

Top Careers Tips for Y13 students in a pandemic

You don't need anyone to tell you that we are living in unusual times. Try to work out what you are going to do after Y13 can be confusing in normal times. Add in a global pandemic and things can get really confusing. We have put together a few tips to help you through this time.

- **Make time to find out more about you.** Whilst none of us can be sure what is going to happen over the next year, you can make sure that you have considered what you would ideally like to happen. What's your first choice and what are you prepared to be flexible about? Equally you need to know what you are not prepared to give up. There are lots of possibilities open to you, but you have to think what are you going to be happiest with and what is realistic. When you are ready, make sure you have a Plan A, B and even a Plan C!
- **Keep up to date with what is going on.** The situation is changing all the time and none of us can predict the future so the best thing you can do is to keep as up to date as possible. Your school or college will give you the information they have, but you can help yourself by keeping an eye on the news, making sure you are using a reliable source.
- **Things are going to be different this year** – whether that is attending a virtual open day at university or having an online interview for a job. So try to plan ahead and prepare as best you can. Make sure your digital skills are as good as you can get them, whether that is getting ready for a new type of university experience or more online work in an apprenticeship or a job. Work experience, either paid or unpaid may be difficult to come by at the moment so take a look at virtual work experience [Barclays Life Skills](#) You can also give your application form a boost by doing an [on line course](#) or a [Mooc](#) Some courses are free others will charge.
- **Make sure you know everything there is to know about all the options open to you.** [Your choices at 18](#) is a great starting point and covers all your options.
- **If you are thinking of Higher Education** No one knows what university is going to look like for 2021 entry. Some of you may feel that you definitely want to go next year, whatever happens, whilst others may feel that you would rather wait a year when maybe things are a little clearer. Broadly speaking, there is, of course, nothing to stop you from applying to go in 2021. If it doesn't feel right for you, you can always change your mind and go the following year. Again it's a case of keeping up to date so keep checking on the [UCAS Covid](#) page and sign up for the UCAS [Covid updates](#) Universities are running Open Days this year, some of which are on line, some as normal, so find out what is available to you on the [Open Days calendar](#)

UCAS is also running [virtual exhibitions](#) based on subject areas where you can talk to admission tutors and students to find out more about the courses, which interest you. Follow the link to get your ticket.

- **If you are thinking of an apprenticeship or a job, you are going to have to really explore the possibilities.** Some sectors have been hit harder by the pandemic than others and have had to cut jobs and may not be recruiting for some time. These include sectors such as some retail, travel and tourism, aerospace engineering and hospitality and it is hard to tell how well or how soon they will recover. Think really carefully about your choices -if you really want an apprenticeship or a job at the end of Y13 you will need to focus on the sectors where there are opportunities. Take a look at this [Careerpilot update](#) to give you some idea of where the opportunities might be. You can find out more about apprenticeships and how to apply [here](#) If you are specifically looking for a job, then look at this [link](#) The alternative, which may not be your preferred option, but may be more realistic, is to consider continuing in education and delay entering the workplace for another 2-3 years.
- **If you are thinking of a gap year.** This is still going to be a possibility for you, but it is going to look a little different to the one you may have been planning. International travel is looking very unlikely for a while, but there is, at the moment, nothing to stop you from exploring this country. You will need to consider how you are going to fund your gap year, especially if there are fewer jobs available. What you may be unaware of is that many university students take a gap year after their degree, before they start work, so you could always consider delaying your gap year until then. Make your gap year count by developing your skills. You can keep a record of them on your [Skills Map](#)
- **If you don't know what to do next, remember you are not going to be the only one so talk to others and ask for help.** There are lots of people around you who can support you, ranging from your teachers, tutor, Head of 6th, parents/carers, friends and also your careers adviser. Make an appointment to see your careers adviser – this may be a bit different too, as it may be face to face, an audio call or through email. A Careers Adviser is trained to help you to think through your options and help you to plan your next steps.

And remember, keep up to date!
Up to date information is key to your planning especially in these different times

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