

Top Careers to Consider

Career Sectors	School Leaver Route?	Specialist Degree Needed?	Postgraduate Degree Needed?
Accountancy, Audit and Financial Management	Yes	No – but you will need to be mathematically minded	No – actuarial and accountancy schemes will usually allow you to gain additional qualifications alongside the job
Actuarial Industry	Yes – actuarial school leaver programmes and apprenticeships last between 4-6 years and give you the opportunity to 'earn while you learn'	Yes – ideally in a numerate subject such as mathematics, statistics or economics	No
Architecture	Yes – degree apprenticeships combine practical experience in the workplace with academic training provided by a university	Yes – architecture	No
Charity and Social Impact	Yes	No	No, unless you want to work in International Development
Civil Service	Yes – there are some public sector apprenticeships within the police, army, and civil service entry-level roles	Depends on the role – on the Fast Stream certain streams also require you to have completed a STEM-based degree, or a degree relating to social science or economics	For some streams, including Diplomatic & Development, Diplomatic and Development Economics, Government Economics Service, Government Operational Research, Government Social Research, Government Statistical Service and Science & Engineering
Consulting	Yes – there are a limited number of degree apprenticeships available	No	No
Construction and Building Services	Yes	Depending on the role	For the vast majority of roles, postgraduate degrees are not needed, but you are likely to have to attain additional qualifications after your undergraduate degree if you choose to progress into construction
Creative Industries	Yes	No, but a degree and work experience are desirable for the performing arts, music, film and TV, fashion. A degree is necessary for publishing and curating galleries and museums.	No, but desirable
Engineering and Manufacturing	Yes		No
Financial Services	Yes		No postgraduate degree needed; additional qualifications will be gained where necessary
Green Jobs	Yes for some roles – check out relevant apprenticeships or other vocational opportunities	Yes for some roles – although there are also degree-level apprenticeships available	No – but it can be a route to specialising which may help with some career roles
Hospitality, Leisure, and Tourism	Yes	No	No
Human Resources	Yes	No	No

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Insurance	Yes	Yes – STEM-based degree required	No – actuarial and accountancy schemes will usually allow you to gain additional qualifications alongside the job
Investment Banking	No	Yes – STEM-based, finance, economics and maths degrees are preferred	No
Investment Management	Yes	No	No
Journalism and Media	Yes	No	No
Law: Barrister	No – you need a degree, but not necessarily a law degree	No	Yes – you will need to complete a law conversion if you haven't done a law undergraduate degree
Law: Solicitor	Yes – it is possible to qualify as a solicitor via a solicitor apprenticeship, which takes five to six years to complete	No	Yes – you will need to complete a law conversion if you haven't done a law undergraduate degree
Marketing and Advertising	Yes	No	No
Medicine	No – a specialist degree is needed; however, some universities have 1-year long widening access programmes that Year 12/55 – 13/56 students may be eligible for	Yes – a degree in Medicine (MBChB or MBBS) is required	No – not required but studying Medicine as a post-graduate degree is a common route into the profession. Additionally, most universities offer the opportunity of an intercalated degree
Property and Real Estate	Yes – there are apprenticeship routes to becoming an estate agent	No	No
Research (Academic)	No	Yes	You will need a PhD in your chosen subject
Research and Development	Yes	Depending on the role – some employers require a STEM-based degree	No
Retail and Consumer Goods	Yes	No	No
Retail Banking	Yes	No	No
Social Work	Depends on the role – to be a social worker you have to acquire an approved qualification in social work. However, there are some jobs that school leavers can take that may assist social workers, such as administrators or receptionists in schools, children's and nursing homes, and hospitals	No	You will need a masters qualification in social work, but read on to discover some other routes to get qualified
Teaching	No – you need qualified teacher status (QTS) to teach in most state schools, and a degree is required to achieve this	No	Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) or other teaching qualification required
Technology	Yes – a number of leading technology firms have apprenticeships for school leavers. For example, IBM offer apprenticeships in software development, technical consulting and other areas	Depends on the role – you may need to do coding as part of your degree or in your spare time for the most prestigious software engineering roles	Not required, but many who work in this industry pursue a masters and PhD, applying in-depth knowledge and a logical mindset to some of the world's toughest challenges
Transport and Logistics	Yes – for example, DHL offer a degree apprenticeship in Supply Chain Management	No	No