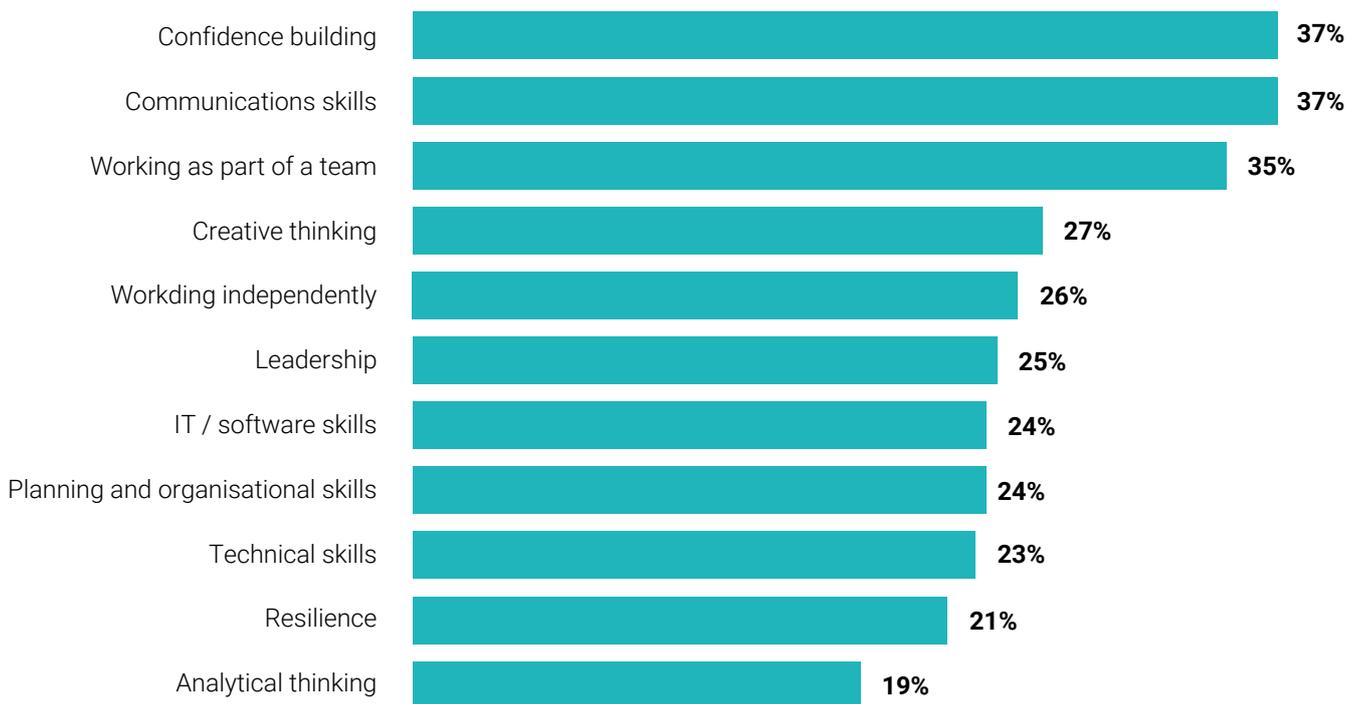
1. Listening to others' experiences can impact their decisions due to the options they're shown, the knowledge they have, and the opinions they're given as a result.

"I think it would be helpful if I got advice from people who are going through the process of becoming a nurse as it would help me to understand the best opportunity." (age 15)

"Work experience, gives you a chance to explore and see if the job is the right fit for you." (age 15)

"Hands-on experience is probably best as opposed to just reading or hearing other people's experiences." (age 15)

When talking about experience, it's natural for young people to think of work experience in particular. They might not immediately think of the other kinds of experience, and jump straight to the practical. Most have some of these key skills, but 91% would like help developing at least one of these:



"Thinking about the skills that you feel might be important to your future career/ job plans, which if any of the following would you like help in developing?"
BASE: all respondents (1,000)

It's not just young people who may make natural leaps – some parents were happy and confident in supporting their child, and many were drawing on their own experiences to offer support. The majority of young people (67%) will discuss their post-secondary options with their parents/carers, often as early as Year 9 – many more than those who recall a conversation with a careers adviser (31%) – but many find parent discussions less useful.

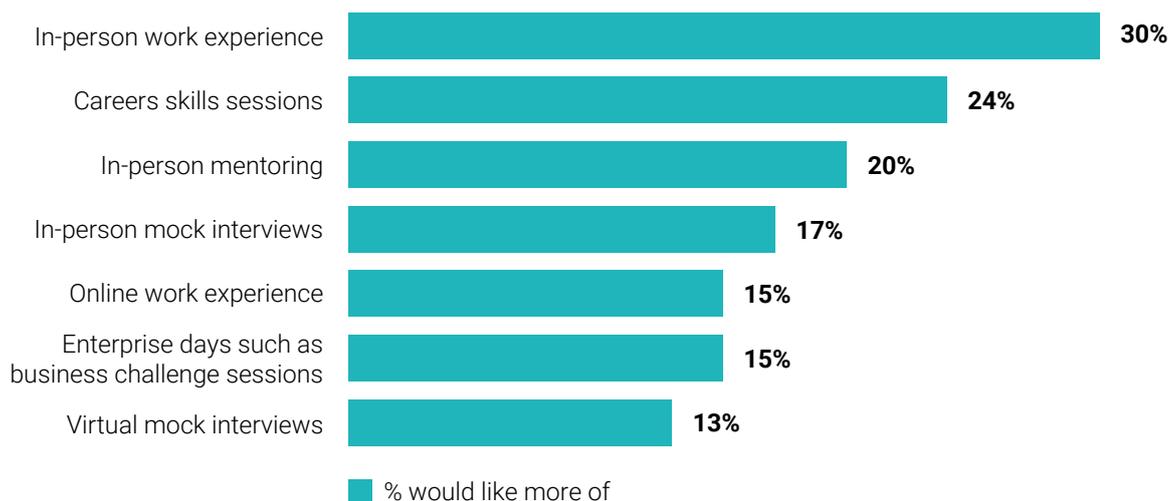
Parents are using their own experiences to give advice, and want more up to date information about different pathways and routes, to ensure they have explored all options. They want to know their child will be stable and secure, whichever pathway they choose. Equipping them with accurate, experience-based information will give them more scope to support their children in long-term planning – around the financial implications and support of each pathway, as well as the opportunities to develop employment skills and ways to progress in careers (especially in apprenticeships).

