

CAREERS SERVICE



A YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE

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THE CAREERS SERVICE

The Department for the Economy's Careers Service provides professional and impartial careers advice and guidance to help you make informed choices about your future career.

Our service is delivered by professionally qualified careers advisers based in Careers Resource Centres, JobCentres and Jobs & Benefits Offices throughout Northern Ireland and you can also find information online at **www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers**

Careers advisers can help you with the following:

- choosing subjects for study at school, college or university
- current and future job trends
- job search techniques
- CVs
- application forms
- interview preparation
- working overseas / gap years
- seasonal / voluntary work

Careers guidance can help you to:

- know more about your career options;

- become aware of the skills required to achieve your career goals and be better prepared to achieve them;
- feel more confident about making decisions regarding your career; and
- understand the importance of considering current and future job trends in career decision making.

How do I contact a careers adviser?

- Ask your careers teacher to arrange an interview for you with a careers adviser (if you are still at school).
- Log on to **www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers** to webchat with a careers adviser (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm) or email a query.
- Phone **0300 200 7820** to speak with an adviser (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm).
- Go to **www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers** for details of your nearest careers office.



CAREERS GUIDANCE INTERVIEW

A careers guidance interview is a one-to-one meeting with a professionally qualified careers adviser and can last approximately 20 - 45 minutes. The interview is not like a job interview – there are no right or wrong answers.

Where will it take place?

If you are a student your interview will most likely take place in your school or college, however, if you are no longer in education you can meet with an adviser in your local careers office.

What will be discussed?

During a guidance interview the careers adviser can help you to:

- broaden and challenge your career ideas;
- identify your personal qualities and skills;
- identify the skills you would like to develop;
- identify occupations, academic courses and training opportunities;
- explore alternative career paths or educational options;

- explore current and future job opportunities;
- understand the processes of job search, writing a CV and going for interviews;
- explore your interests, likes and dislikes, family influences, barriers and work experience; and
- think about how study, work experience, home-life etc can all contribute to your employability.

The careers adviser can provide you with:

- accurate and up-to-date information;
- the opportunity, if appropriate, to complete a personality-based assessment;
- alternative sources of information and help if required; and
- an action plan to help you move forward.



Preparing for your interview

Think about:

- how much control you feel you have in making choices;
- what is important to you e.g. helping others, making money...;
- anything you would like to change;
- qualifications or additional qualifications and experience required for the career you are interested in; and
- the ideas you already have and how you might achieve them.

Career matching tools

If you do not have any career ideas before your interview you can work through one of the career matching tools on **www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers**. Completing this will provide you with a personalised list of career suggestions and up-to-date information on over 1,800 career titles.



SUBJECT CHOICES AT YEAR 10

During Year 10 you will be asked to make a choice about some of the subjects or courses you will study in Years 11 and 12. The process of choosing subjects will be organised by your school.

In addition to the help from your careers teacher in school, the Department for the Economy's careers adviser can also provide you with careers information, advice and guidance when making subject choices.

When choosing subjects it is important to be aware that some courses require specific subjects, e.g. Science is required to study nursing.

To help decide, think about:

- subjects you enjoy;
- subjects you are good at or find challenging;
- subjects that can link into careers ideas;
- how you like to learn (through coursework, exams or a combination of both);
- hobbies / interests you enjoy;
- the type of job you would like to do;
- researching jobs through the Careers Service website;
- talking to the careers adviser; and
- talking to your subject teachers.



OPTIONS AFTER YEAR 12

There are a number of options available to you at the end of Year 12. The following gives a brief overview of each option.

Staying at school

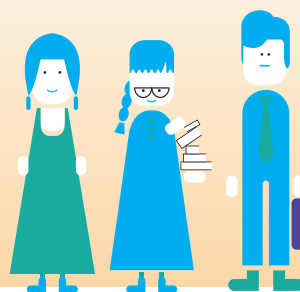
If you are thinking about staying on at school or transferring to another school for further study, you will need to decide which subjects to choose and also what grades you will require to get into a particular sixth form.

