



# SHAPING YOUR FUTURE:

**INFORMATION, RESOURCES & TOP TIPS FOR PLANNING YOUR CAREER  
AND NEXT STEPS AFTER YEAR 13**



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# SECTION ONE



"Know thyself "  
Socrates

Knowing yourself...

Your:

- strengths
- skills
- weaknesses
- values
- preferences

As well as...

→ what you enjoy

→ what brings you the most fulfilment...

Are all key in helping you:-

- consider careers which may suit you well, and...
- discover routes into those careers, which suit you best

# Learn more about yourself....

Your unique combination of strengths (gifts), skills, and passion/s can help you discover your purpose. You can learn more about who you are, and potential purpose (including career inspiration):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXAk-LaNmW8>



Buy a book or create a file – call it ‘Career Ideas’, ‘My Career Dreams’, or something similar.



Begin to brainstorm - list what makes you, you – your strengths, skills and \*competences (\*often referred to in the world of work):

A strength is...an activity that makes you feel strong, excites you, energizes you. It's more than just something you're good at

A Skill is...something you can learn (and master) through repetition.

A Competence: refers to skills and knowledge while being more than just the skill or knowledge itself. It includes ability and behaviour.

<https://www.cv-template.com/en/course/strengths-skills-competences-cv>

Taking the time to do this will definitely pay off



Hard skills are those which can be measured (e.g. via exams). Soft and transferable skills are also highly sought after by employers and universities. Our skills, strengths and levels of competence help us to increase our employability.

Consider and research the skills listed below:

**Adaptability**

**Analytical Skills**

**Commercial awareness**

**Communication**

**Decision making**

**Flexibility**

**Initiative**

**Innovation**

**I.T. Skills**

**Interpersonal skills**

**Leadership**

**Learning**

**Negotiation**

**Networking**

**Numeracy Skills**

**Planning and Organisation**

**Problem solving**

**Research**

**Resilience**

**Teamwork**

**Time management, working under pressure and to deadlines....**

There are more soft/transferable skills, can you find them online/via Job Profiles...?



**A word about weaknesses:** It is good to be self-aware. While we do not need to focus on our weaknesses all the time, it is important to be aware of areas you need to work on – is it time management? Or Teamwork? How can you improve on your weaknesses? Employers will be keen to know how you are working on your weaknesses too. Always seek to frame weaknesses in a positive way and let Employers know you are working on them, indicating how.

**A common interview question** – Tell us about your strengths and weaknesses! Start preparing now, it will definitely help you.

**TASK:** Write down the skills/strengths you already have, and give examples. Also write those you would like to work toward or improve upon...

A few examples:

**Subjects you are/were good at in school**

- ★ Where you achieve your best grades
- ★ When you have achieved a clear outcome – won a prize or commendation for a piece of work / artwork / written work, etc.
- ★ An ability to communicate in another language

**A skill you have acquired in your spare time – at a school club, a local club/organisation or at home**

- ★ learning to play a musical instrument
- ★ achieving a badge as part of a Uniformed organisation, e.g. Scouts, Girls'/Boys' Brigade, Guides, Air Cadets, Sea Cadets, Army Cadets, Volunteer Police Cadets, etc.
- ★ Others tell you they love a particular dish you make
- ★ You are able to fix and mend things – bikes, computers, clothes
- ★ Success within a sport – within a team, competitively, or achieving a certain level – e.g. different belts within Judo, School or Local Team, etc.

**Can you think of any more strengths and skills? Why not ask at home and your friends too?**

**Write them down.**

# Developing your strengths and skills and increasing your employability: where, when & how?

## Studying

at school, college and university, or online



## Hobbies



Art/Photography, Cooking, Dance, Make-up/Fashion, Music, Reading, Sport/Fitness, Drama, Gaming, DofE

