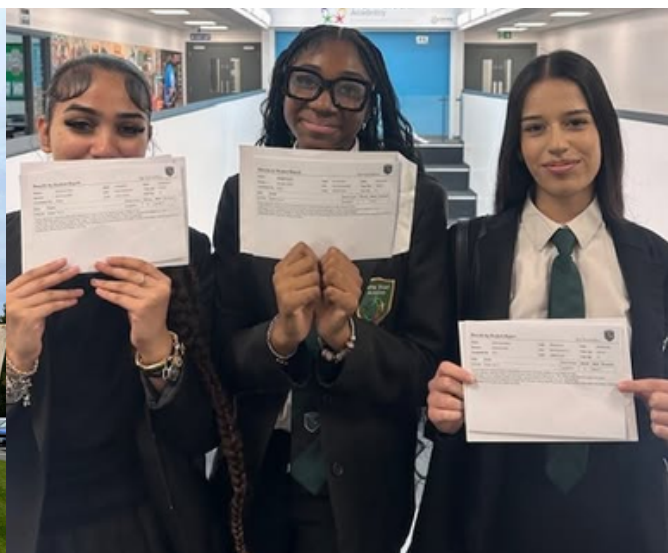




A PARENTS' GUIDE TO

PATHWAY OPTIONS

Understanding the options available to your child when they leave school can be tricky - this series for parents is designed to give you more knowledge to help support your child at home.



GCSE RESULTS

Mock Exams
PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Apprenticeships
National Apprenticeship Week

Exams

NCW
National Careers Week

THE NATIONAL SCHOOL & COLLEGE LEAVER
FESTIVAL

PSHE
Mental Health

Post-16 visits

Post-16 talks

Careers FAIR

PSHE
Financial literacy

Mock Exams

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

ASPIRE TO HE
Higher Education for all

10

PSHE
Next steps

GCW
GREEN CAREERS WEEK

1-2-1 CEIAG starts

ASPIRE TO HE
Higher Education for all

NCW
National Careers Week

TELFORD SKILLS SHOW

WORK EXPERIENCE

IN-COMM TRAINING SERVICES

GCW
GREEN CAREERS WEEK

CV workshop

Keele University
Post-16 talks

Apprenticeships
National Apprenticeship Week

PSHE
Budgeting

Apprenticeship taster

GCSE

PSHE
Further and Higher Ed

Speed Networking Event

Careers FAIR

Workplace visits

Mock Interviews

aiico

9

PSHE
Employability

NCW
National Careers Week

Harper Adams University
Post-16 talks

PSHE
Preparing for the workplace

PSHE
Options and pathways

YEAR 9 OPTIONS

Apprenticeships
National Apprenticeship Week

Careers FAIR

GCW
GREEN CAREERS WEEK

TAKE YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY

Opportunities to meet local employers

8

ASPIRE TO HE
Higher Education for all

Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College
Post-16 talks

THE STEM WORKSHOP

NCW
National Careers Week

PSHE
Financial security

FUJITSU National Trust

scifest
Science, Technology, Engineering and Computing

TAKE YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY

GCW
GREEN CAREERS WEEK

PSHE
Online safety

Apprenticeships
National Apprenticeship Week

LEGO Innovation at Stafford College

PSHE
The workplace

PSHE
Finance for the future

THE BIG BANG FAIR

NCW
National Careers Week

Guess My Job

PSHE
What is a career?

Welcome to Y7! Attendance should be 97%, ready for the world of work.

7

LEGO Innovation at Stafford College

Apprenticeships
National Apprenticeship Week

Introduction to Unifrog - Careers platform.

GCW
GREEN CAREERS WEEK

Formal assessment and revision habit building.

97%

CAREERS TIMELINE

September

- Y11 Guidance with Future Focus starts
- Y11 College visits (invite only)
- Y11 Open days start
- Drop-In sessions (Mon/Weds/Fri)
- KS4 SEND Careers Event at school



October

- Careers Fair for KS4 students and Y11 parents
- Y11 Parents' Evening
- Applications for Post-16 open

Autumn Term

- A variety of KS4 trips offered. Students sign up in the Careers Office or via their tutor
- Mock Exams for Y11

January / February

- Most A Level applications close around Feb half term - some are sooner, so check individual places
- Mock Exams
- Year 10 Mock Interviews

