



## Introduction

This pack is to inform Year 10 and 11 students and their parents and carers about their next steps following GCSE examinations. This is commonly called post-16 education and training or Further Education. Since 2013, the Raising of the Participation Age law has meant that children must be in some form of education or training until they are 18. This can include one of the following options:

## Sixth Form

Sixth forms deliver A Levels, BTEC Diplomas and Applied qualifications at **level 3** over a two-year period.

A Levels are graded A\* - E and are like GCSEs but look at subjects in a lot more depth. This is why it is normal to only choose three subjects to focus on.

BTEC and Applied Level 3 qualifications, are also two years long, can be taken alone or alongside other A Level subjects, depending on the sixth form and how many units the BTEC has (6-unit BTEC – comparable to one A Level, 12-unit BTEC comparable to two A Levels, 18-unit BTEC comparable to three A levels). These are usually made up of several separate modules and include practical assessments and coursework, as well as examinations.

## Entry Requirements:

Sixth forms will ask students to have at least 5 x GCSEs at grade 4 or above including mathematics and English **Language**. This varies depending on each sixth form and the subject choices, so checking the entry requirements for each subject is vitally important. Some will ask for grades 5 or above in both mathematics and English Language and potentially other subjects depending on A Level subject choice. For example, it is common to be required to have achieved at least a grade 7 at GCSE to be able to study A Level mathematics and 6 or 7 in science to study an A level science subject.

## Colleges and Training Providers

Colleges and training providers offer BTEC, T Levels and other vocational qualifications at different levels, which focus on a specific area of study in a practical way and relates to a job or career. Vocational means around an area of work. These courses are usually either one or two years long, with progression options for higher level qualifications on completion, in the same or similar area. Examples include Engineering, Hair and Beauty, Childcare, Construction, Motor Vehicle, Business, IT, Performing Arts and many more.

## Course Entry Requirements:

**Entry Level/Level 1** – can require anything from no qualifications to up to 4 x GCSEs (at any grade) including mathematics and English language.

**Level 2** – usually requires x 4 GCSEs at grade 3 or above including either mathematics and English **language** at grade 4 or above.

**Level 3** – usually requires 5 x GCSEs at Grade 4/C or above including both mathematics and English language at grade 4 or above.

**Level 3 Extended Diploma courses and T levels are a route into university and are taught for 2 years.**

All entry requirements can alter and vary from provider to provider and by course to course.

## Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships involve working for an employer and training with a local training provider to gain qualifications in relation to the job role. Between them they will agree the entry requirements for the job role and the level of training being undertaken.

Apprenticeship levels available for post-16 school leavers include:

Level 2 – Intermediate

Level 3 – Advanced

Higher level apprenticeship (level 4 and 5) and Degree level apprenticeships (level 6 and 7) are available to post-18 students and adults and can follow on from any form of Level 3 study or apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship vacancy search - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

Pay and conditions - <https://www.gov.uk/become-apprentice/pay-and-conditions>

## T-Levels

T-Levels were a new qualification from September 2020, they are similar to A Levels but with a mixture of classroom learning and 'on the job learning' experience with an industry placement of approximately 45 days. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels/introduction-of-t-levels>

## Traineeships

A Traineeship is an unpaid work experience option with no vocational qualifications attached. This is an option for students who would like to do an apprenticeship but may not have the experience, skills or qualification to do so yet. This option can last up to six months and involve mathematics and English study to help with applications for apprenticeships. <https://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship>

## Making Applications

Students can begin to apply for post-16 courses at colleges and sixth forms from the Autumn of their Year 11 (**October 2025**) ready for the following September and it is advised that students complete their applications by Christmas. This is done online via the provider's website,

### A projected timeline:

**October** – Sixth form and college applications open.

Open days are advertised through provider websites along with booking instructions. Madam Blyth will also advertise these in school.

**November - January** – Some sixth forms will close applications. It is worth checking each provider you are interested in and making early applications to avoid disappointment.

**December– April** – Students are invited to sixth form and college interviews.

Students begin to receive 'conditional offers' (this means based on them gaining the grades required to meet the entry requirements for the specific courses applied for). This will be determined on results day in August.

**March–July** – Students accept conditional offers received for the courses they have applied for.

**(It is important to remember, students can accept more than one course option and make their final decision in the summer, when they have received their examination results).**

**April onwards** – A lot more apprenticeship vacancies will start to be advertised on The **National Apprenticeship Service** website. Students can start apprenticeships after the last Friday in June.

**August** – GCSE Results day (Always a Thursday – around 21<sup>st</sup> August).

**August 21<sup>st</sup> – Mid September** – Enrolment onto courses at sixth form, college, or training provider.

**NOTE: Apprenticeship applications run throughout the academic year with bigger companies starting their recruitment processes much earlier. Start looking in**

**September/October of Year 11, as some employers have a much more detailed application processes and can require CV submission, interviews and in some cases online ability tests and assessment centres.**

### **Support Available**

Students can access support with applications or recruitment advice via Madam Blyth, Careers Leader.

**All students will be offered a 1:1 personal guidance meeting during the school day, between May of year 10 and March of year 11 (due to the large number of students in each year group).** Lots of support will be delivered through Personal Development lessons and Tutor time.

