Next Steps South West

Lesson Plan – Choosing a Degree Course

Session Name:	Choosing a HE Course KS5	**Duration:** 60-minute workshop
Description:	Help students to choose the correct Higher Education course for them.	
Main Objectives:	Increased understanding of HE pathways and personally relevant options.	
Gatsby Benchmark:	Gatsby 3 and 7	
Aim 1	Consider what is important to you when deciding what and where to study	
Aim 2	Know how and where to research more information about university and college courses	
Aim 3	Plan some next steps to help you choose a Degree course	
Differentiation:	If students do not want to go to university, they can use the session to make decisions about employment or other education such as apprenticeships. The diamond nine activity is beneficial to all and could be adapted for anyone not wishing to go to university. Students could use this to consider how to choosing an apprenticeship programme or to seek employment.	
Classroom Layout:	FE College or school sixth – form classroom with desktop computers, laptops, tablets or I – Pads. Can be delivered without student access to technology.	
Resources:	PowerPoint Presentation Lesson Plan – Choosing an HE Course KS5 Evaluation – Choosing an HE Course Worksheet – Activities 1 - 3 University websites University prospectuses https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/choosing-undergraduate-course www.whatuni.com https://discoveruni.gov.uk https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/courses	
Key Vocabulary:	UCAS, HE/FE, BA, FdSc, FdA, HND, HNC, Apprenticeships, Degree Apprenticeships, etc, modules, pathways.	
Content and Time:	**Description:**	**Location:**
Introduction (3 mins)	Introduce yourself and the session. Safety and Safeguarding Briefing Explain to students what the session learning objectives are PPT 1-3 Introduce the Student Ambassadors (if you have them) and ask them to talk about their own choices, what they study and why they chose their HE provider / Course (after slide 3).	PowerPoint link: https://nextstepssw.ac.uk/content/uploads/2025/04/Presentation-KS5-Choosing-a-Degree-Course-formatted-2025.pptx PPT 1-3

Quiz (5 mins)	HE Quiz Get students to use their white boards to write the answers. If these are not available, ask them to raise hands or write them in a workbook. Answers on the next slide (they come up together, not question by question.	PPT 4/5
Types of HE Qualifications (5 mins)	See notes on PPT. Talk through this slide to raise awareness of different HE courses. Use student ambassadors and your own experience where possible. Use slide 9 to raise awareness of the pathways to HE and the crossover between them.	PPT 6-9
Where to Start? (5 mins)	To start off, get the students to consider the different factors that a prospective student will need to consider when choosing a degree course. They can do this in pairs and they can use the white boards to write down their answers. Emphasise that it can be an overwhelming process but it can be manageable when they start to consider and narrow down what is important to them. Depending on the group, get them to share and discuss their results as a group.	PPT 10
Things to Consider (10 mins)	One by one, go through each factor and expand on each as they appear. Explain why each one could be a factor and what type of things they could be considering for each. Emphasise that factors can differ between different people in order of importance and value and that they will be spending at least three years at that institution if they choose a degree; so they will need to choose somewhere that they are happy. If you have an ambassador with you ask them about their factors and what their process was when choosing the right degree course for them.	PPT 11
Activity 1 - Diamond 9 (10 mins)	Print or use the interactive worksheet for the diamond nine slide (PPT 11) activity. Direct students to complete. Ask the students to give some feedback on what they could consider when choosing a course or university using slide 10.	PPT 12 Worksheet –Activity 2 and 3
How to Research (5 mins)	Go through ways they can research their next steps. Use the slides to explain UCAS and how it can be used as a research tool. Highlight how courses can differ depending on institution; the same subject may have different content and focus depending on which institution they are looking at. Looking at the modules is one way of comparing these. Encourage students to gauge how they are feeling as they research different courses, this can help them identify which courses may meet their needs.	PPT 13,14
Unibuddy (2 mins)	Signpost Unibuddy and how they can use it on different university websites.	PPT 15

Mind Mapping (10 mins)	Ask students to complete activity 2 on the worksheet. Alternatively, you could use flip chart paper and marker pens for this activity and divide the students into smaller groups. They could then present their ideas to each other in a fun and interactive way. Try to get everyone in the group to contribute and develop a discussion about the points on the slide – if you have student ambassadors present ask them how they selected their course and University. You could also use yourself as an example.	PPT 16
What Next? (2 mins)	Talk through students' next steps including any they come up with. Emphasise that this is an important choice that no one can make for them. They will need to put in some time to research properly before making a decision.	PPT 17
Any questions (3 mins)	Go through the reminder/check in questions with the students. On slide 19 Students can scan the QR code to go to the NSSW page to read a blog on choosing a course.	PPT 18-19
Further Reading / Suggested Links:	Show slide 1 – Allow students to take photos or write down the websites.	