



| Choosing your A-Levels

A Guide to Your Next Steps Towards
University



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Introduction

Moving to Year 12 is an exciting but daunting prospect. It's probably the first time in your life where you can take real control of what you study and where you study. It is a time that will be intellectually challenging and introduce you to some big ideas and fascinating opportunities. After GCSEs nothing is inevitable or set out for you; what happens next really depends on what you want to do and where you want to go. Choosing your A-levels is an important step in determining your future path, because the A-level subjects you study will play a crucial role in your university application

Things to Consider when Choosing your A-Levels

What are your aspirations?

You may already have a clear idea of the degree or job you want to do, in which case choosing your A-levels might be easy. But if you're unsure you may want to choose A-levels that keep your degree options open.

What are your talents?

It's important that you enjoy studying your A-levels but grades are an important factor too -

the higher your grades, the more options you have to choose from in future. Think about how you did in your GCSEs and choose subjects that allow you to achieve to the best of your ability.

What are your interests?

This has to be balanced with your talents, but as you study each A-level subject in such depth and detail, it really helps to have a strong interest the subject, as this will help you stay motivated.

What new things might you discover?

One of the most exciting things about A-level study is you might get the chance to study a subject you have never even heard of before. Take the time to research unfamiliar subjects because you may find a new passion in life.

What do you need?

If you have a clear idea of what you would like to do after A-levels you may need to study specific subjects to do so. Learn about what is needed to pursue your goals and plan accordingly.



What Universities are Looking For

Applying to some universities and courses can be highly competitive and this is worth bearing in mind when choosing your A-levels. Studying the right subjects can help you to develop the skills that you will need when applying to, and studying at, university.

Some university degrees may require you to have achieved a certain grade in a specific subject in order for you to study them.

Medicine, regardless of the university and its entry requirements, will almost always require you to have A-levels in Biology and Chemistry. So anyone wishing to pursue a career in medicine must choose these subjects. Likewise, many highly numerate degree subjects will require a pass at a specific grade in A-level Maths.

However, lots of degrees don't require you to have studied any specific subjects at A-level and instead will just specify the grades you need.

apply for. They are particularly useful for developing skills in critical thinking, essay writing or problem solving. Specifically, these include: science subjects, maths, languages and humanities like English, history, or geography. This doesn't mean you shouldn't study subjects not included in this list, but if you aren't sure what you'd like to do after you've finished your A-levels, facilitating subjects will help to keep your options open.

Some A-level combinations can better prepare you for higher education depending on what you intend to study. A broad range of subjects may help you to develop the knowledge and skills needed for the wide-ranging breadth of degree study.

It's a good idea to research some of the degrees you might be interested in so that you're aware of the expectations they set. Better to do that than sign up for A-levels only to find out that they do not meet the requirements of the degree that you would like to study.

Facilitating Subjects and Subject Combinations

Facilitating subjects are A-levels that are most commonly asked for in university entry requirements, regardless of the course you



How to Find out More

Here are a few practical tips on what you can start doing to prepare for choosing your A-levels.

- Research the A-levels you are thinking of studying:
 - Find out more about the subject in general. Watch relevant documentaries and do some wider reading.
 - When researching sixth forms find out which exam board the school uses for the subject and then research its content on the exam board website. This will give you a more detailed idea of what you will be studying.
- Speak to older family and friends about their experiences of studying A-levels or even specific subjects.
- Start exploring universities and degree programmes you're considering. Check their entry requirements and whether they require specific A-levels.
- For more information visit [Informed Choices](#). This website will guide you through different options and help you make more informed decisions when it comes to planning your future.