March onwards

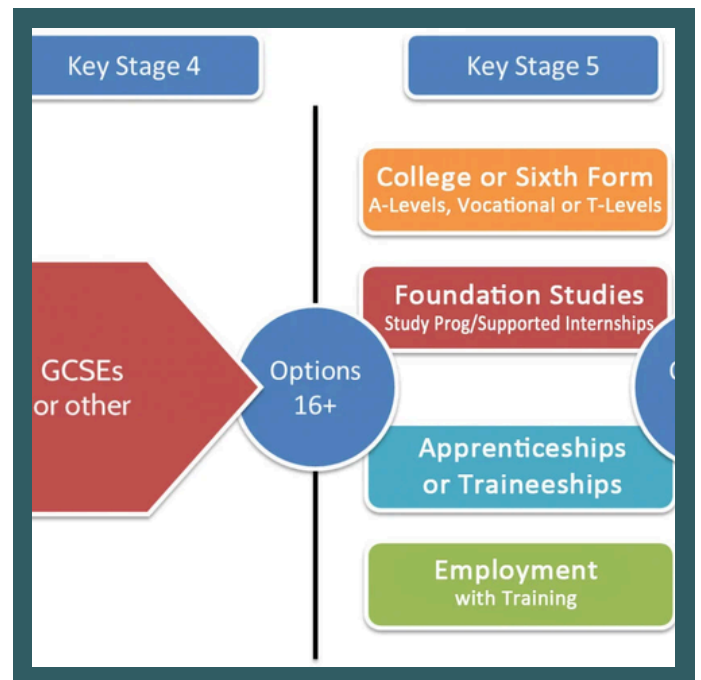
- Year 10 Work Experience
- All Y11 students should have applied for a Post-16 course by now
- Y11 Parents' Evening
- Y10 Mock exams



COMMON PATHWAYS

Pathways after leaving secondary school are split broadly into:

1. sixth form
2. college
3. an apprenticeship
4. a job
5. supported internships



GRADE LEVELS

The system has recently changed with how grades are given in England.

A **Grade 4** is roughly equivalent to the old C grade and is considered a pass by many local providers.

A **Grade 5** is considered a strong pass and will be required for most A Levels.

If students do NOT receive a Grade 4 in English and Maths, they will be required to re-sit these exams.

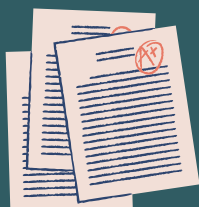
Current	Old
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	C
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

QUALIFICATIONS

Qualification levels in England range from Entry Level (pre-GCSE) to Level 8 (a doctorate obtained through University).

GCSEs are either a level 2 or level 3 qualification, depending on the course.

Level	Qualification / educational route				
8	Doctorate (PhD)		NVQ 8		
7	Masters degree (MA)		Degree apprenticeship / NVQ 5, 6, 7		
6	Bachelors degree BA or BSc				
5	Foundation degree FdA or FdSc	Higher National Diploma (HND)			
4			Higher apprenticeship / NVQ 4		
3	A levels Grades A-E	International Baccalaureate	T Levels	BTEC diploma BTEC certificate	Advanced apprenticeship / NVQ 3
2	GCSE Grades 4-9 (C, B, A or A*)			BTEC first diploma	Intermediate apprenticeship / NVQ 2
1	GCSE Grades 1-3 (D,E,F or G)			Foundation diploma / entry level qualifications	Traineeship / NVQ 1
	Academic route		Vocational route	Applied / work route	



Predicted grades

These are given to your child after completing assessments and mock exams. We use these to help us predict what level qualification will be suitable.

Post-16 Providers use these grades to assess how suitable the student is for their chosen course.



Jargon Buster

- A Level - level 3 course (academic)
- T Level - level 3 course (vocational)
- Vocational - prepares you for a specific job
- Apprenticeship - a full time job with study
- Diploma - a type of vocational qualification

POST-16 PROVIDERS

SIXTH FORM VS COLLEGE

This is often a difficult choice for some students... so what is the difference?

The guide below is a basic comparison. We recommend students use open days to visit before applying as each provider is very different.

Sixth Form

- Is attached to a school with students Y7-Y13.
- Usually follows a school timetable with tutor time and break times.
- Usually has a uniform requirement.
- A smaller range of subjects, with limited vocational options.
- Around 16 hours of study per week.
- You must have English and Maths at a grade 4 and often a Grade 6 in your preferred subjects.
- Usually smaller with less students.

College

- Usually only has students aged 16+.
- A more flexible timetable where students can go off-site.
- Generally has no uniform requirement.
- A larger range of subjects with lots of vocational options.
- Around 16 hours of study per week.
- You don't always need English and Maths at a grade 4 due to more qualification options.
- Usually much larger and busier.

POST-16 PROVIDERS

INDEPENDENT TRAINING PROVIDERS (ITPS)

ITPs provide vocational education and training for young people, including apprenticeships, traineeships and study programmes.

Want to know more?

- ITPs are usually based in a smaller building with small class sizes which is ideal for those who don't want a busy school or college environment.
- ITPs often have specialised SEND programmes, making them a good choice for those with special needs.
- ITPs offer English and Maths alongside a study programme for those who need to resit before going to college.
- ITPs can also support students into work or apprenticeships.



QUALIFICATION BREAKDOWN

A LEVELS

An A Level is a level 3 qualification and an academic route that can be taken at sixth form or college.

A Levels have strict GCSE entry requirements starting from four or more grade 4's including English and Maths.

Do you always need a Grade 4?

A really common question.

A Levels often require specific GCSE grades. For example, studying Psychology often has a requirement of a grade 6 in Maths.

Some providers also need a Grade 6 in the A Level of study as well as the minimum of a 4 in English / Maths.

