

Changing or leaving your course

Plans can change for all sorts of reasons. Careers and Placements can support you to explore your options and develop a positive plan for the future.

This information sheet provides initial advice about:

- Leave of absence
- Changing course
- Leaving or failing a course
- Alternatives to university

For individual advice, you may book an appointment with a Careers Consultant on [Handshake](#).

When reviewing your career goals or education plans, there are certain factors to consider:

- Strengths and skills
- Values and motivations
- Interests
- Work style and personality
- Long term aims

We can help you to review these and explore career or educational areas which may be a good fit for you. You can start this process by reading the ['Explore' section](#) of our website.

Leave of Absence

Students may take a leave of absence for a variety of reasons, including personal or health reasons, or reassessments. We can advise you on how to make the most of your leave of absence and opportunities which may be open to you while you are away from university.

You can still get help from us during your leave of absence. We can offer support in person, by telephone, email or video call. Book an appointment or send us a message using [Handshake](#).

Taking a break from your studies should not disadvantage your application for employment or further study, however, you may be required to give details. If you are writing about a leave of absence on an application, keep it short and factual. Talk to us if you're not sure how to approach this.

Changing Course

Read the [University guidelines for changing your plan](#).

If you're thinking about changing your course, consider:

- What will you enjoy?
- What are you good at?
- What could the course lead on to?
- What is the learning and assessment style?
- Are there any industry links?
- Level of study, eg higher national diploma, bachelors, masters
- Funding

Your academic supervisor may be a good person to speak to about your progress, and they should be kept informed about your decisions.

If you plan to change to a different course, you should speak to the admissions tutor to find out whether the study you have already undertaken could exempt you from some of the course (eg find out whether you could join the course at the start of the second year). This process is called Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). Course providers will have guidelines about how to assess APL, but the decisions are made on a case by case basis.

Ensure that you are clear about the financial implications of changing course. For advice, speak to the [Student Hub](#).

Leaving or failing your course

No matter what the final outcome of your course is, there will be a lot of ways in which you have grown and developed. Think about what you have gained from your time at York, including:

- knowledge
- skills
- experience
- self-awareness

You are in control of how you describe your experiences, so think about what you have achieved and consider how you wish to present this to friends, family, employers or other universities. We can also help you to present your achievements on CVs, applications and in interviews.

An academic transcript will give you a breakdown of the marks you have achieved in your degree. Some employers and course providers will ask to see this. You may choose to share it with potential employers to provide evidence of areas in which you achieved highly. You can [request your academic transcript](#) online.

Depending on how much of your course you have completed, you could look at job vacancies requiring A-levels, a HND or a degree. Read the [student guide to the progression and award](#) in undergraduate programmes.

Alternatives to university

You may decide that you would prefer to work rather than study full time. Options include:

- Full time employment
- Apprenticeship
- Part time study or distance learning
- Volunteering

You can find out more about apprenticeships and alternatives to university on these web pages:

- [Not going to Uni](#)
- [Government information on apprenticeships](#)
- [UCAS information on higher apprenticeships](#)
- [National Careers Service](#)

If you need support, there are teams at the University that can help you:

- Careers information and advice from [Careers and Placements](#)
- Advice on topics like money, housing, personal issues and academic progress from the [Student Hub](#), the [Advice & Support Centre run by YUSU](#) and [college wellbeing teams](#)
- Psychological or mental health support from [Open Door](#)

Please note: The websites listed here are not intended to represent a comprehensive list. Careers and Placements cannot be held responsible for the content of external websites.