To help with your research you could:

- start in your school careers library which will have a range of relevant books;
- look into what schools are in your area and what courses they offer which best suit your needs;
- speak to teachers and other students for additional information on subjects and the workload involved. This will help you to decide whether the subject and topics covered interest you and if the learning style / method of assessment will suit you;

- explore careers you are interested in and what subjects are required for these careers. Check out **www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers**. From this site you can choose to visit “Careers A-Z list and Subject Links”. This section allows you to browse a range of jobs and match the subjects you study to the careers for which they can be useful. You can also go to “Careers Ideas” for career suggestions which match your likes and interests.

You may be entitled to financial support. For more information visit **www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/14-19-education-employment-and-training-options/education-maintenance-allowance**



OPTIONS AFTER YEAR 12

Going to College

If you are thinking about going to a further education college, you will need to decide which course to choose.

To find out more about the colleges in Northern Ireland and what they offer visit:

- www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/further-education-fe-colleges
- College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE): www.cafre.ac.uk

You can visit college open days (usually in February and March of each year) where you will be able to speak to tutors for additional information on courses and the workload involved. This will help you to choose a course which will be of interest to you and that you will enjoy studying.

It is important to get your application in early as some courses are very popular. If you have not fully decided on doing a further education course,

it is advisable to apply as a back up plan. You can always withdraw at a later date.

Information on support available, including funding, can be found at www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/further-education

Training and Apprenticeships

If you are thinking about training for a specific job or completing an apprenticeship, you will need to choose an occupational area in which to train or work.

Training for Success www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/training-success

Training for Success is designed for school-leavers aged 16-17 (and up to age 24 for those requiring additional support). Vocational training is available in many occupational areas at different levels e.g. Administration, Childcare, Hairdressing, ICT, Retail, Construction and Engineering. You will receive a weekly non-means tested Educational Maintenance Allowance and you may be entitled to assistance towards travel, childcare and / or lodgings.



OPTIONS AFTER YEAR 12

ApprenticeshipsNI

www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/apprenticeships

ApprenticeshipsNI offer opportunities in many occupational areas. For some apprenticeships you will have to meet entry requirements e.g. some require you to have GCSEs.

To complete an apprenticeship you need to be employed or be about to take up paid employment as an apprentice with a Northern Ireland based company. To find a job, check local and national newspapers. Investigate any contacts through family or friends, contact employers directly, visit the JobCentre / Jobs & Benefits Office or visit **www.jobcentreonline.com** to check for vacancies.

For information on the National Minimum Wage and rates of pay for apprentices, visit **www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/national-minimum-wage**

Finding a job

If you are considering looking for work see the section on Employment on page 14.

Action Points

- Research your options
- Speak to your teacher for information on subjects and exams
- Visit local college / school / training provider open days
- Identify where the jobs are now and where they are likely to be in the future
- Attend talks given by employers
- Discuss your plans at home, with teachers and your careers adviser
- Consider applying for more than one option
- Always have a back up plan

Remember

- Consider your options early. As most colleges open for applications in February, you should check for courses in January
- Keep your options open as there are many paths available to you
- You could change your mind when you get your GCSE results
- If you need additional help you can contact your careers adviser.



UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT OPTIONS AFTER YEAR 14

After Year 14 there are lots of different routes and options to move forward in your personal career journey.

Options include:

Going to University

If you are thinking about going to a university it is important to understand the application process and research fully the range of universities, courses and methods of study / assessment.

For more information check out:

- **www.ucas.com** – Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)

UCAS is the central organisation through which applications are processed for entry to higher education in the UK.

- **www.cao.ie** – Central Applications Office (CAO)

CAO is the central organisation through which applications are processed for entry to higher education institutions in the Republic of Ireland.

- **www.open.ac.uk** – Open University

The Open University's distance learning enables you to study in your own time, at home or wherever you choose – reading, watching or listening to material supplied, doing course activities and assignments with regular support from your teacher.



Further Education (FE) Colleges

Both higher and further education courses are available at FE colleges. For more information on the colleges throughout Northern Ireland check out the following websites:

- www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/further-education-fe-colleges
- College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE): www.cafre.ac.uk

Higher Level Apprenticeships

A Higher Level Apprenticeship is an apprenticeship with a targeted qualification between Level 4 (HNC equivalent) to Level 8 (PhD equivalent). A Higher Level Apprenticeship can help you develop professional and technical skills, as well as gaining recognised higher qualifications while in paid employment.