Young people with parents in ‘careers’ will naturally receive more support for entry into that realm, as their parents can easily and capably act as career coaches. Parents in ‘trades’ can do the same – meaning that different young people have different information, but rarely all of it.

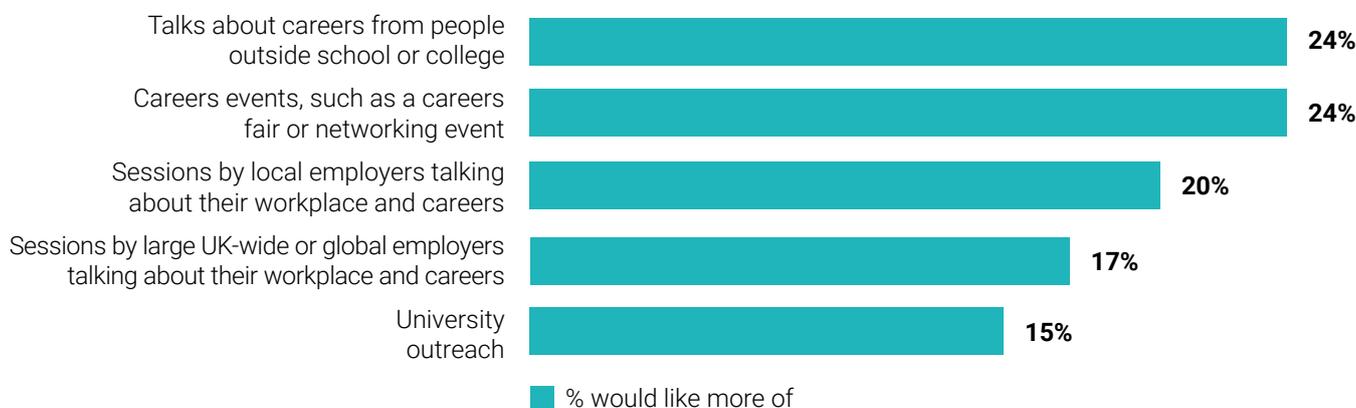
“I helped with work experience on one path so he could try it. . He loved it...All the questions he has I have been able to get people from the industry for him to speak to. So he can hear it from someone who’s worked in the industry so it’s good, honest truth.” Parent (of age 14)

Whatever the parental situation, young people want more of their own experience.

Direct experience



Indirect experience



Which, if any, would you ideally like more of to help you consider your options after school/college? BASE: All Respondents 1000



"There are lots of people out there and not many good jobs about, it's harder to find one. Most companies are looking for people with experience or certain qualifications." (age 16)

"Teacher's advice has been not so helpful, it doesn't always answer the questions I have. The advice is basic, and I feel as if when I reach out to the teacher, I receive a standard response." (age 16)

Action points

Offer resources to develop soft skills (e.g. via life coaching and mentoring videos about confidence). Explain what communication skills are in the context of employment, and suggest alternatives to work experience, like schemes and volunteering.

1. Provide targeted and substantial advice and mentoring, to fill the gap for those without useful parental support.
2. Balance in-person (for confirmation and confidence) with digital opportunities (for inspiration and discovery).
3. For direct experience, offer work experience and placement years, as well as hands-on employability skills development. For indirect experience, offer engagement with mentors, employers, and current students.



CHAPTER FOUR: CONFIDENCE

Defined as **'knowledge/experience & level of support/reassurance received'**.
 What they need to be confident in decision making. The confidence they feel/what impacts their confidence.

WHERE KNOWLEDGE IS, CONFIDENCE APPEARS.

AND CERTAINTY AND EXCITEMENT SOON FOLLOW.

When can one ever say they have enough confidence to make a jump as seismic as that from school to university or to a career?

Natural confidence, or confidence in your ability, is one thing. But without experience, knowledge, and reassurance – it can only take you so far.

59% of young people tell us that they have a lot, or a reasonable amount, of knowledge – but only **47%** think it's enough. Because, naturally, what about all the things they may not know?

And what about those who are globally lacking in confidence?

How much do you know about...