### **How many colleges and courses can students apply for?**

Students can apply for and accept as many courses and conditional offers as they would like to. We would advise that they apply for more than one college or sixth form and at different levels of courses, where available, so they have a backup option in case the entry requirements are not met on results day.

### **How can I help my child?**

**Encourage your child to find out about local open days and attend with them or encourage them to attend with friends. Some providers offer virtual open days to make them more accessible, which is helpful but not the same as going and getting a feel for the new learning environment.**

**Most sixth forms only have one open event, and these can be very early in the academic year. Please remember to check the education providers websites. Madam Blyth will also advertise these in school.**

Show an interest and have discussions with your child about their future education plans. Let them explore and figure out what route is best for them, taking into account their predicted grades and the entry requirements for specific courses.

Every student in Year 10/11 will have a careers meeting with Madam Blyth, at which time, an action plan will be agreed, for the student to work on to help them develop a plan for their future. If they are still unsure about what to do, please encourage your child to make a further appointment to see Madam Blyth for a follow up guidance meeting. This year appointments will start in the summer term of year 10.

**For further information and support contact the school's careers leader**

Madam Blyth – [c.blyth@fernwood.school](mailto:c.blyth@fernwood.school)

**Resources available to all students:**



All Fernwood students have an account with Unifrog. This is an online tool that helps students compare every university course, apprenticeship, and further education courses. Unifrog brings all the available information into one comprehensive, user-friendly platform that helps students make the best choices.



Labour market information as well as job profiles can be used and researched on the National Careers Service website: <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-careers>

The logo for PROSPECTS, featuring the word "PROSPECTS" in white uppercase letters on a dark blue rectangular background.

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Use the UCAS website to find out everything you need to know about studying at university. From researching different higher education courses, gaining information about apprenticeships, to finding out how the UCAS tariff system works. <https://www.ucas.com/>



The National Apprenticeship Service. Use the search tool to browse which apprenticeships are available based on your interest and location. <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>



Medic Mentor are a national medical social enterprise who are dedicated to nurturing your journey into the medical field. Their mission is to support students every step of the way. From mentoring and widening access programmes to webinars with doctors, work experience, ongoing guidance during medical school and beyond. Register with them for lots of help with preparing for medical school. <https://medicmentor.org/>

### **Local Further Education Providers**

Further Education Provider	College / Sixth Form / Training Provider	Level of Courses	Website
<b>The Becket School</b>	Sixth Form	Level 3	<a href="https://www.becketonline.co.uk/sixth-form/">https://www.becketonline.co.uk/sixth-form/</a>
<b>Bilborough College</b>	Sixth Form	Level 3	<a href="https://bilborough.ac.uk/">https://bilborough.ac.uk/</a>
<b>Bluecoat Academy</b>	Sixth Form	Level 2 & Level 3	<a href="#">Home - Bluecoat Sixth Form</a>
<b>Brackenhurst College</b>	College	Level 2 & 3	<a href="https://www.ntu.ac.uk/c/virtual-open-day/brackenhurst-college-courses">https://www.ntu.ac.uk/c/virtual-open-day/brackenhurst-college-courses</a>
<b>Bramcote College</b>	Sixth Form	Level 3	<a href="https://bc6f.org.uk/">https://bc6f.org.uk/</a>
<b>Confetti College</b>	College	Level 1, 2 & 3	<a href="https://confetti.ac.uk/">https://confetti.ac.uk/</a>
<b>Derby College</b>	College / Sixth Form	Level 1, 2 & 3	<a href="https://www.derby-college.ac.uk/course/">https://www.derby-college.ac.uk/course/</a>
<b>George Spencer Academy</b>	Sixth Form	Level 3	<a href="https://www.spencertrust.org.uk/sixth-form-education">https://www.spencertrust.org.uk/sixth-form-education</a>
<b>Inspire Learning</b>	Training Provider	Level 1 & 2	<a href="https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/college-16-24/">https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/college-16-24/</a>
<b>Nottingham College</b>	College / Sixth Form	Level 1, 2 & 3	<a href="https://www.nottinghamcollege.ac.uk/">https://www.nottinghamcollege.ac.uk/</a>
<b>NUAST</b>	Sixth Form	Level 3	<a href="#">Sixth Form   NUAST</a>
<b>The Nottingham Emmanuel School</b>	Sixth Form	Level 3	<a href="mailto:admin@emmanuel.nottingham.sch.uk">admin@emmanuel.nottingham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Rushcliffe Spencer Academy</b>	Sith Form	Level 3	<a href="mailto:info@rushcliffespencer.com">info@rushcliffespencer.com</a>
<b>The Trinity Catholic School</b>	Sixth Form	Level 3	<a href="https://www.trinity.nottingham.sch.uk/sixth-form/">https://www.trinity.nottingham.sch.uk/sixth-form/</a>
<b>The West Bridgford School</b>	Sixth Form	Level 3	<a href="https://www.wbs.school/page/?title=Post%2D16&amp;pid=9">https://www.wbs.school/page/?title=Post%2D16&amp;pid=9</a>

The above is not an exhaustive list.