## Work Experience

Paid and unpaid



## Volunteering

In the community



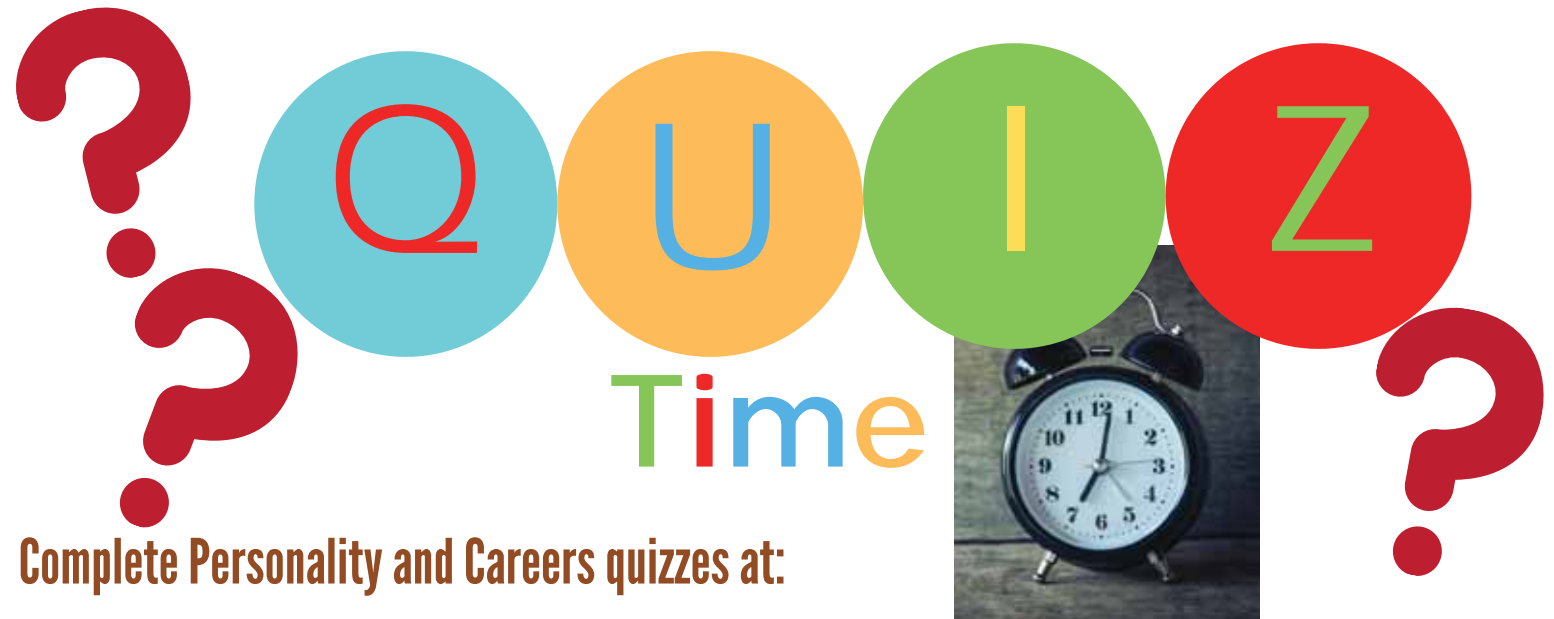
## Membership of a group/team

e.g. Guides, Boys'/Girls' Brigade, Armed Forces Cadets, Sports Club, Police Cadets, Amateur Dramatics, Teams, Sports Teams, Orchestra, band, etc.





# QUIZ Time



## Complete Personality and Careers quizzes at:

- <https://www.16personalities.com/> (Learn about yourself and what makes you, you)
- [www.icould.com](http://www.icould.com) (Buzz Quiz – short Personality and career matching test)
- [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) (You will need to register online)
- [www.sacu-student.com](http://www.sacu-student.com) (You will need to register online)



## Research careers, find job profiles and related information at:

- [www.startprofile.com](http://www.startprofile.com) - informative careers website
- [www.careerpilot.org.uk](http://www.careerpilot.org.uk) - excellent all-round website including information, skills matching and videos
- <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/> - skills assessment, career information + web chat/careers advice via phone
- <https://www.allaboutcareers.com/>
- [www.icould.com](http://www.icould.com) - includes videos of people talking about their Job roles
- <http://www.careerninja.co.uk> – for the free careers personality test and career related information
- [www.healthcareers.nhs.uk](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk) - for a wide range of detailed healthcare careers information
- [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) – good source of careers information and what you can do with your degree
- [www.planitplus.net](http://www.planitplus.net) - see careers areas and the careers match quiz
- <http://www.tomorrowengineers.org.uk/> - engineering information
- [https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/explore\\_lm/](https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/explore_lm/) - important 'Labour Market Information' – including salary, estimated growth relating to different jobs/sectors, etc.

