

# Lesson 2a: What is University? (45mins)

Activity	Teaching Notes	Resources
Introduce the Session	Download and set up the PowerPoint. Using Slide 2 let the pupils know that today you will be learning more about what a university is. Remind the pupils of the previous lesson and that university was one of the pathways you discussed.	PowerPoint
Group Activity	<p>Divide the pupils into groups of 4-6. Using the PowerPoint tell the pupils that they will be taking part in a group activity. There are two ways to run this activity, either ask each group to look at all five questions or give each group one question to consider and feedback on to the rest of the class. Remind them that this is not about being right or wrong but rather what they think the answer is. Depending on the timeframe you could ask the pupils to note down bullet points or create a mind map or ask them to do a group poster of their ideas. When the pupils finish the activity go over each question as a class. If you split the questions up between different groups, start by asking the group to feedback and present their ideas, and then open the discussion up to the rest of the class. Use the PowerPoint to go over the activity. Below are some of the main points you would want to cover for each question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>What does a University look like?</b> </li> </ul> <p>The pupils' ideas may centre around the idea of a "big school" and this is fine. You can confirm that university is indeed like a big school, with lots of different students, studying different subjects and doing different classes. However, in terms of appearance use the slide to show the pupils that universities can look lots of different ways. They can be very old or very modern; they can be in the middle of a city or someone more remote; they can be spread out over lots of different buildings over a large area or several locations. The universities featured in the PowerPoints are Glasgow</p>	PowerPoint Paper/Pens

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Caledonian University, University of Glasgow, Stirling University and Strathclyde University. This is a good point to highlight to the pupils that if they want to go to university, they can pick what university they want to go to and what one they like the most.

- **Who goes to University?**

The pupils may come up with a whole array of wonderful answers e.g. smart, boring, posh, etc. You can probe the group by asking them what age they think a university student is; What do they think a typical university student might wear? Again, the pupils may come up with a full array of weird and wonderful answers. The main message that you want to get across when going over this question is that anyone can go to university if that is what they want to do and study hard to get the necessary qualifications. There is not just one type of university student. If anyone in your class thinks they want to go to university, and they work hard, they can go to university. Make sure to also highlight that you can go at any age. You can go to university when you are 17 after S5 or when you are 70. You can straight from school or decide to go when you are older and have worked in a different job.

- **Why do people go to University?**

Ask the pupils to feedback their ideas before using slide 6 to go over the answers. Most of the time pupils will focus on the idea of needing qualifications for specific jobs or career prospects which is fine. However, you also want to highlight the fact that some people may go because they want to learn more or because they really love a subject and want to learn more about it. For example, maybe when you are in secondary school you find out that you really love History or Physics and you want to learn more

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about it. This is a good point to make the pupils aware of the fact that they choose what they study at university. It is not like school where they are given a set timetable. At university they have the choice to pick the subjects that they are interested in. You can ask the pupils to think of their favourite lesson in school and imagine being able to do that all the time. Make sure to also highlight that sometimes you can do things at university that you cannot do at school and learn something new. For example, you can do university degrees in subjects like computer hacking where you learn how to stop people hacking computer systems. You also want to mention the fact that a lot of people go because they want a new experience and to meet new people. Going to university you are going to be in a new environment with people from all over the world and from different backgrounds. In Scotland there are lots of universities to choose from so you can choose to stay at home, but you might decide to go somewhere further away, and this might be the first time that you will live away from your family.

- **What do people do at a University?**

The pupils may not be entirely sure of what happens at a university. When going over this you can start with terms that the pupils will understand like 'study,' and then move on to explain university terms like 'lecture' and 'seminar.' Tell the pupils that at university you mostly learn through lectures and seminars or tutorials. For example, you could say that at university you would go to a lecture where a teacher, or lecturer as they are called at university, gives you lots of information and you take lots of notes. Later, you go to a seminar which is a small class where you and the other students in the class, discuss what you learned in the lecture. In this section it is also important to highlight the social/non-academic aspects of higher education. Many pupils may not realise that while at University you can join societies and clubs. You can give examples; Football, Basketball, Cheerleading, Swim Team, Student TV and Radio stations, Gaming Society, Music and TV

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	<p>appreciation societies. For example. At the University of Glasgow there is a Disney appreciation society who meet up and watch Disney films together. You want the pupils to understand that alongside the academic side of university, they will have the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends who share similar interests, while also having the opportunity to try new things. You can also mention the fact that most universities will also give you the opportunity to study abroad as part of your degree and that often there is no extra cost associated with this so as part of your degree you can go, study and live in another country for free.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What can you study at a University?</b></li> </ul> <p>Make sure that the pupils understand and are aware of the variety and breadth of subjects that you can do at university, and that there is something for everyone if that is what they want to do. The word cloud has some examples.</p>	
Summarise	Summarise the activity and let the pupils know that you will continue to look at this topic in the coming days/weeks and that next you are going to look at college in more detail. Check the Lesson Plan for this lesson for follow up activities.	PowerPoint