Find out more at www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/higher-level-apprenticeships

Foundation Degrees

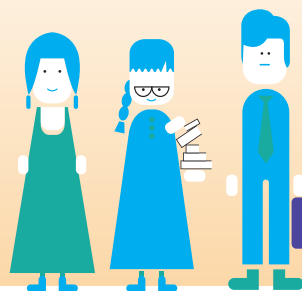
Foundation degrees are higher education qualifications which mix academic and work related learning and offer a route into employment or university and a way to better yourself in your job.

Further information is available at www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/foundation-degrees

Funding

For a guide to the various types of student finance you may be entitled to when in Higher Education, how to apply for them and how to repay a student finance loan, visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/higher-education/student-finance

Details of support available to those in Further Education can be found at www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/further-education



UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT OPTIONS AFTER YEAR 14

Finding a job

If you are considering looking for work see the section on Employment on page 14.

For more information check:

- www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/planning-gap-year

Gap Year

You may choose to take a gap year after leaving school and before you start university or college. Universities, colleges and future employers support gap years as they see the value when students grow in confidence, have a more mature outlook and greater focus when they return to their studies.

A gap year does take planning and for this reason it is important that you have a goal, rather than just taking a year off without any real direction or purpose.



SKILLS IN DEMAND

When you are just starting out or taking a change in direction, it is important you make informed career choices. To fully explore all your possible options you should know where the jobs are now and where they are likely to be in the future.

Future job opportunities in Northern Ireland

There are job opportunities across all occupational areas in Northern Ireland but there is higher demand in occupations relating to Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM).

As the world becomes increasingly technology dependent it is anticipated that the range of businesses emerging around the STEM areas will grow significantly. This will require people to get a good education in STEM subjects.

The following areas are extremely important to the Northern Ireland economy:

- ICT
- creative and digital media
- agri food sector
- business and financial services
- advanced manufacturing and engineering
- renewable energies and recycling
- health and life sciences

Further information

To find out more about any of these job areas and the skills and qualifications needed, use the Careers A-Z tool at the web address below.

www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/exploring-career-options

For additional detailed information on future labour market opportunities and the skills needed (including employment prospects by level of education and by subject area) for the Northern Ireland economy, you can refer to the **Northern Ireland Skills Barometer** at **www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/ni-skills-barometer**



EMPLOYMENT

If you are thinking about going into employment some preparation will be required.

To prepare:

- think about your skills and interests and consider how these will affect the type of career path you will follow;
- consider voluntary work as an opportunity to develop your skills and gain experience;
- attend mock interviews;
- complete mock application forms and CVs;
- check local and national newspapers for advertised jobs;
- investigate any contacts through family or friends;
- contact employers directly.

Useful information on completing CVs and covering letters can be found at

www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/looking-work/applying-jobs

You could also check the following websites:

- **www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/finding-job**
- **www.jobcentreonline.com**

Registering with a recruitment agency may assist you in finding a job. For information on the benefits of recruitment agencies and how to get the most out of them, visit **www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/recruitment-agencies**

If you are finding it difficult to get a job, further education and training may enhance your future prospects.

Self Employment

If you have a good idea for a business and thinking of self employment, the following organisations provide support to help young people turn their business idea into a reality:

- **www.goforitni.com**
- **www.princes-trust.org.uk**
- **www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk**



WORK EXPERIENCE

Work experience involves going on a short term placement with an employer, to observe and work alongside people as they go about their daily tasks. You will develop skills, make contacts and learn more about the kind of career you would like to follow.

Benefits of work experience

Work experience can support your career planning in a number of ways. Some of the benefits of work experience are:

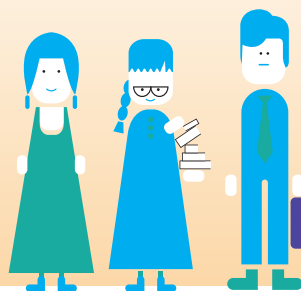
- it gives you a valuable insight into the skills needed for a particular job;
- it is an opportunity to test out a job that you are interested in to see if you really like it;
- it can broaden your knowledge of jobs that you had never considered;
- it will increase your awareness of your own skills and strengths;
- it helps you understand how the subjects you study in school link to certain jobs; and
- it gives you an insight into what the world of work is really like.

Finding an employer

Once you have decided what you would like to do for work experience, your next challenge is to find an employer. Below are some ways to find an employer.