# SECTION TWO

## The National Qualifications Framework

LEVEL 8	<b>Doctorate</b> PhD				
LEVEL 7	<b>Masters Degree</b> MS, MSc, MPhil			<b>Masters Degree Apprenticeship</b>	
LEVEL 6	<b>Bachelor Degree</b> BA, BSc			<b>Degree Apprenticeship</b>	
LEVEL 5			<b>Foundation Degree</b> FdA, FdSc	<b>HND</b>	<b>Higher Apprenticeship</b>
LEVEL 4		<b>HNC</b>			
LEVEL 3	<b>A-Level</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>L3 Diploma</b> (National)	<b>L3 Certificate</b> (National)	<b>Advanced Apprenticeship</b>
		<b>A1</b> (AS Level)			
LEVEL 2	<b>GCSE</b> Grades A*-C New grades 9-4		<b>L2 Award/Certificate/Diploma</b> (First)		<b>Intermediate Apprenticeship</b>
LEVEL 1	<b>GCSE</b> Grades D-G New grades 3-1		<b>L1 Award/Certificate/Diploma</b> (Foundation)		
	ENTRY LEVEL				

# SECTION THREE

## Higher Education (University + some Further Education (F.E.) Colleges (levels 4-8):



### Thinking about university? Useful websites:

[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) – The UK University application and information website

[www.sacu-student.com](http://www.sacu-student.com) – Personal Statement help and advice. Great student section

[www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) – Graduate career prospects + lots of helpful information

<http://russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college> - help with A' level choice (also learn about the 'Russell Group' universities)

[www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk) – contains very helpful information

[www.thestudentroom.co.uk](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk) - Forums on choosing universities / degrees / student life and much more!

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2019/jun/07/university-league-tables-2021> - ranks universities and university courses (link changes at the start of each academic year)

<https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/> - advise the A-Level subjects which might be required for certain degree courses, especially at Russell Group universities

\*Some Further Education Colleges also offer degrees and HNC (Higher National Certificates) and HND (Higher National Diploma) courses . Tuition fees may be more competitive.

The Open University - <http://www.open.ac.uk/> - Offer flexible ways to study



# SECTION FOUR

## Apprenticeships

This option enables you to gain work experience and earn a salary and gain a qualification. As with all options, if you would like to apply for an apprenticeship to begin after Year 13, it is a good idea to apply for a variety of back-up options (e.g. various levels of apprenticeship, jobs, and/or university) as entry to Apprenticeships can be competitive.

When applying - research the apprenticeship, the company and the qualification you will gain. Consider if/how the apprenticeship will enable you to go further in your education and training.

Each employer will share what they are looking for in an Apprentice. The subjects you took, and grades you achieved at Level 2 (GCSE) and Level 3 (A-Level or Level 3 BTEC) may be important, or the employer may be more focused on your skills, strengths and qualities. Requirements vary widely, so do research every Apprenticeship. Below is a rough guide for entry requirements:

**Here are the different levels of Apprenticeship:-**

- Intermediate Apprenticeship – A small number/range of GCSE grades may be required
- Advanced Apprenticeship – 4+ GCSE's often at 4-9 grades required for entry
- Higher Apprenticeship – 2+ 'A' levels or equivalent may be required for entry
- Degree Apprenticeship - 2+ 'A' levels or equivalent may be required for entry

**\*Each employer will indicate the skills, qualities, strengths and qualifications they are looking for\* - they will make decisions based on applications, assessments and interviews at various stages of the application process.\***



## Helpful Apprenticeship websites:

There is not currently one, go to website for Apprenticeships, so include a wide range of websites and resources in your searches. Start searching and applying for a number of opportunities during September of Year 13, onwards. Search regularly (e.g. weekly, every 2 weeks) and apply as soon as you can to ensure you do not miss great opportunities!

