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A project led by the:

Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership

Which path is right for you?

There are five main options after school or college:

Full-time education

You can study at a sixth form, college or with a training provider.

This option might suit you if you are planning to go to university.

Apprenticeships

These are available in many different careers, such as beauty consultant, mechanical engineer or chef.

Traineeships

Not ready for an apprenticeship? A traineeship can help you get the knowledge, skills and experience to get on an apprenticeship.

This option might suit you if you want to start work, earn money or get a job-related qualification.

Jobs with training

You can work or volunteer full-time after Year 11 but must also study or train at the same time.

University

A university course gives you the opportunity to gain valuable skills and a qualification.

This pathway is ideal for someone who wants to continue their academic studies.

You decide which option is best for you.

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Challenge 3:

Imagine it!

TAKING THE NEXT STEPS

Did you know?

Employers spend on average 5-7 seconds looking at a CV, so it's vital that your application stands out.

Imagine it! gives you the tools you need to tackle real-life scenarios related to your future ambitions.

Imagine applying to a college, sixth form or higher education institute, creating a personal statement, establishing examples of key skills or even being interviewed. You might not be involved in this level of challenge just yet, but why not have a go and start preparing now.

The elements of an epic personal statement

A personal statement gives people an insight into who you are. The clue is in the name; it has to be 'personal'.

Your personal statement will be read by teachers, further education providers, careers advisors or employers.

Here are a few important things to include in your personal statement:

Talk about the subjects that you are studying that are relevant to your next subject choices.

Briefly mention subjects that you have achieved particularly high marks in.

Talk about things that you have done additionally to your classroom learning: coursework, extended projects, hobbies etc.

Tell the reader about your likes and the subjects you enjoy – why do they capture your attention?

Mention any personal achievements or things that make you proud of yourself.

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Have a look at the following extracts from personal statements. See if you can spot examples of the previous list that will attract the attention of the intended reader. Can you guess the type of subject or career they are working towards?

CLICK HERE TO SEE THE KEY PARTS THAT ATTRACT ATTENTION

#1

As a violinist, I am part of the school orchestra and the violin quartet. Outside of school, I currently play in the Youth Orchestra. I am passionate about music in general and see it as an opportunity to expand my creativity. I enjoy collaborating with other musicians to create something memorable. I have also completed a media studies module in film studies, which has given me the inspiration to one day be involved in the musical side of film and television production.

#2

I hope to do well in my GCSEs. I enjoy creative writing and writing for a specific formal purpose; I also enjoy doing things where you have to use logic and solve problems. That is why I joined the Young Enterprise Team in school. I had to develop an advertising campaign and persuade people to buy our products. My passion for writing means that my favourite subject is English, but I also enjoy maths because I thrive under pressure and enjoy solving equations.

#3

I recently completed a work experience placement working with elderly people in a residential home. I chose this placement because my passion is helping and caring for people. I'm currently studying a health and social GCSE, which is teaching me everything I need to know about problem solving, prioritising, organisation and social care. My science GCSEs have been useful in helping me understand the physiological side of health and social care, which opens my future career to roles like a paramedic.

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Building your personal statement

Now that you've seen a few examples that incorporate the key elements of a successful statement, it's time to understand and piece together your own examples.

Subjects currently studied – Art, English, IT

Subjects achieved highly in – 100% in IT coursework

Skills that certain subjects have given you – English has improved written communication

Skills that you have acquired through education – Able to work to a time limit

Optional activity

If you want to take this task to the next level, try to put all of your examples into a fully written personal statement.

Activities outside of the classroom – Creating make-up tutorial videos

Books, magazines, websites or courses – Subscription to a creative writing magazine

Subjects you enjoy – why do they capture your attention?
– Maths because it is full of problems to be solved

Things that make you proud of yourself (within school or outside of school) – Thoroughly preparing for mock exams and seeing the hard work pay off

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Putting your skills to the test

'Can you give me an example of a time when...'

This question comes up frequently in interviews, job applications and higher education statements (to name just a few). Understanding the purpose of this question is simple. It's not enough to simply SAY that you have excellent communication skills, you need to PROVE that you do.

See if you can give an example from your own life for each of the following skills. Try to use the STAR technique to help you.

Situation – What was the situation you faced?

Task – What tasks were involved?

Action – What actions did you take?

Results – What were the results?

Did you know?

The Leeds City Region has the largest number of universities outside of London.

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The following are key skills that many employers and higher education providers in our region have identified as being important skills to have:

- Communication
- Planning
- Leadership
- Creativity
- Problem solving
- Teamwork
- Organisation
- Time management

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Putting your skills to the test

Communication (verbal and written)	Leadership
Situation: Task: Action: Results:	Situation: Task: Action: Results:
Problem solving	**Organisation**
Situation: Task: Action: Results:	Situation: Task: Action: Results:

Putting your skills to the test

Planning	Creativity
Situation: Task: Action: Results:	Situation: Task: Action: Results:
Teamwork	**Time management**
Situation: Task: Action: Results:	Situation: Task: Action: Results:

The interview

Step 1: Doing your research. Being prepared.

Let's imagine that you have applied for a place at a college, sixth form, apprenticeship or a part-time job with a company. Now imagine that they received your personal statement, learnt lots about you and have decided to invite you for an interview.

Don't worry. You've got this; you're well prepared.

A common question asked during an interview is **'Do you have any questions for us?'** – this is a perfect time to show that you've researched the college, sixth form, apprenticeship or company.

Use the internet to research and fill out information for the following.

Organisation research

E.g. size of business, progression, additional opportunities, values, history of organisation.

Example questions

Add in example questions you will ask at the end of an interview using this research.

The interview

Step 2: In the hot seat.

Did you know?

We have 9 universities and 14 higher education colleges as well as lots of degree apprenticeship opportunities across the region.

Now comes the exciting part. It's time to stop imagining and take the next step.

Find somewhere quiet to sit, click on our 'In the hot seat' film and prepare to be 'interviewed'.

When a question appears, you'll also see a timer. You need to give your answer before the timer runs out.

At the end of the interview, you'll be asked if you have any questions and this is the perfect time to put your organisation or education provider research into action (there is no time limit for this).

What's next?

Within this challenge you will have progressed through the following career-focused stages:

self – reflected on your own skills

opportunities – researched and explored your options

decisions – taking responsibility for the impact and outcomes for yourself

transitions – put your preparation into action

As part of this challenge, you will have demonstrated and developed the following skills:

problem-solving – evaluating your own skillset and creating personal examples

research – learning all there is to know about a specific organisation or education provider

creativity – taking part in a mock interview

These are great skills to learn and develop before looking at progression after school and moving into sectors like:

There are many opportunities within West Yorkshire that span across each of these sectors.

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Need more inspiration?

College, sixth form, apprenticeships. If you're not sure which route is right for you, head to our 'Education and Training' page to find out about each route and the opportunities available.

futuregoals.co.uk/education-and-training

Have a quick look at our 'Inspirational Wall' by visiting the FutureGoals website. Here, you'll hear from a variety of people currently working in each sector and find out information about each industry and the key skills needed. You'll also find further opportunities to develop your own personal skillset.

futuregoals.co.uk/be-inspired

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Working in partnership with the

West Yorkshire Combined Authority