	...continuing your studies	...getting an apprenticeship	...different jobs/careers
A lot	12%	12%	12%
A reasonable amount	30%	26%	29%
A little bit	32%	33%	36%
Very little	18%	21%	17%
Nothing at all	6%	8%	5%
Prefer not to say	2%	1%	1%

How much do you know about the various options that you will have at 18, after school/college?
 BASE: All Respondents 1000

How comfortable are you with that level of knowledge:

Percentage (%)	...continuing your studies	...getting an apprenticeship	...different jobs/careers
Extremely	11%	11%	11%
Very	20%	19%	19%
Fairly	42%	43%	47%
Not very	21%	19%	17%
Not at all	4%	5%	4%
Prefer not to say	3%	4%	2%

And how comfortable are you with that level of knowledge right now? BASE: All Respondents 1000

“I have a lack of confidence, so I would like help developing my confidence as it would benefit many areas of my life and help with my future career plans...” (age 16)

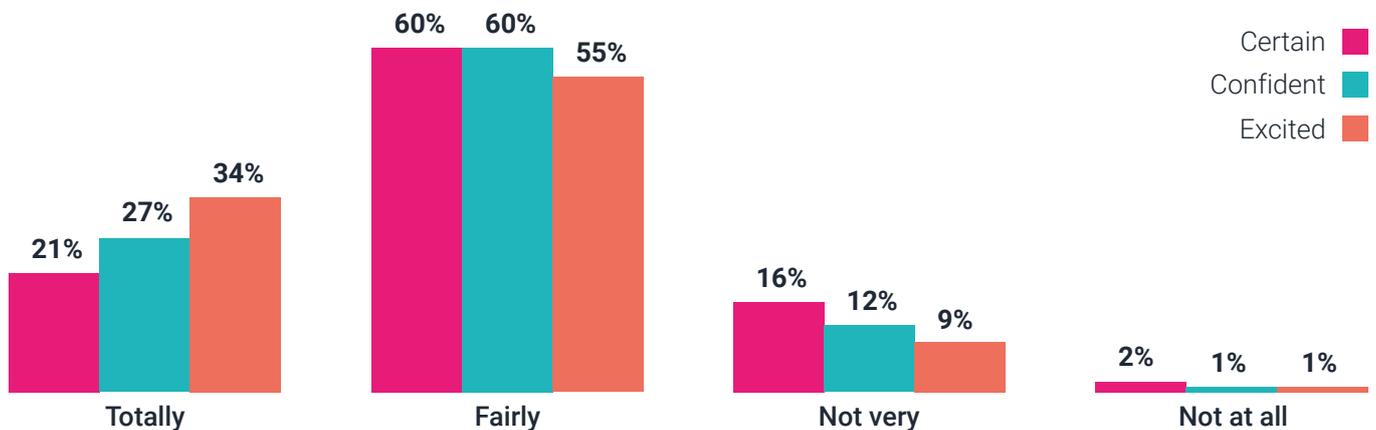
This is particularly true for apprenticeships – although the majority of young people are considering this route (59%), many are concerned about being ready for an apprenticeship, particularly if they haven’t got a role in mind they are passionate about.

There are two types of confidence that are important for young people to acquire:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 Confidence in their ability to do the job or complete the pathway.
This directly leads to experience and enjoyment.</p> | <p>2 Confidence in it being the right decision and it getting them to where they want to be.
This directly leads to empowerment and inspiration.</p> |
|---|---|

Here we see the same challenge we discussed in Chapter One, where inspiration is plentiful enough to guide them forward, and the same challenge we discussed in Chapter Three, where experience may nudge them towards a narrow field of options – young people are confident about their future but know little about their post-secondary options.

- By and large, they’re confident, excited, and certain about their future. But most (57%) know only a little about their post-secondary choices.
- Those anticipating pursuing university are significantly more confident, excited, and certain.
- Whilst those anticipating leaving education altogether are significantly less excited.



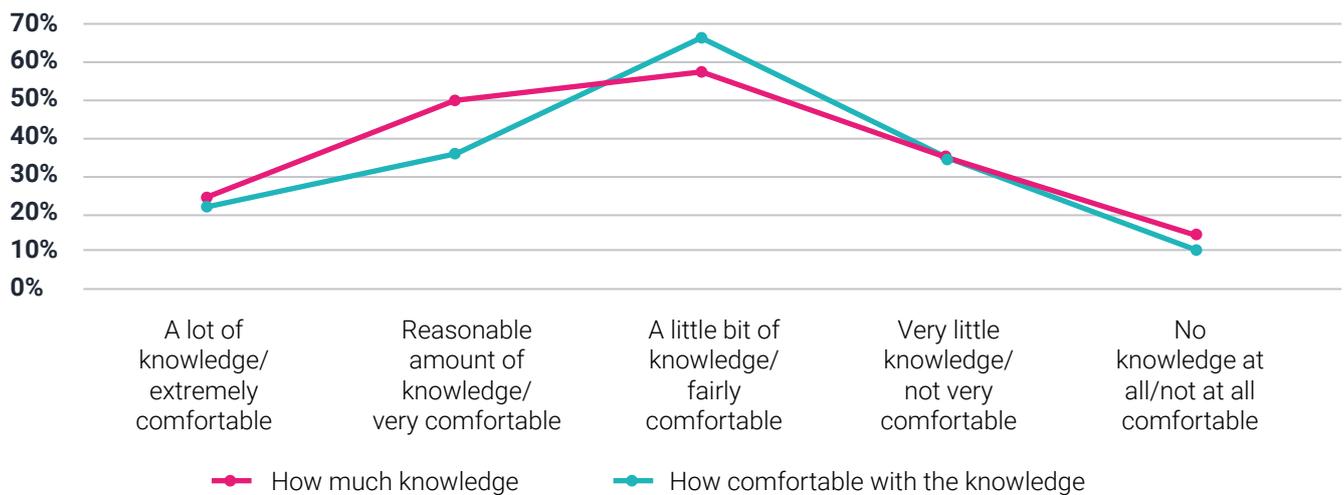
“How confident/certain/excited are you that this is something that you will be able to do?” Base: All with an idea of what they are most likely to do (856)

"At the moment I would say I'm not so certain, confident or excited about university as I have concerns over whether I'll get into any." (age 15)

There should be no difference in the levels of positivity between any of the pathways.

It comes as no surprise then, that the more they know, the better they feel. Equipped with knowledge, they are more able to assess their options and make decisions that feel more informed, wide-ranging, and complete.

Correlation between level of knowledge and comfort with level of knowledge



How much do you know about the various options that you will have at 18, after school/college?, And how comfortable are you with that level of knowledge right now? BASE: All Respondents 1000

"Earning money, no studying, gaining confidence, enjoying doing something you like and learning new things all the time". (age 16)

Action points

- Communicate that university is not only about following an interest and pursuing a career, but that it can help prepare for employment, and give valuable and transferable skills across many different destinations.
- Offer practical skills development and support like CV/application prep and interview techniques, standing out against competition, and confidence and communication skills.
- Facilitate opportunities to engage with employers/employees in their area of interest to give them more insight and confidence, and help them feel better equipped to apply.



CHAPTER FIVE: INDEPENDENCE & EMPOWERMENT

Defined as **'the ability to make own decisions & take responsibility for own future'**.

How it is important and how universities and employers can show how pathways can increase young people's independence.

**STEPPING BOLDLY
INTO THEIR OWN
DECISIONS.**

**TRADING
PRESSURE FOR
SUPPORT AND
REASSURANCE.**

For all the importance that parents and advisers play in the decision-making process for young people, the need for independence flares up too.

Here are two key types of independence for young people:

Making and trusting their own decisions & choices

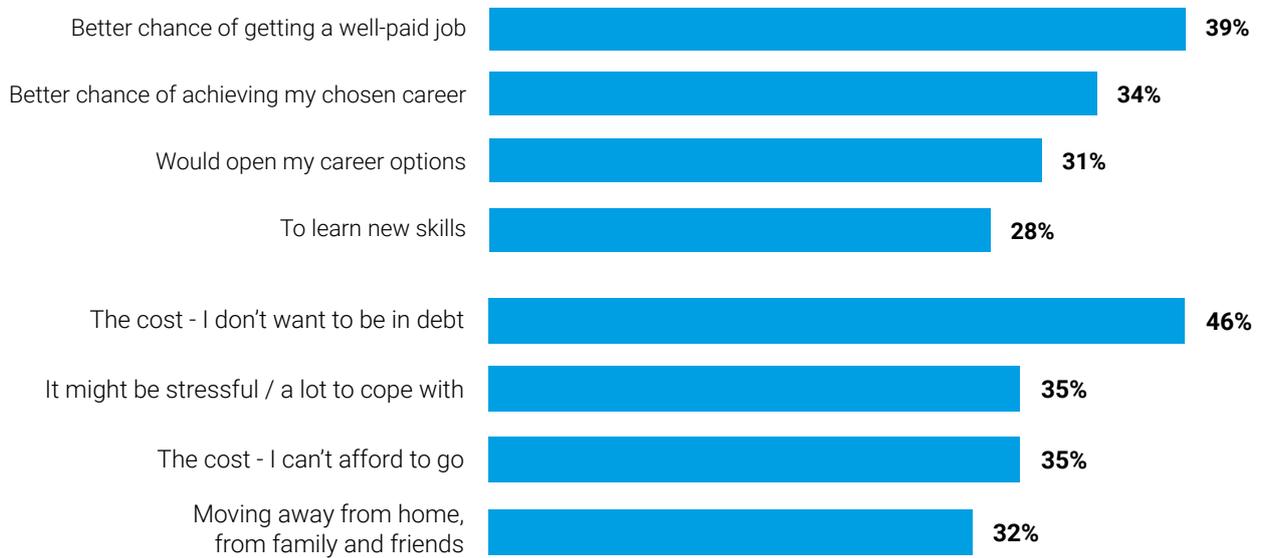
- This branch of independence is impacted by confidence, experience, and pressure from parents.

Feeling ready and able to manage their own lives

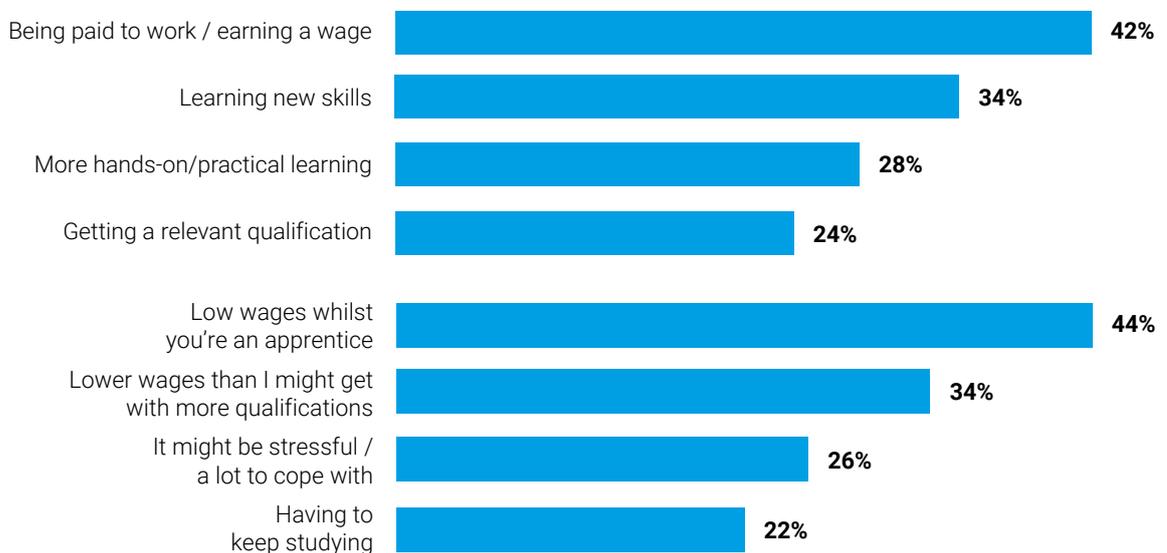
- This branch of independence is impacted by strained finances, lack of experience, living independently, and confidence.

Both branches come together in one of the biggest and most immediate concerns for them: money.

Because the main draw of going to university is building a better future financial position, yet money is behind many of the drawbacks too:



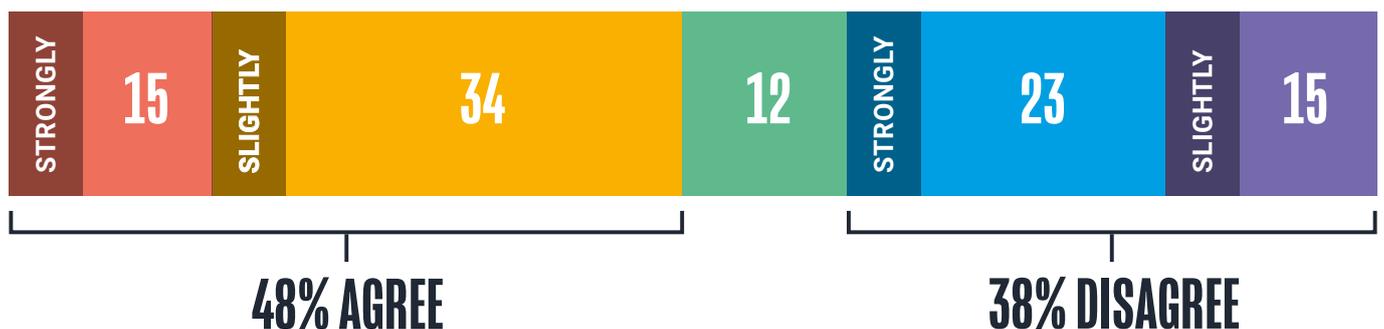
And similarly the attractiveness of apprenticeships is weighing up earning a wage now, with lower wages now and in the longer term:



University advantages/disadvantages, Apprenticeship advantages/disadvantages. BASE: All Respondents 1000

Finances are equally as important for parents too, as they want to guide their children towards the pathways that have the best capacity for earning and stability. But this means that many young people feel under pressure from their parents, which likely infringes on the feelings of independence that are so important to the process.

I feel quite a bit of pressure from my parents to make good decisions about my future education/careers



BASE: before 'all respondents'

This is a pressure felt evenly across every year group, from Year 9 to Year 12, but is more prevalent overall in those from private schools.

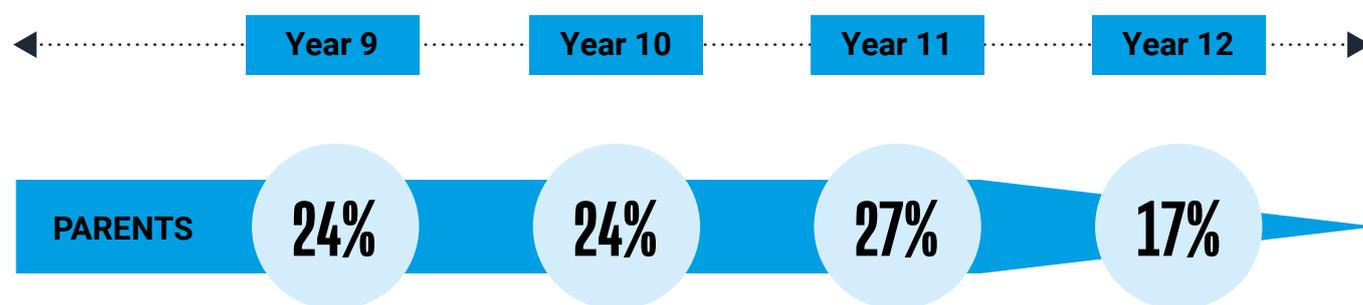
“My mum tells me I won’t get a good job if I don’t go to university, I want to study engineering science and I’m hoping I can get good qualifications and get a good job.” (age 14)

Support and reassurance, not pressure, is needed to empower young people to be independent in their decision making and to feel prepared for their future. The concerns from parents are valid and from a good place, as are those from teachers and career advisers – but just like with the students themselves, knowledge is what makes the difference between advice that means well, and advice that is worthwhile.

This is especially important from Year 11, when young people look for confirmation and validation that they’re making the right choice – but need the awareness and reassurance that if things don’t go to plan, there are plenty of other options.

Empowerment can also come from young people engaging with and hearing real-life examples of people in a position they want to be in – perhaps who took an alternative route to get there. They are able to speak with first-hand knowledge, imparting credible advice.

By the time they reach Year 12, they need to feel confident in their independence (from their parents) because this is where they begin to take matters into their own hands, and the potential for input and guidance falls. This doesn’t mean they’re closed to advice – it more likely means that they start searching for it outside of the family home, as they embrace entry into adulthood.



PARENTS ARE KEY KNOWLEDGE PROVIDERS UNTIL YEAR 11 BUT THIS DROPS OFF AT YEAR 12

Who would you say has done most of the work to improve your knowledge around your options at 18? BASE: All Respondents 1000

Action points

- Provide resources about finances and increase awareness of available support to alleviate money concerns – e.g. myth busting, bursaries, accommodation, budgeting, and independent living.
- Provide parents with resources enabling them to support, rather than pressurise, young people during the decision-making stage.



CHAPTER SIX: CONTROL

Defined as **'preparedness and certainty/confidence for the future'**.
The importance of having control of their future and finances.

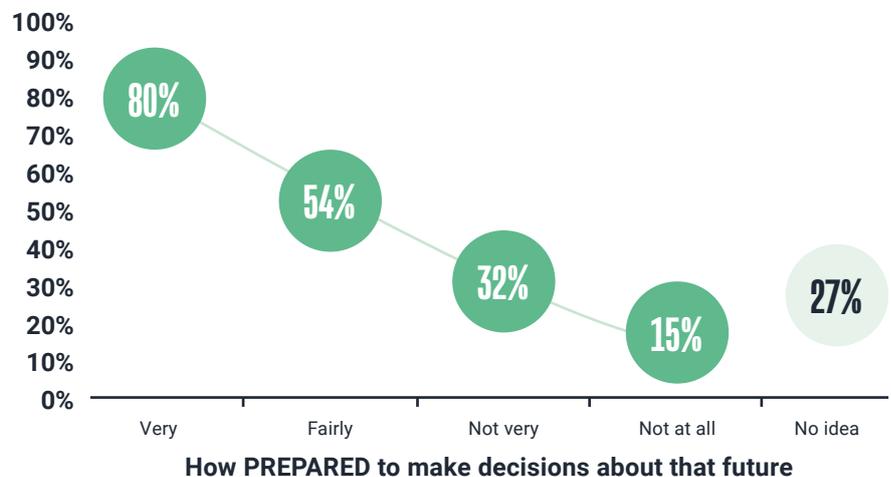
**CONFIDENCE IS
A FAST TRACK
TOWARDS
CONTROL.**

**DEVELOPING
OWNERSHIP
OF THEIR OWN
CHOICES.**

Hot on the heels of independence comes its resulting and rewarding emotion: a sense of control.

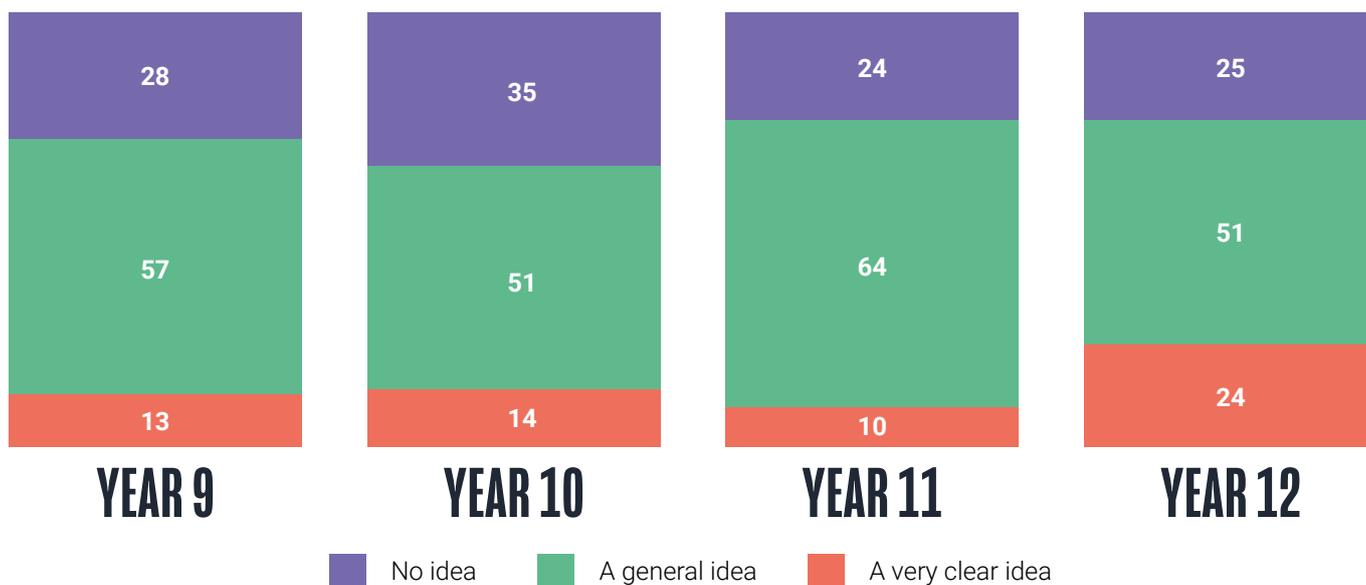
And just as we saw knowledge lead to confidence in Chapter Four, the preparedness of young people is directly relative to how positive they feel about the future. Control = optimism, and optimism = happiness.

% Extremely/very positive about the future



Overall, how do you feel about your life... how it will turn out in the future? BASE: All Respondents 1000

But if you dig a little deeper, and into future specifics rather than future generalism, there is still a great deal of uncertainty about final jobs and careers – across all ages.



“How much of an idea do you have about what you will do for a living/ as a career?” BASE: all respondents (250/250/251/249)

For some, a sense of direction would appear to develop into Year 11 and crystallise further in Year 12. But even at the top of the age range, 76% only have a general idea or no idea at all what they’ll eventually go on to do for a living.

“I’m concerned about the unknown because I don’t know what might happen in the future, but this also excites me.” (age 15)

Here are some of their main concerns:

- 31% are concerned about finding a job.
- 28% are concerned about not getting the grades they need.
- 25% are concerned about not knowing what they want to do.

These are natural worries to have about the future. Job markets may not be in their control, but grades and discovery certainly are. Besides, a better solution than reiterating revision and career-searching would be to help them understand that **it’s okay not to know exactly where they’re going** – and that there’s plenty of guidance on how to make decisions without a set destination. Equipped with such a mindset, those questions without answers need not be as much of a cause for concern.

A more immediate concern, and one not necessarily within their control, is finance:

- 48% say that their choices are restricted by not having enough money.
- 23% are concerned about their family’s financial situation.

“University is only available to people who can afford it.” (age 15)

Action points

1. Develop resources further down the inspiration funnel, designed to help young people tap into the reality of life at university, life on certain courses, and life at work.
2. Give them access to role models and accomplished peers who overcame their concerns and found success – especially those with experience of hurdling financial obstacles.
3. Challenge preconceptions and address late-stage decision-making paralysis, by highlighting the possibilities of branching into other areas, transferable employment skills, support for specific routes, and stories of entrepreneurship or alternative pathways.



CHAPTER SEVEN: TIMELINES

The decisions they're making, The drivers of their choices.

The resources they use, The information they need. In Years 9, 10, 11, and 12.

It's only natural for young people's emotions to fluctuate as they pick their way through their most formative years in higher education or their early career. Sometimes they need independence and control, at other times they need support and guidance. Some things they need to discover alone, others they need your help with.

In this Timelines section, we've broken down their specific needs by year group, giving you the tools and insight to build a year-by-year rolling strategy.

By knowing what decisions they're making, what's driving their choices, what resources they're using, and what information they still need – you'll have a pre-built to-do list for your outreach, at every step of KS4 & 5.

Timelines: Year 9

What decisions are they making?

- Choosing GCSEs
- Lightly considering their future
- Considering subjects and courses for uni
- Two thirds have an idea of what to study
- More relaxed than other years, more focused on immediate next steps

What drives their choices?

- What's enjoyable
- What teachers encourage
- What friends are doing
- Career choice is often inspired by parent beliefs and family jobs

What resources do they use?

- Teachers
- Happy to be led by parents
- Social media as inspiration – travel and entrepreneurship in particular

What information do they need?

- Sources of inspiration, exploration and discovery
- Enjoyment
- Advice tailored to parents
- Relationships with career advisers

Year 9 actions

- Target parents and teachers with up-to-date knowledge of available options and myth busting information, with them being key sources of knowledge. This should be done digitally, providing toolkits and easily digestible information, such as infographics and decision trees, about available options and how to support and guide young people with their decision-making, without pressuring them to follow a particular path.
- Connect young people with specialist careers advisers/mentors who can offer continuous advice throughout the post-secondary decision-making process. Start by establishing their interests, providing inspiration, and then encouraging discovery based on this.
- Provide sources of inspiration for young people through social media content (infographics, video content of real experiences from current students) - tailored more towards what courses/options can come from particular GCSEs etc. But also showing life at university, future possibilities/career opportunities/travel opportunities available through university, plus quizzes to link interests to courses.

Timelines: Year 10

What decisions are they making?

- Choosing secondary quals
- Lightly considering their future

What drives their choices?

- Enjoyment of subject
- Parents' beliefs
- Friends doing
- Own knowledge
- Uncertainty – they're nervous for Year 11

What resources do they use?

- Discussion of post-secondary options with friends
- Less likely to have discussions with specialist careers teachers
- Teachers are less likely to be helping them to understand real life applications of subjects compared to Year 11 and 12

What information do they need?

- Sense of direction
- Qualification requirements
- More knowledge on available pathways & options
- Career inspiration
- Knowledge about different experiences



Year 10 actions

- Knowledge about alternative routes/courses/future possibilities, for parents and teachers.
- Deter overwhelm by helping with planning, such as outlining application deadlines and giving a timeline of key dates for the upcoming steps in their decision-making.
- Continue to provide sources of inspiration and discovery via social media, but tailored more towards what courses/options can come from particular A Levels/Highers or vocational pathways.
- Offer more detailed information to schools, such as links to relevant sections on UCAS.com, to university and apprenticeship employer websites. Provide information about digital/in-person events to explore their options and help give guidance to manage their uncertainty.
- Provide opportunities to engage with current students and apprentices via talks about their experience of post-secondary decision-making and to give support/advice for reassurance and inspiration.



Timelines: Year 11

What decisions are they making?

- Choosing their post-secondary pathway
- For those already considering university: which subject to study

What drives their choices?

- Needs for next steps (uni course or apprenticeship)
- Interest in building a career

What resources do they use?

- Preferred learning style (e.g. I'm not an academic)
- Parents, for post-secondary options knowledge
- Friends, to discuss post-secondary options
- Siblings

What information do they need?

- Specialist teacher discussions
- How to get to where they want to be
- Practical tips about pathways
- Knowledge/inspiration about future possibilities
- Financial implications

Year 11 actions

- Continue to outline application deadlines and provide timelines of key dates for the upcoming steps in their decision-making, including open days, in-person events/online webinars and Q&As.
- Offer events specifically for parents, either in person at school or via online webinar/Q&A so they can ask specific questions and address concerns such as finances, independent living, and how this pathway will help their child get to where they want to be.
- Provide employer-led workshops for developing skills in independence, confidence, employability, and entrepreneurship (such as confidence, teamwork, day-to-day employment practicalities, realities of setting up their own business and what it means to work for yourself etc).
- Through schools and emails to students and their parents, highlight and signpost the alternative opportunities for work experience and volunteer placements – if they don't get a work experience place provided automatically.
- Provide opportunities to engage with employers and current students for talks and their experiences to give reassurance, support and answer specific questions.

Timelines: Year 12

What decisions are they making?