[www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk) - the government website – probably includes widest number of apprenticeships available. Includes option for email alerts for new opportunities.

[www.notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk)

[www.thestudentladder.co.uk](http://www.thestudentladder.co.uk) - excellent apprenticeship website offering placements with large high profile companies as well as advice.

[www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk](http://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk)

[www.allaboutcareers.com](http://www.allaboutcareers.com)

<https://www.beetroot.com/>

[www.university.which.co.uk](http://www.university.which.co.uk) – Higher and Degree Apprenticeship Guide

[www.careermap.co.uk](http://www.careermap.co.uk)

<https://careerfinder.ucas.com/jobs/apprenticeship/>

[www.thescholarshiphub.org.uk](http://www.thescholarshiphub.org.uk) – Degree Apprenticeships

<http://www.aimapprenticeships.co.uk/>

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/yaan/ambassadors/> - find out about YAAN – the Youth Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network and hear Ambassadors share their stories.

[www.young-professionals.uk](http://www.young-professionals.uk)

[www.indeed.co.uk](http://www.indeed.co.uk)

Search company websites - they carry a huge amount of information on recruitment and opportunities

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/resources/> - see the vacancy snapshot + much more!



# SECTION FIVE

## FINDING A...



## SEARCH, APPLY AND REPEAT:

By using a variety of media, it is important to search and apply regularly (e.g. on a weekly basis - just as with apprenticeships). It is important you do not rely only one or a few applications. You can search and apply for jobs using the following methods:

**ONLINE - e.g. via:**

[WWW.INDEED.CO.UK](http://WWW.INDEED.CO.UK)

[WWW.MONSTER.CO.UK](http://WWW.MONSTER.CO.UK)

[WWW.REED.CO.UK](http://WWW.REED.CO.UK)

VIA COMPANY WEBSITES (SEE CAREER SECTIONS)

