

# Exam results: no wrong path to succeed

August the eighth is exam results day for 144,000 young people across Scotland. Congratulations to all the students who got the results they had hoped for! It's a real relief to open that dreaded envelope and find good news.

For those that didn't, don't worry. If you're not sure what to do next, the results helpline on 0808 100 8000 can steer you towards course vacancies, apprenticeships, volunteering or one of the many, many other options that are open to you. You can also get wellbeing support if you are feeling worried or perhaps not ready to make a big life changing decision. Check the [SQA website](#) and [My World of Work](#) for more information.

Remember there are plenty more ways to get where you want to be, or to figure out what that is. People wander up, down and sideways across all sorts of different paths in the course of their lives and are all the better for it. There really is #NoWrongPath

Below are a few examples of famous people, past and present, who did not follow a linear track but achieved great success in their fields.

## WINSTON CHURCHILL

The most famous UK Prime Minister and World War 2 leader did not do so brilliantly at school and took three attempts to pass the entrance exam for the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. On his school days, [he said](#): "...I had hardly ever been asked to learn anything which seemed of the slightest use or interest, or allowed to play any game which was amusing. In retrospect those years form not only the least agreeable, but also the only barren and unhappy period of my life."

## JK ROWLING

Rowling was a single mum, on benefits and struggling financially at the time she wrote the first Harry Potter book. Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone [was rejected](#) by 12 different publishers before finally a small print run was agreed. It's probably the most successful series in the world now.

#### ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The USA's most famous President, had [little formal education](#) and did not attend college or university. Born poor, he worked on the family farm, was a soldier and ran a general store amongst other early roles. After Lincoln successfully ran for election he decided to teach himself law in order to join the Bar.

#### STEVEN SPIELBERG

The phenomenally successful Oscar winning Director Steven Spielberg [was rejected](#) from the University of Southern California's film school three times, apparently! He eventually got a college degree some 35 years later in 2002, with the band playing the Indiana Jones theme tune at his graduation.

#### ALBERT EINSTEIN

The scientific genius Einstein did not do well on the university entrance exam and was not accepted for his first choice, the Polytechnic School in Zurich, Switzerland.

#### CHARLES DARWIN

Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection changed the course of science, yet he had a chequered career academically, [failing at a medical career](#) to the annoyance of his father. He was said to have preferred riding and shooting to studying. In his autobiography he wrote "I was considered by all my masters and my father, a very ordinary boy, rather below the common standard of intellect."

#### WALT DISNEY

Walt Disney went bankrupt more than once before his studio became such a huge international success story, and the Disneyland theme parks were turned down by financiers. He was [fired from an early job](#) as an animator on a newspaper because the editor thought he “lacked imagination and had no good ideas”.

#### THOMAS EDISON

Credited with inventing the lightbulb, Edison was apparently told he was “too stupid to learn anything” at school and fired from his first couple of jobs. When questioned about his many unsuccessful experiments [he said](#): “I have not failed, not once. I’ve discovered ten thousand ways that don’t work.” Persistence got him there in the end.

As comedian Sarah Millican [reminds everyone](#): *“if you don’t get what you need, it isn’t the end of the world: You can always resit. Yes, good exam results are useful but not the be all and end all. (I got 2 Ds and an E) Take care. Hugs and love xx”*