- On the Internet
- Contact organisations
- Speak to your school
- Ask your family and friends
- You can also search for school work experience placement opportunities from a range of employers and occupational areas across Northern Ireland online at 'Connect to Success NI' at **www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/search-school-work-experience-opportunities**

For more information on work experience check out **www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/work-experience**



TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

These are abilities, aptitudes and qualities that can be transferred from one job or activity to another and are gained in a range of ways e.g. through work, interests, volunteering, hobbies, sports.

In the current economic climate, job hunters face increasing competition for every vacancy. To be successful, you need to demonstrate to an employer you hold relevant qualifications and that you have the skills for the job. A good way to start is by recognising your transferable skills.

Transferable skills include:

- communication - being able to communicate by speaking or in writing
- teamwork - being a constructive team member
- leadership - motivating and leading others
- initiative - seeing opportunities and achieving goals
- willingness to learn - being open to new ideas

- solving problems - thinking things through in a logical way
- flexibility - being able to adapt
- being self aware - knowing your strengths and skills
- commitment and motivation
 - having energy and enthusiasm when carrying out projects
- interpersonal skills - relating well to others
- numeracy - understanding and using information such as numbers, statistics and graphs

Identifying your current skills

You probably have many of these skills already. The next step is to become aware of them. Start by considering all your jobs, activities and experience to date.

Write down the tasks relevant to each of the activities in the worksheet provided. Once you have compiled this list of skills it can help create a personal profile which can be referred to when applying for jobs or changing careers.



TRANSFERABLE SKILLS WORKSHEET

Experience to date and related skills

[illegible]

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

The worksheet can also be used to rate your skills level (e.g. 1-5) and show areas you need to improve. You can also highlight the skills you enjoy using. To develop skills in a variety of ways, you may want to consider:

- doing some voluntary work;
- taking part in a hobby, committee or group;
- doing some part-time / temporary work;
- going on a training course.

The “Career ideas” software programme will help you consider your skills and match them to certain careers. To access this programme visit **www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers**

Remember that developing your skills helps you to find work, stay in work and get further in your career.

Providing evidence of your transferable skills

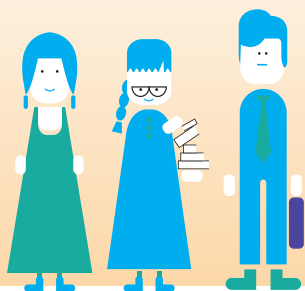
Once you are clear about your skills, ensure you include them in your CV and application forms. Interviews will give you the opportunity to make employers aware of them. Some suggestions are given below.

Ability to work under pressure

- Meeting deadlines in school / work
- Completing tasks within a set time frame

Communication skills

- Making presentations to peers / colleagues
- Contributing articles to the school / community magazine



TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Flexibility

- Combining study with work commitments
- Able to make changes to when, where and how you work

Initiative

- Coping well with the unexpected
- Organising fundraising activities
- Starting your own business

Leadership

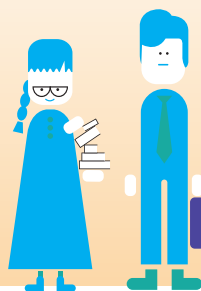
- Coaching younger members of a football team
- Being a representative on a committee

Numeracy

- Treasurer of a committee
- Producing statistics

Teamwork

- Taking part in team sports
- Voluntary work



TRANSFERABLE SKILLS CHECKLIST

KEY TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

- ☐ Ability to delegate
- ☐ Ability to plan
- ☐ Accept responsibility
- ☐ Computer skills
- ☐ Communicate in writing
- ☐ Efficiency
- ☐ Instruct others
- ☐ Manage money
- ☐ Manage people
- ☐ Meet deadlines
- ☐ Results orientated
- ☐ Solve problems
- ☐ Supervise others

PEOPLE SKILLS

- ☐ Adaptable
- ☐ Caring
- ☐ Counselling
- ☐ Demonstration skills
- ☐ Diplomatic
- ☐ Energetic
- ☐ Helping others
- ☐ Interview skills
- ☐ Listening skills
- ☐ Open minded
- ☐ Patient
- ☐ Persuasive
- ☐ Pleasant
- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Tactful
- ☐ Understanding

PRACTICAL SKILLS

- ☐ Assemble / build things
- ☐ Construct or repair
- ☐ Drive or operate vehicles
- ☐ Follow instructions
- ☐ Good time management
- ☐ Good with my hands
- ☐ Operate tools / machinery
- ☐ Safety conscious
- ☐ Use equipment