**SOCIAL MEDIA - LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram**

**NEWSPAPERS**

**MAGAZINES**

**RECRUITMENT AGENCIES - e.g. Reed, Office Angels, other small/specialist career agencies**

**ARMED FORCES RECRUITMENT WEBSITES AND CAREERS CENTRES**

**VIA CAREER / OTHER WEBSITES WITHIN THIS PACK**

**BY WORD OF MOUTH**

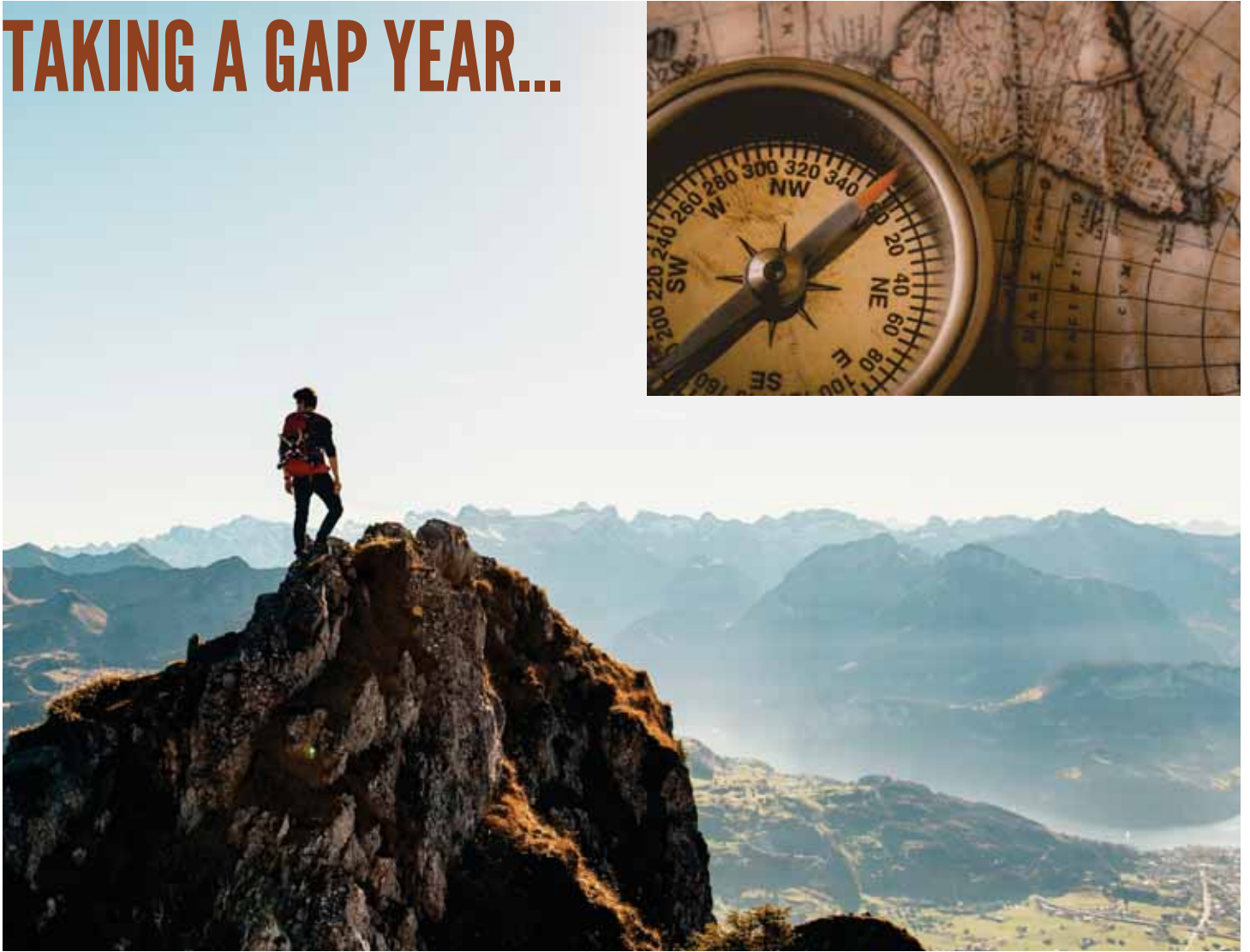
**THROUGH FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

**THROUGH VOLUNTEERING AND WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES....**

**Can you think of any more?...**

# SECTION SIX

## TAKING A GAP YEAR...



**A Gap Year is a fantastic way to combine adventure, work and life experience, as well as voluntary experience - all invaluable in helping you gain new skills, confidence and perspectives...**

**Find out more about some of the exciting and varied opportunities here:**



### **Gap year**

Discover gap year, volunteering and work experience opportunities in the...

[prospects.ac.uk](https://prospects.ac.uk)



### **Gap years - ideas and things to think about**

There are lots of things you could do with a gap year, and it's not all about travel. Check out gap year ideas, tips, pros and cons.

# SECTION SEVEN

## Volunteering:

Another great way to gain work experience, gain a taste of certain careers/job sectors, develop your skills, AND it shows employers you are enthusiastic and have initiative.

Find out more here:

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/volunteering/have-you-thought-about-volunteering>

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/volunteering/what-can-i-do>

[www.do-it.org](http://www.do-it.org)

<https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/>



**Work experience/Internships:** A great way to find out about the world of work and possibilities. Sometimes paid, but more often a chance to learn more about certain job sectors, gain useful experience. Plus - employers view it very positively.

For more information, please explore:

<https://careerpilot.org.uk/information/a-job-or-career/work-experience-what-s-in-it-for-me>

You can contact Employers directly - for advice on how:

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/work-experience-and-internships/how-to-ask-employers-for-work-experience>

Virtual work experience:

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/a-job-or-career/finding-virtual-work-experience/what-to-expect-from-virtual-work-experience>

**You can also speak with your Teachers, and ask your family & friends if they might have any contacts you can approach 😊**



# APPLICATIONS - make yours shine



**1) Show you have researched...**

the role

the company

the person specification (strengths, skills, qualifications & qualities required/preferred)

**2) Tailor your skills to those the employer is looking for:**

provide evidence (e.g. of strengths, plus skills/transferable skills gained through study, work /voluntary experience and through your hobbies and extra-curricular activities

**3) Show your interest, enthusiasm, and motivation towards the role and company - tailor your application, CV and Cover Letter to each role you apply for - this takes time, but pays off - hugely!**

**4) Practice and then write/type your application (if applying online use Word and cut and paste)**

**5) Check for mistakes before submission**

**6) The more applications you work on and submit, the easier they become**

**Following your application -**

Prepare for interviews and assessments (e.g. online tests, group activities, etc.).

Research what form assessments and interviews will take & prepare accordingly.

**The time you take and effort you give to complete your - job, work experience, volunteering, gap year, or apprenticeship applications will be evident to employers - it can help you gain the opportunity of your dreams!**

# SECTION EIGHT

## UNDERSTANDING GRADES: GCSEs

	New grading structure	Old grading structure
	9	A*
	8	
	7	A
	<hr/>	
	6	B
Strong pass →	5	
Standard pass →	4	C
	<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed;"/>	
	3	D
	2	E
	1	F
		G
	<hr/>	
	U	U

## BTEC Level 2 and GCSE grade equivalent


GCSE Grade	BTEC grade	Current points	New points
A*	Distinction*	58	8
A	Distinction	52	7
B	Merit	46	6
C	Pass	40	5
D		34	4
E		28	3
	L1 Pass	25	2.5
F		22	2
G		16	1
U		0	0

Academic Grades: 'A' Levels, BTEC Level 3 and UCAS Tariff Points [Link for further information and copy of table on following page: https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/comparing-btec-to-other-qualifications/btec-ucas-points.html](https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/comparing-btec-to-other-qualifications/btec-ucas-points.html)

# UNDERSTANDING GRADES: Level 3 - A-Levels, BTEC, T-Levels

Extended Diploma	Diploma	Foundation Diploma	Extended Certificate	Certificate	AS level	A level	UCAS tariff points
D*D*D*							168
D*D*D							160
D*DD							152
DDD							144
DDM							128
DMM	D*D*						112
	D*D						104
MMM	DD						96
		D*					84
MMP	DM						80
							78
MPP	MM						64
			D*			A*	56
PPP	MP	M	D			A	48
						B	40
	PP		M			C	32
				D*			28
		P		D		D	24
					A		20
			P	M	B	E	16
					C		12
					D		10
				P			8
					E		6

# UK Degree Classifications



The graphic features a grid background. On the left is the Union Jack flag. To its right, the text 'British Undergraduate Degree Classification System' is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font. Further right is a glowing yellow lightbulb icon with radiating lines. Below these elements, a short paragraph explains the system: 'Navigate your way through the the British undergraduate degree classification system which grades degrees (bachelor's degrees and integrated master's degrees) in the UK.'

Classification	Mark	OU Mark	Equivalent grade
First-class (1st)	70%+	85%+	A
Upper second-class (2.1)	60-69%	70-85%	B
Lower second-class (2.2)	50-59%	55-70%	C
Third class (3rd)	40-49%	40-55%	D

**\*OU = Open University**

# SECTION NINE

## Recommended reads:

How to Find Work You Love - Paul Allen

What Colour is Your Parachute? For Teens:  
Discover Yourself, Design Your Future and Plan  
for Your Dream Job (3rd Edition) -  
Richard N Bolles and Carol Christen

People, Planet, Passion: Simple Steps to discover a  
fulfilling non profit career that makes a difference  
and earns you a living - Devi Clark

What Employers Want: The employability skills  
handbook (2nd Edition) - Karen Holmes

Now What? The Young Persons Guide to  
Choosing the Perfect Career - Nicholas Lore with  
Anthony Spadafore

**Practice makes progress**



**The best preparation for  
tomorrow is doing your best  
today.**

H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

 BrainyQuote

**Prepare, work hard, & run your race**

