

The Post-18 Decision

What Route Should I Take?

What is a dual career?

The term dual career can refer to an array of different forms of education and work, that an individual is involved in alongside their sailing career.

British Sailing statement on dual career

Sailing embraces all personal development opportunities in and out of the pathway. British Sailing recognise that all forms of education and training play a fundamental role in the sailor's progress and journey. We encourage sailors to have dual aspirations as it has been shown to support the long-term development of the person and performance on and off the water.



Post-18 Sailor Pathways

Full-time Sailing pathway

Full and exclusive commitment to sailing as a career.

Sailors do not engage in any formal education outside of sailing once further education has been completed.

Dual career pathways

University route

Vocational route

Sailors embark on balancing a vocational course or work and sailing.

Parallel route

Sailors embark on balancing a university degree and sailing.

They commit to completing their degree in three/four years and returning to sailing after completing their degree.

Staggered route

Sailors embark on balancing a university degree and sailing.

They will use strategies to manage their careers, such as taking a year out to focus on one career, stretching their degree.

If you are currently struggling to determine which pathway would be best for you, best practice is to reach out to your support network for advice.

“ [Sailors] need to be as good off the water as they are on it. Some of the skills that are required to plan, to review, to prioritise, to time manage etc., are skills that are as equally applicable in sailing as they would be if they were working in a large corporate business... there are a broad set of skills that would make you an even better sailor and not just sailing all the time. Olympic team support staff

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Key things to consider when making the decision

- Consider your future career goals in sailing and your vocational career
- Consider where you are within an Olympic/major event cycle
- Consider your available finances and funding options
- Consider what support you may have access to
- Consider your preferred learning style (e.g., combine multiple demands at one vs. focusing on one career at a time)
- Consider how you might best optimise your time
- Consider all available options before making a firm decision

“ You get to 18 and then you've got to decide...Some sort of change is going to happen, basically one way or another. You've got some decisions to make. There's a whole load of factors, and sailing is just a small part of that. Coach

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Top tips

- Go on university open days and speak to university sport scholarship staff about support options
- Speak to employers about flexible work arrangements
- Speak to other sailors that have offered your desired pathway
- Do thorough research!
- Reach out to British Sailing staff to discuss your position in the pathway and how this might impact your options
- Seek additional support if you are struggling or feeling overwhelmed



For more information, please refer to the 'Post-18 Decision-Making' section of the 'Sailing Through a Dual Career' guide.