

## Next Steps After Year 11

Each of the information boxes will explain more about your options and what you need to do if you are considering this. There are also some useful websites listed so you can research the option(s) that relates to you. Don't forget, the more research and planning you do the better the outcomes will be.

### What are your Post 16 options?

#### A' levels

- ▶ Usually offered in **sixth forms and sixth form colleges**
- ▶ Entry requirements are usually a minimum of 5/6 GCSEs at grade 9 – 5 but this will vary in each institution.
- ▶ Some subjects may have specific grade requirements as well e.g. higher GCSE grades for maths, sciences, languages A' level.
- ▶ You can study a broad range of subjects; familiar and new.
- ▶ Mainly assessed via exams but there may be some course work or practical assessments.
- ▶ A' levels can keep options open if you have no clear career ideas.
- ▶ Opportunity to study favourite subjects in more depth and breadth.
- ▶ You may need A' levels for specific careers e.g. medicine, veterinary and other science related careers.
- ▶ Progression can be to University or Higher/Degree Apprenticeships and School Leaver Programmes.
- ▶ They usually have firm deadlines for applications so check these.

#### You need to...

- ▶ Check the entry requirements for your subject choices on school/college websites.
- ▶ Attend Sixth Form open events in the autumn term and check deadlines for applications; *usually December January.*
- ▶ Find out about the subjects available and what they involve, as this may be different to the GCSE and can vary in different sixth forms.
- ▶ For help with A' level subject choices - Russell Group's Informed Choices page [www.informedchoices.ac.uk](http://www.informedchoices.ac.uk)
- ▶ Research subjects needed for careers or higher education courses (university). [www.ucas.co.uk](http://www.ucas.co.uk)
- ▶ For degree ideas <https://www.ucas.com/explore>

## Vocational Courses and T-Levels

- ▶ Usually offered at **colleges** but also at some sixth forms (level 3).
- ▶ Courses focussed on a broad career area e.g. art and design, engineering, business, healthcare, but these can still lead to other careers.
- ▶ One year (levels 1 and 2). Two-year (level 3) courses, equivalent to three A' levels. *Please note T-levels are only offered at level 3.*
- ▶ Entry requirements: Check individual institutions but the minimum requirements are generally as follows:
  - Level 1 - satisfactory completion of secondary education or 2/3 GCSE grades 3 – 1.
  - Level 2 requires 2 - 4 GCSEs, grades 9 – 3
  - Level 3 requires 4 – 6 GCSEs, grades 9 – 4
- ▶ A mix of theory and applying this to practice/real life.
- ▶ Assessed mainly via course work (continuous assessment), but also some exams (up to 50 %).
- ▶ Will usually have a work experience element (20% of the course for T-levels).
- ▶ Progression can be to University or Advanced/Higher/Degree

## Occupational Courses

- ▶ Usually offered at **colleges**.
- ▶ Preparation for a career in a specific occupation/job e.g. engineering, catering, construction, hairdressing.
- ▶ Levels 1 -3. Usually one year for each level being studied.
- ▶ Practical skills with some theory.
- ▶ Mainly practical assessments but may include written/online assessments.
- ▶ Entry requirements: Check individual institutions but generally as follows:
  - Level 1 - satisfactory completion of secondary education or 2/3 GCSEs, grades 3 – 1
  - Level 2 - 4 GCSEs, grade 9 – 3 (some may want grade 4 or above).

As students will be learning the skills to do a job, they will usually start at level 1 or 2, even if GCSE grades are higher.

- ▶ Progression to Intermediate/Advanced Apprenticeships,

## You need to...

- ▶ Research subjects needed for careers or higher education courses (university).
- ▶ Look at college prospectuses/websites to find out about the courses on offer and what they involve.
- ▶ Attend college open events in the autumn term of year 11 to find out more about the courses, facilities and college life.
- ▶ No formal application deadline at most colleges but some do, so it is advisable to check and apply early, by January 2023 if possible.
- ▶ Students will be interviewed and there may be other assessments, depending on the course e.g. audition, portfolio of work, online basic skills test.
- ▶ Useful websites to help with research. [www.ucas.co.uk](http://www.ucas.co.uk) and Informed Choices - [www.informedchoices.ac.uk](http://www.informedchoices.ac.uk)
- ▶ <https://www.ucas.com/further-education/post-16-qualifications> guide on A' levels, BTECs, T- Levels etc. and what you can do with them.

## Apprenticeships

- ▶ Qualifications, skills and experience gained in the workplace, with at least 20% of the time working towards a qualification.
- ▶ **Levels;** Intermediate (2), Advanced (3), Higher (4/5) and Degree (6/7).
- ▶ Minimum of one year but often longer, depending on the level.
- ▶ **Level 2 and 3** – Entry level on the job learning with the opportunity to obtain a qualification(s) such as a BTEC or City & Guilds or other vocational qualifications, as specified by the particular career sector. Also Maths and English (if not already achieved).
- ▶ Progression to higher or degree level apprenticeships, full time employment and can lead to full time higher education (after level 3).
- ▶ **Level 4 -7** – usually after sixth form/college. Learning in the workplace with college or university study (Higher National Diploma/Degree) and/or professional/technical qualifications.

## CAREERS RESEARCH - USEFUL WEBSITES

- ▶ The Buzz Quiz [www.ucas.com/careers/buzz-quiz](http://www.ucas.com/careers/buzz-quiz) Take the quiz to see which job areas might suit you then start exploring opportunities –There's a huge variety of options you may not have thought of.
- ▶ Explore careers via interests or favourite subjects or job families <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/after-gcses/find-career-ideas/explore-jobs>
- ▶ Careers research - <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-careers>
- ▶ Job profiles and where different degree subjects can lead <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles> and <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree>
- ▶ Videos, guides and more <https://icould.com/explore/>

## You need to...

- ▶ Find out more <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk>  
<https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>
- ▶ To search and apply for vacancies <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>
- ▶ Check websites of large organisations for information about recruitment of school leavers. Companies will recruit anytime from December of year 11, onwards.
- ▶ <https://amazingapprenticeships.com> Free resources, vacancies and other useful information on apprenticeships.
- ▶ To find out about Higher and Degree level apprenticeships <https://www.ucas.com/understanding-apprenticeships>

## SIXTH FORMS AND COLLEGES

Chelmsford College – [www.chelmsford.ac.uk](http://www.chelmsford.ac.uk)  
Colchester Institute & Braintree campus [www.colchester.ac.uk](http://www.colchester.ac.uk)  
Writtle University College – [www.writtle.ac.uk](http://www.writtle.ac.uk)  
South Essex College – [www.southessex.ac.uk](http://www.southessex.ac.uk)  
Stansted Airport College - <http://www.stanstedairportcollege.ac.uk>  
Fashion Retail Academy - <https://www.fashionretailacademy.ac.uk>  
Colchester Sixth Form College - [www.colchsf.ac.uk](http://www.colchsf.ac.uk)  
Braintree Sixth Form <https://www.braintreesixthform.com>

*Many schools have sixth forms as well. Please refer to school websites for information.*