DATA SKILLS

- ☐ Analyse data or facts
- ☐ Audit records
- ☐ Balance money
- ☐ Calculate
- ☐ Classify data
- ☐ Compare or record facts
- ☐ Counting or compiling
- ☐ Research
- ☐ Stock taking
- ☐ Working with detail

CREATIVE, ARTISTIC

- ☐ Artistic
- ☐ Dance, body movement
- ☐ Draw
- ☐ Expressive
- ☐ Music appreciation
- ☐ Perform
- ☐ Play instruments
- ☐ Present artistic ideas

USING WORDS AND IDEAS

- ☐ Accurate
- ☐ Articulate
- ☐ Create new ideas
- ☐ Design skills
- ☐ Editing
- ☐ Innovative
- ☐ Logical
- ☐ Remember information
- ☐ Research
- ☐ Understanding the bigger picture

LEADERSHIP

- ☐ Arrange social functions
- ☐ Decisive
- ☐ Delegate
- ☐ Direct projects
- ☐ Empowering others
- ☐ Explaining things to others
- ☐ Mediation
- ☐ Motivate people
- ☐ Negotiation
- ☐ Plan
- ☐ Run meetings
- ☐ Share leadership
- ☐ Solve problems
- ☐ Take risks
- ☐ Think of others



VOLUNTARY WORK

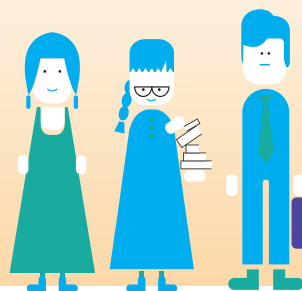
Volunteering can be personally rewarding and helps you contribute to your community. It can also give you a better chance of getting paid work, improving your career prospects or getting a place at university.

Benefits of volunteering

- **Decision making:** Voluntary work is an excellent opportunity to help you decide the type of career you wish to follow, no matter what your circumstances are.
- **Making friends:** It is a great way of meeting new people whilst in a working environment.
- **Confidence building:** Volunteering work can be quite challenging and a useful way of developing skills, which in turn can increase confidence and self esteem.
- **Improving your CV:** Employers recognise the value of voluntary work experience. It can demonstrate initiative, commitment, motivation and the ability to work well as part of a team.

- **Networking:** Voluntary work can help you network with others who might be in a position to turn your voluntary work into a paid career. It may be an opportunity to get the work experience you need to get a job.
- **Take on a challenge:** It can be a real challenge to take on something new. Volunteering can help you achieve your personal goals.
- **Making a difference:** Many people get great satisfaction from being able to help others who are less fortunate than themselves.
- **There are even health benefits too:** It can give you an increased sense of physical and mental well-being.

Voluntary work is not something to take on lightly and you should ask yourself a number of questions before you decide to go ahead and make a commitment.



VOLUNTARY WORK

- **Time commitments:** Consider how much time you can give, taking into account your other responsibilities such as work, study, sport or family. Can you make a regular commitment? Volunteering can vary from a few hours to a full time commitment. Be realistic about how much time you can spare.
- **Consider your skills:** Assess your skills and find out which organisations could make good use of them while giving you experience which will help your career aspirations. There are many voluntary positions which require no special skills or talents and many more where training would be provided.
- **Travel and costs:** If the location of the organisation is not on your doorstep, think about how you are going to get there and how much it is going to cost.

Further Information

Useful information on volunteering can be found at

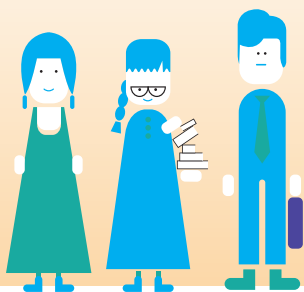
www.nidirect.gov.uk/volunteering

For details of volunteering opportunities in your area, visit the Volunteer Now website at **www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/becoming-volunteer**.

The Millennium Volunteers national programme is designed to promote and recognise volunteering among young people aged 14 to 25. Details can be found at the following website

www.youngcitizens.volunteernow.co.uk/millennium-volunteers

For information on volunteering opportunities abroad, visit **www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/voluntary-work-abroad**



NOTES



My Careers Adviser is:

and is based in:

Telephone:

Email:

