the WOW factor

Unit One What are my Options?
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Resources
Useful Websites
Aim

In this unit, pupils take part in activities that involve researching information about further education, training and career options available to them. They learn the importance of using relevant information and guidance to make informed career plans.
Unit Overview

Mapped to the Statutory Statements
Pupils should be enabled to:
- develop a career plan based on relevant information and guidance.

Learning Intentions
Pupils learn that:
- career planning is important and helps pupils recognise and achieve their goals;
- there is a range of ways to achieve qualifications; and
- there is a range of ways to achieve different careers.

Success Criteria
At the end of this unit, pupils will:
- understand the importance of career planning;
- be able to describe some of the options available to them post-16;
- know the differences between the various options; and
- be able to identify some of the options they are interested in.

Employability Skills Focus

This unit allows pupils to develop the skills that meet the statutory requirements of the revised curriculum at Key Stage 4. The focus within this unit is outlined below:

Problem-solving
(including thinking, decision-making and being creative)
- Examining the pros and cons of various options available and evaluating the outcomes of the options for a range of different individuals

Key Questions
Throughout this unit, encourage pupils to consider the following questions:
- What different pathways are available to me to follow different careers?
- Do I need to know what career I want to pursue now?
- In what career direction do I want to progress?
- How many ways are there to achieve my career goals?
Learning and Teaching Activities within this Unit

**Theme 1**
**I Wish I Had Known Sooner**
Pupils consider the importance of planning key transitions throughout their lives. Guest speakers allow the class to learn about the outcomes of different life-choices.

**Theme 2**
**Career Planning**
Pupils explore the key elements in the career planning process.

**Theme 3**
**Options**
Pupils research and explore the range of options available to them to help them progress their post-16 choices. They also consider ways to present their findings.

**Theme 4**
**Making Post-16 Choices**
Pupils examine in further detail some of the factors that must be considered when making post-16 choices.

At this stage, pupils have a good understanding of the post-16 options available to them. Now they need time to think about which options they are interested in and the pros and cons of those options.

**Theme 5**
**Comparing Post-16 Choices**
In this activity, pupils use what they have learned to express their views and opinions about the wide range of post-16 options available to them.

**Theme 6**
**Help Me Decide**
Pupils take on the role of Careers Advisors and explore further education and training opportunities.
Pupils consider the importance of planning key transitions throughout their lives. Guest speakers allow the class to learn about the outcomes of different life-choices.

Support Materials for Activities
- Plus, Minus, Interesting (PMI) Template (Resource 1)
- Flip chart and paper
- Coloured markers

Activity 1
Initiate a class discussion about the pupils’ experiences of change/transition. Possible topics for the discussion include:

- moving from primary school to post-primary school; and/or
- choosing post-14 subjects.

Divide the class into small groups of three or four. Ask each group to appoint a recorder and a reporter. The groups must then make a list of the things they wish they had known sooner about the change/transition. The recorder lists their findings onto a flip chart page.

Next invite each reporter to present their group’s list to the class.

Finally, as a class discuss:
- what issues are common to most groups?
- what issues are unique to individual groups and why?
- in what ways could the decision-making process have been improved? (for example, being better informed)

Activity 2 – Extension opportunity
Organise visits from a number of people in the local community and invite them to share their experiences of life-changing decision-making. Include people who study and/or work in a range of settings. Ask them to share their ‘what I wish I had known sooner’ list.

As a class, discuss how some of the issues/factors/feelings described by the guest speakers are similar or different to those described by the class.
Activity 3 – Follow up

Distribute a copy of the *Plus, Minus, Interesting (PMI)* Template to each pupil. Explain to pupils that this template helps them evaluate an issue and make decisions by allowing them to compare advantages and disadvantages.

Ask pupils to complete the *PMI Template* following what they have learnt about making transitional choices. In the Plus column, pupils must record all the positive things they have learned about making decisions. In the Minus column, pupils record all the negative things they have learned about decision-making. In the Interesting column, they record things that are neither positive nor negative, but are interesting.

Below is a list of possible entries in the *PMI Template*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Try to get as much information as possible about all the different options.</td>
<td>- Don’t make a decision based on what my friends are doing.</td>
<td>- Sometimes even the ‘wrong’ decisions can work out ok.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Write down the pros and cons of different decisions.</td>
<td>- Don’t make snap decisions.</td>
<td>- Give yourself permission to change your mind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make your own decisions – they will affect your life.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, as a whole class, discuss the findings in the completed *PMI Templates.*
Pupils explore the key elements in the career planning process.

**Support Materials for Activities**
- Career Mind Map (Resource 2)
- Flip charts for each group
- Coloured markers

**Activity 1**
Divide the class into small groups of four to five individuals. Ask each group to appoint a recorder and a reporter. Give the groups a few minutes to carry out a thought shower – have them identify the factors they need to consider when career planning.

After the group discussion, invite each group’s reporter to present their group’s thoughts to the entire class. List the thoughts of all of the groups onto a flip chart page.

Organise the thoughts under the following headings:
- Qualifications;
- Experience;
- Research;
- CV;
- Job searching skills; and
- Building useful contacts.

**Activity 2**
Ask pupils to remain in the same groups. Explain the concept and benefits of mind mapping. Distribute the Career Mind Map to each group. Allow groups time to examine and discuss the Career Mind Map.

Next allocate a different job to each group for example:

- Group 1 accountant;
- Group 2 teacher;
- Group 3 engineer;
- Group 4 plumber; and
- Group 5 nurse.

Alternatively, invite groups to choose their own job. Ask each group to create a mind map to help plan their allocated career. For example Group 1 must produce a mind map for someone interested in a career in accountancy.

Ask groups to record at least two planning activities under the following headings:
- Qualifications;
- Experience;
- Research;
- CV;
- Job searching skills; and
- Building useful contacts.

When the groups have completed this task, ask the reporters to present their group’s mind map to the whole class. Display each group’s mind map with the whole class.
Pupils research and explore the range of options available to them to help them progress their post-16 choices. They also consider ways to present their findings.

Support Materials for Activities
- Know/Want to Know/Learned (KWL) Template (Resource 3)
- Post-16 Option Cards (Resource 4)
- Post-16 Options Research Template (Resource 5)
- Sticky labels
- Coloured markers
- Flip chart and paper

Activity 1
Ask the whole class to take a few minutes to think about the post-16 options available to them. Organise the class into pairs. Ask them to share their ideas about what their post-16 options are.

Ask each pair of pupils to team up with another pair to form a group of four. Direct the newly formed groups to record all the options they know about onto sticky labels. Spend a few minutes sharing these ideas with the whole class.

Explain to pupils that there are many choices open to them when they are 16 years old, for example:
- continue at school;
- go to College of Further and Higher Education;
- go into employment; and/or
- start vocational training.

Activity 2
Display a KWL Template on a flip chart.

Ask pupils to remain in their group of four. Distribute a set of Post-16 Option Cards, coloured markers and sticky labels to each group of pupils. Ask pupils to discuss the Post-16 Option Cards. Then ask pupils to individually record what they know about the options onto sticky labels.

Invite pupils to share their knowledge with the class by placing their sticky labels in the ‘K’ column of the KWL Template.

Ask pupils to then record on another sticky label some of the things they would like to know about their post-16 options. Share this information with the class by inviting pupils to place their sticky label on the W column of the KWL Template.

As a class collate all the options listed in the W column and plan how these can be researched.

Activity 3
Distribute a Post-16 Options Research Template to small groups of pupils. Alternatively allow them to design their own research template that meets their needs and wants.

Allow pupils access to the internet and careers library so they can research their questions. Invite pupils to present their findings to the class.

Provide time for pupils to record what they have learned onto sticky labels. Share this feedback with the class by inviting pupils to place their sticky labels in the L column of the KWL Template.
Pupils examine in further detail some of the factors that must be considered when making post-16 choices.

At this stage, pupils have a good understanding of the post-16 options available to them. Now they need time to think about which options they are interested in and the pros and cons of those options.

Support Materials for Activity
- PMI Template (Resource 1)
- Consider all Factors Template sized for flip chart (Resource 6)
- Flip chart paper
- Coloured markers

Activity 1
Display a copy of the Consider all Factors Template on a flip chart at the front of the class. As a class, discuss what factors pupils need to think about to help them decide on a post-16 option. Encourage pupils to think about the pros and cons of different options. Collectively fill in the Consider all Factors Template.

Divide the class into four groups. Appoint one of the following options to each group:
- taking on an apprenticeship;
- getting a job;
- going to a college of further and higher education; and
- going to university.

Ask each group to complete a PMI Template for their option. Rotate the completed templates to other groups and encourage pupils to add additional comments. Invite each group to present their findings to the whole class.
Theme 5
Comparing Post-16 Options

In this activity, pupils use what they have learned to express their views and opinions about the wide range of post-16 options available to them.

Activity 1
Initiate a class discussion in which pupils talk about what they have learnt. Explain that different people choose different options – and that there are many different ways to progress to different careers.

Divide the class into four groups. Ask each group to appoint a facilitator, a recorder and a reporter. Give each group one of the following headings:
- Staying at School vs. Getting a Job;
- College of Further and Higher Education vs. Apprenticeships;
- College of Further and Higher Education vs. Sixth Form College; and
- Apprenticeships vs. Going to University.

Ask groups to discuss their heading and highlight the benefits and drawbacks of each option.

Distribute three straws to each pupil. Each straw represents one turn to voice their opinion. When they make a comment they must hand over one straw to the facilitator. The facilitator must ensure that the other members of the group listen to the speaker’s opinion. The recorder must record all the important comments onto the flip chart. It’s a good idea for the recorder to organise comments under headings such as pros, cons, advantages, disadvantages and/or interesting points.

When groups have finished their discussion, invite the reporters to present their group’s findings to the whole class. Allow some time for general comments from the class.

Support Materials for Activity
- Flip chart paper
- Coloured markers
- 3 x straws per pupil

Opportunity for Assessment for Learning!
Using prompt statements

It is sometimes a good idea to give each group a prompt to help kick-start the discussion. Some prompts are listed below:

“Staying at school gives pupils more time to consider their career options”.
“Apprenticeships allow pupils to learn on the job and earn while they learn”.
“Colleges of Further and Higher Education allow pupils to study to degree level without having to move away from home”.
“Universities offer a vast range of courses”.

Using prompt statements
Pupils take on the role of Careers Advisors and explore further education and training opportunities.

Pupils need access to the internet and/or the careers library for this activity.

Support Materials for Activities
- Case Studies (Resource 7)
- Pupil Reflection Record (Resource 8)
- Paper and pens
- College and university prospectuses
- Brochures and leaflets on apprenticeships and government schemes
- Internet access

Activity 1
Divide the class into four groups. Distribute one case study to each group. Alternatively create your own case studies that are more relevant to the needs of the class.

Inform groups that they must take on the role of advisors to the pupils in the case study. Ask groups to read and discuss the case study and decide what they need to do to be able to answer the questions posed. Give groups a timeframe for their investigation work.

Ask groups to allocate group roles and agree who is responsible for different parts of the investigation. Also ask the group to think about ways in which they will present their findings.

After completing the investigation work, invite each group to present their case study and advice to the rest of the class.

Activity 2
Distribute a copy of the Pupil Reflection Record to each pupil. Encourage pupils to read the Pupil Reflection Record and think about their learning to date. Invite pupils to take part in a group discussion to share their learning with each other.

It might be useful to record feedback from individual pupils in their Progress File.
Plus, Minus, Interesting (PMI) Template
Achieve good GCSE results.

Select relevant subjects for A Level.

Achieve high enough grades to enter physiotherapy course at university.

Obtain physiotherapy degree.

Continue to take courses to keep up to speed with new developments in physiotherapy.

Organise one weeks work shadowing with a local physiotherapist in sixth form.

Offer to assist a local sports physiotherapist by attending games with him/her to observe what is involved.

Complete work placement as part of physiotherapy degree.

Carry out research into the qualifications (A Level subjects, grade requirements etc...) needed to become a physiotherapist. Use the Internet, university prospectus etc...

Research the different types of roles a physiotherapist can have e.g hospital rehabilitation, private practice etc...

Gain as many useful certificates as possible e.g First Aid to help my career.

Attend CV skills workshops at school and university to find out what skills employers are looking for.

Include involvement in sports teams in my CV to illustrate team work, leadership, discipline etc...

Develop job search skills.

Make contact with local physiotherapists to find out what the job involves, possibly arrange work experience or placements.

Speak to my cousin who is currently at university studying physiotherapy to seek his advice.

Through my involvement in playing football, build useful contacts in my own club/other clubs who may prove useful in the future.

My career plan

Job search skills

Contacts

Qualifications

Experience

Research

Career Mind Map
### Know/Want to Know/Learned (KWL) Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Know (K)</th>
<th>Want to Know (W)</th>
<th>Learned (L)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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**Education for Employability - Year 11 Resource**

The WOW Factor - Unit 1: What are my Options?
### Post-16 Option Cards

| Most young people who stay on at school after sitting GCSEs take GCE A Levels (either General or Applied). |
| There are specialist colleges in Northern Ireland, such as the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE). |

| Apprenticeships are a mixture of work-based training and education. |
| Some young people go to university after they have completed their studies in sixth form at school or at a College of Further and Higher Education. |

| Universities provide a wide range of courses. Entry requirements depend on the course of study. |
| There are many websites that offer support and advice to pupils regardless of the career/education choices they make aged 16 and beyond. |
There are two universities in Northern Ireland: Queen’s University, Belfast and The University of Ulster.

Pupils who complete apprenticeships can go on to complete a degree if they acquire the necessary entry points.

There are two university colleges that offer teacher training courses in Northern Ireland; St Mary’s University College and Stranmillis University College.

Universities Central Admissions Service (UCAS) is the central organisation that processes applications for full-time undergraduate courses at UK universities and colleges.

Central Applications Office (CAO) is the central organisation that processes applications for full-time undergraduate courses in Ireland’s universities and colleges.

A very small percentage of young people leave school at 16 and get a job.
Volunteering is an excellent way to gain new employability skills and make new contacts.

Colleges of Further and Higher Education (FE) offer a wide range of full and part-time courses.

You can get up-to-date information on government initiatives from the Department of Employment and Learning website and the Careers Northern Ireland website.

After further study some people take ‘gap’ years. A properly planned ‘gap’ year can be excellent for gaining employability skills.

You may be able to claim an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) if you decide to study NVQ’s, AS Levels or A Levels.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where can I find about...?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AS and A Level qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges of Further and Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where can I find about...?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government training programmes for example, Training for Success and New Deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled workers’ rights and programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Post-16 Options Research Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where can I find about...?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education Maintenance Allowance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking a Gap Year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Consider all Factors Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
<th>Interesting Factors</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
<th>Interesting Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
After discussions of all the factors we think that...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting Factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...
Case Study 1

NAME: DAVID
AGE: 16 YEARS OLD
HOME: ENNISKILLEN

“I really need your advice. I am mad about sport. I play football competitively with my school and local club and have even become involved in coaching some of the younger members at our local youth club on a Friday night. This summer I will be working in my local leisure centre helping out with their sports summer scheme. I would really love to work in a sports related role after completing my GCSEs. I am unsure what my next move should be and what potential career/further study options might be open to me”.

Over to you... Key Questions

- What potential career opportunities are open to David?
- Is there a qualification that David needs to achieve?
- Where can David get career advice?
Case Study 2

NAME: HELEN  AGE: 16 YEARS OLD  HOME: COLERAINE

“Help me out if you can! I currently work at weekends as a sales adviser in a clothes shop in my home town. I really enjoy the job and in particular dealing with customers. I get a real buzz from helping them to make the right choices. The store manager, Sarah told me that she has been really impressed with my work and has offered me a full-time position in the store whenever I finish my GCSEs. She told me that there are great opportunities for promotion if I work hard enough not only within the local shop but also throughout the wider branch of shops throughout Northern Ireland. I love the idea of earning my own money but I want to make sure that this is the right decision for me.”

Over to you... Key Questions

- What are the advantages of accepting Sarah’s offer?
- What are the possible disadvantages of accepting Sarah’s offer?
- Is there a possible solution where she can have the best of both worlds?
- Where can Helen go for advice?
“I really need your help in helping me to decide what to do next. Earlier this year, I spent a week on work experience in a busy hospital. I saw lots of jobs that really interested me but have since then decided I would like to study physiotherapy. I am currently preparing for my GCSEs and am studying all three sciences – biology is definitely my strongest subject. I know that in order to qualify as a physiotherapist I need a degree in physiotherapy and, therefore, need to get good grades in my AS/A Levels.”

Over to you...Key Questions

- Are there any specific subjects Claire needs to study in Years 13/14?
- What qualifications does she need to become a physiotherapist and where could she study?
- Where can Claire go for advice?
- Access a range of university guides, such as, Times Good University Guide or the Guardian University League Table and choose four universities that offer Claire the course of her choice. For each, describe why these might be good choices for Claire.
Case Study 4

NAME: MARK  AGE: 16 YEARS OLD  HOME: NEWRY

“I hope that you can help me. For as long as I can remember I have enjoyed gardening. I love finding out about and growing plants. At weekends and during school holidays I mow lawns and do gardening for a number of people in my area. I want to be my own boss and know that every hour I work is for my own benefit. I would love to open my own gardening business in the future and know that I can make it work. I am good with computers and think garden design might be of interest to me as well. I know that people who have good qualifications are more successful entrepreneurs so I am determined to complete my course in horticulture. I don’t know what my options are after that.”

Over to you... Key Questions

- Provide details of some organisations that may be able to advise Mark on how to start the business?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of starting a business?
- If Mark was to meet up with an entrepreneur what questions should he ask?
Pupil Reflection Record

What important issues have you learned about making choices and career planning?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

Why is it important for you to remember these?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

What post-16 options are of interest to you now and why?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
Describe the career planning activities you have taken part in during this unit. (Examples might include reading, watching videos, carrying out research, giving presentations and/or learning from others.)

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________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________

List one or two areas of work you want to learn more about or gain more exposure to.
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Signed: ______________________________________________________________________

Teacher: ______________________________________________________________________

Parent: ______________________________________________________________________
Useful Websites

To access the most up-to-date support materials for Education for Employability, log on to www.ccea.org.uk/employability