Different providers have different requirements - best to check.

How many A Levels?

You can take 3 or 4 A Levels over 2 years.

Sometimes, you can combine a BTEC with A Levels too.

The EPQ

Some providers may require students to take the EPQ alongside A Levels. This is an independent project that awards a qualification.

Find out more info:

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/information/a-levels/why-do-an-extended-project-qualification-epq>

QUALIFICATION BREAKDOWN

T LEVELS

A T Level is a new level 3 qualification which can get you into some Universities, a job or apprenticeship. It combines academic learning with an unpaid work experience placement.

You take ONE T Level... so the young person must be sure this is what they want to study!

Entry requirements?

Students must have English and Maths at a grade 4 or above.

Most T Levels also require 2 or 3 other GCSEs at grade 4 or above.

What subjects are offered?

There are more being added every year, but some popular ones include Construction, Health, Education, Digital, Business, Hairdressing and Legal.

Work Placement?

Yes! What makes this qualification brilliant is the opportunity to get real experience in a work setting.

Currently, there is approx. 1 day per week of work placement, or around 45 days per academic year.

This is an obligatory part of the course and must be completed in order to pass, so students must be prepared to take part in the placement.



QUALIFICATION BREAKDOWN

BTEC / VOCATIONAL

These qualifications are available at a variety of levels to suit the student. They combine hands-on learning with classroom-based work. The assessment is often practical.

They are a great practical option for those who prefer a less academic course of study.

Where can they be studied?

A small selection of BTECs are available at local sixth forms, such as BTEC Sport or Health & Social Care.

A larger selection of BTECs and vocational options (such as hair and beauty, construction, carpentry etc) can be found at local colleges and training providers.

Vocational courses are fantastic, but they only cover one area of industry, so we advise the student to be very sure of their chosen course before applying.

New V Levels will be introduced in 2027 so this information may change.

Which grades are needed?

It depends! There is a large selection available and each provider has different requirements.

For example: Level 2 Health and Social Care at Telford College requires any 5 GCSEs at Grade 3.

The same course at Shrewsbury College needs 4 GCSEs at Grade 3 including English and Maths.

Check with each provider to ensure students have the best chance at success.

QUALIFICATION BREAKDOWN

APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships come in a variety of levels depending on the age and grades of the student.

Apprenticeships are a full time job plus usually a day of classroom work at a local provider. Apprentices are paid at least minimum wage.

How to search and apply?

Like any job, apprenticeships are competitive and difficult to find and secure.

You can search and apply by:

1. Looking on the government site:
findanapprenticeship.service.gov.uk
2. Approaching a company who advertises elsewhere, such as on social media or in the newspaper
3. Asking a company to offer an apprenticeship privately (e.g. if the student already has a part time job)

Applicants will need a CV and cover letter.

Grades?

The basic requirement is a grade 4 in English and Maths. However, some companies may want more or higher grades, or some may be willing to lower these requirements. Best to check individual job postings.

Mythbusting

Parents should be aware that child benefit stops when their child starts an apprenticeship.

Students can only apply once they turn 16 and can only start their apprenticeship when they leave school.

For this reason, we advise all students to have a college back up plan just in case their application is delayed.

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

There will be plenty of support for your child throughout KS4 when making these big decisions, including tutor support, drop-in sessions with the careers team available every week, plus bookable appointments for a more in-depth discussion. The careers team are happy to speak with parents via an appointment, email or phone.

We also have large events, such as the Careers Fair and Parents' Evenings where careers staff will be available for advice for both parents and students.



Future Focus is the Careers Advice service from Telford and Wrekin Council. They are in school 3 days a week and will see every Y11 student **at least** once to offer them guidance about next steps.

If your child has an EHCP, they will be at the annual reviews from Year 9 in order to support parents and students with the transition to Post-16.

ALUMNI



We are incredibly proud of our students. Here are some of their stories.

Lucy Felton

After completing secondary school, I was accepted into Thomas Telford School, where I am currently studying within the Business Academy which covers a wide range of subjects, including customer service, international business, and marketing. Following sixth form, I have now secured a degree apprenticeship in a with Capgemini to support my ambition of working for an international company in a professional business role.



Victoriaia Srokovska

I am currently studying Business Management and Information Technology at Lancaster University. After moving from Ukraine in 2022, I completed my GCSEs at New Road, before progressing to Shrewsbury College where I studied Level 3 BTEC in Digital Technology, gaining D*D*D*.

I am truly enjoying the blend of technical and management skills in my degree and University has been an exciting next step - proof that with persistence, you can achieve more than you think!

Tim Davis

New Road provided me with some amazing opportunities, which I absolutely grabbed, and which also helped me to transition into 6th Form. Like many young people, I wasn't sure what my 'dream job' was but with the help and support of school and sixth form, I was able to narrow down my options and identify the 2 or 3 career paths that interested me most. After leaving sixth form, I graduated from Wolverhampton University with a degree in Cyber Security and now work for a global technology company as a member of their digital forensics team.