- Post-secondary options
- What they want to experience & how to get there e.g. money vs. travel
- Which industry – more have an idea about what industry they want to be in by Year 12
- More considering university as an option
- Which subject to study (firms up in Year 11 and 12)
- Where to study

What drives their choices?

- Career choice is more inspired by favourite subject & passions than parents beliefs
- Opportunities for independence, entrepreneurship & career progression
- Earning potential & career quality

What resources do they use?

- Parents – but less so than previous years
- Discussion of post-secondary options with friends
- Specialist careers teachers (still only a minority recall this)
- Teachers
- Siblings

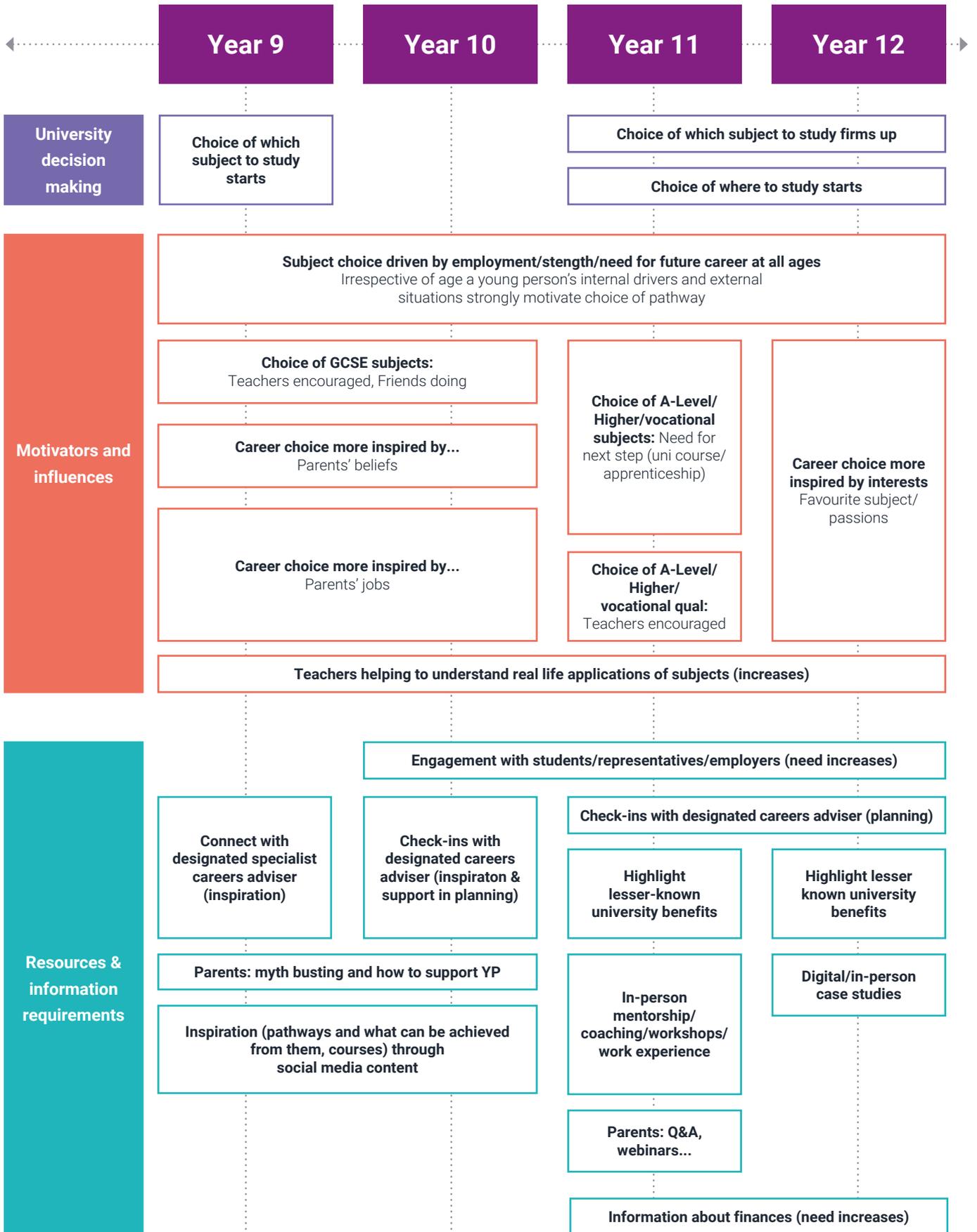
What information do they need?

- Opportunities for professional development & entrepreneurship
- Plans about how to get to where they want to be
- Practical tips about pathways
- Knowledge/inspiration about future possibilities
- Financial implications

Year 12 actions

- Provide opportunities to engage with university and employer representatives and current students and apprentices in their area of interest, through in-person talks to give inspiration and to reassure their decisions.
- Send marketing comms with links to university and employer websites and useful, practical information about applications/making decisions etc. Plus social media channels, ways to contact the university and employer, as well as prospectuses, and knowledge about finances and support.
- Continue to highlight the additional benefits and opportunities available from this pathway (travel, employability, opportunities for future career progression, connections to employers and talks with employers, etc).
- Give practical support for increasing confidence and experience during the application process, e.g. mock interviews, cv writing tips from employers, signposting additional steps they could make to help them stand out.
- Provide digital case studies (videos/webinars) and in-person talks from employers/business-people/entrepreneurs to inspire students about the many routes to success to settle anxieties around grades etc.
- Send tailored comms around financial support and advice, including budgeting hacks, spreadsheets, advice from current students and apprentices in the form of TikTok style / YouTube videos, and opportunities for part-time work, bursaries and scholarships etc.

University Decision Making Timeline*



*Based on a standard secondary calendar

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