

YOUR JOURNEY

If you're in year 10 or 11 at school, it's time to start thinking about your next step. This leaflet will break down the Further Education (FE) study options available to you at sixth form or college. Think of these as stepping stones to university or college, and your long-term career goals.

We also recommend searching for these websites:

- **Careerpilot**
Post 16 options
- **Which? University**
A-levels
- **UCAS**
Tariff point calculator
- **Prospects**
What job would suit me?
- **City and Guilds**
Technical and applied qualifications
- **Gov.uk**
Qualification levels and definitions, including Apprenticeships



EXPLORE YOUR FUTURE

If you're unsure of what you want to do next, visit our website to start your research. You'll find information on:

- Why Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) matter
- Career paths and job sectors
- Courses subjects and qualifications
- Local events and activities
- Student stories
- Frequently asked questions



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Next Steps
South West



Next Steps
South West



LEVEL 3 OPTIONS

After you complete your GCSEs, it's time to specialise. From A-levels to apprenticeships, T-Levels to traineeships, pick a post-16 pathway that suits your learning style and interests.



Part of the
National Collaborative
Outreach Programme

WORK-RELATED OR VOCATIONAL LEARNING

Want to get stuck into the workplace? You might like to study a vocational course.

Practical programmes are available in a diverse range of industries, including engineering, construction, accountancy, design, hair & beauty, IT and more. This style of training will suit you if you like getting hands-on and want real-world experience in a specific field, it develops practical skills and specialised knowledge of software and equipment. They can be studied at school or college, and often include some classroom-based activities too. Assessment is usually both written and practical, in order to check your knowledge of theory alongside the industry skills you'll gain.

Types of qualification

- **BTECs**
- **City & Guilds** (Technicals or Techbac)
- **OCR Technicals**
- **Extended & Level 3 Diploma**
- **T-Levels** (launching in 2020)
- **NVQs** (usually work and college based)

Entry requirements

To enter at Level 3, you will need four GCSE grades 9-4 (A*-C), including English and Maths or prior achievement at Level 2. If your GCSE grades are lower than a C, you may enter vocational study at Level 2 – ask your teachers about your options.

What next?

Many students continue their professional development in the workplace or apply to a university, college, or higher apprenticeship. You can still gain UCAS points without studying an academic route like A-levels.

A-LEVELS

If you want to keep your options open, go for an academic or subject-based qualification.

Often considered a traditional choice for students, A-Levels offer you the chance to carry on studying more than one subject at school or college. They take two years to complete and subject combinations vary so check each provider's website for more information. Learning assessment usually includes a mix of exams and coursework.

There are hundreds of subjects to choose from, but consider how you combine them...

e.g. Art with Business would provide a practical understanding of how to market your creativity, whilst Maths and IT could teach you strong accountancy skills.

Entry requirements

To study A-levels you usually need at least five GCSEs at grades 9-4 (A*-C), with at least grade B in the specific subject(s) you want to study.

What next?

A-levels are recognised internationally, making them a smart choice if you'd like to study or work abroad someday. They provide a strong foundation for going into a range of courses and careers, and help prepare you for higher education level study. Grades translate into UCAS tariff points for applications to higher education, but some degrees have specific entry requirements. (e.g. Science A*), so do your research.

APPRENTICESHIPS

Earn while you learn as a young apprentice.

Advanced apprenticeships are a form of work-based study, helping young people become ready for industry. They are equivalent to two A-levels and take place both in the workplace and in the classroom, balancing practical experience with theory. Subjects on offer include agriculture, business, catering, healthcare, marketing, engineering, transport logistics and more.

Over 150,000 employers are currently offering apprenticeships in more than 200,000 locations, covering more than 170 industries across the UK.

[UCAS.com](https://www.ucas.com)

Apprentices typically work for 30 hours per week and study the equivalent of one day per week. The current minimum wage rate for an apprentice is £3.90 per hour. (This rate applies to apprentices under 19 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year). As an apprentice you may have the right to holiday and sick pay.

Entry requirements

You may need up to five GCSEs at grades 9-4 (A*-C), including Maths and English.

What next?

Apprentices qualify with the expertise to enter the workforce straight away, but many decide to develop their expertise further on a Higher Apprenticeship (Level 4 - 7) which is equivalent to a Foundation Degree.