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Post GCSE Options Booklet





Post 16 options— How does it all work? What are my options?

Post GCSE Choices

In 2015 the Government increased the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training. All students will need to continue in some form of education, training or work with training until their 18th birthday. This does not necessarily mean staying in school; you have a choice about how you continue your education or training post GCSE. Which could be through:

- ◇ Full time study in Sixth Form or College
- ◇ An Apprenticeship
- ◇ A Traineeship
- ◇ Spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training

For more information please visit <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/08/22/what-options-are-available-for-students-after-their-gcses/>

How do I pay for my post-16 Education and Training?

Education and training in the UK are free for young people until they turn 19.

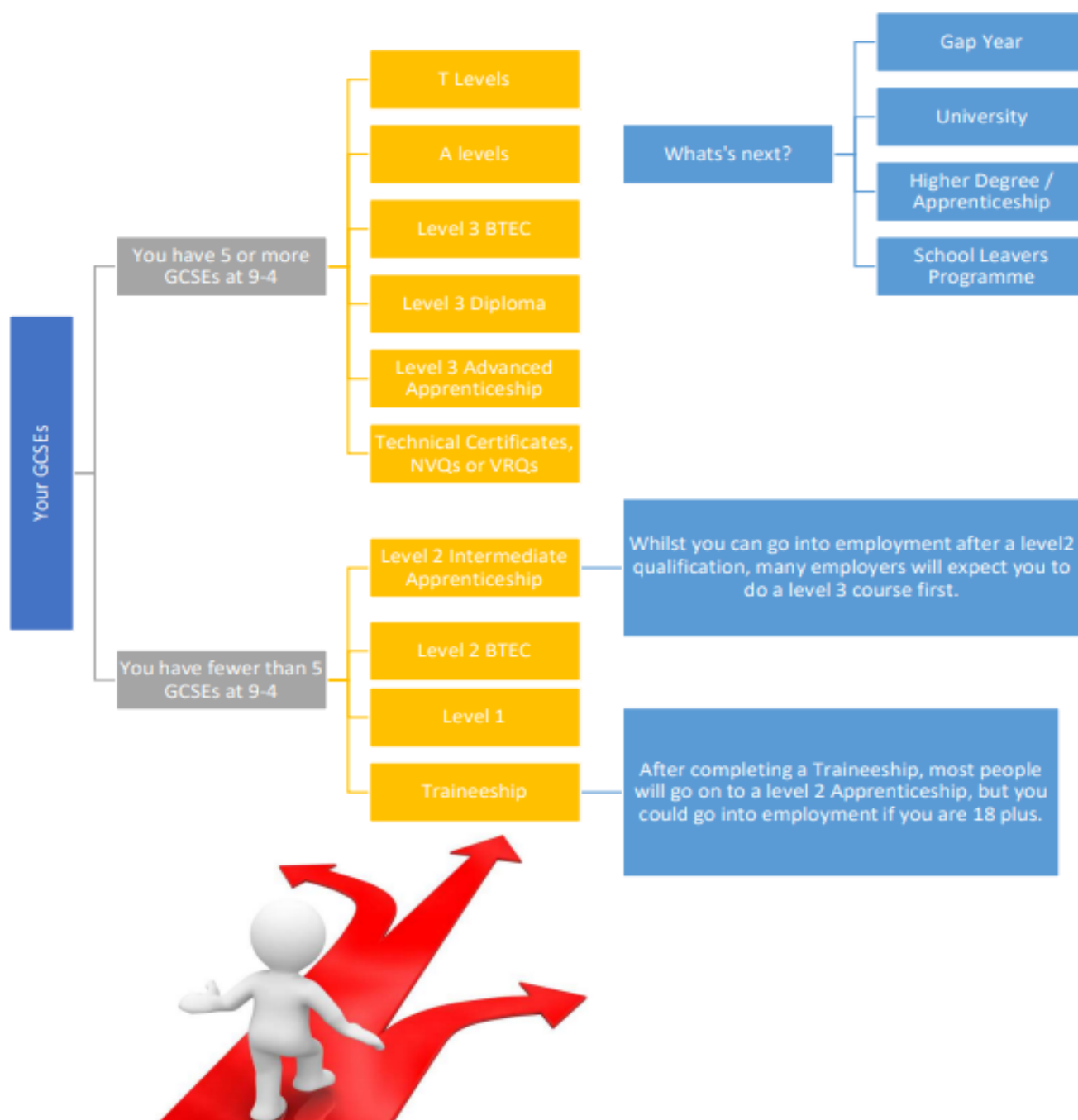
In addition, many organisations offer financial support for students from low income families to help pay for things like transport, food and stationary, so check first!



Last Official Day

The official last leaving day of school is always the last Friday of school in June, you cannot start an apprenticeship before this date: <https://www.gov.uk/know-when-you-can-leave-school>

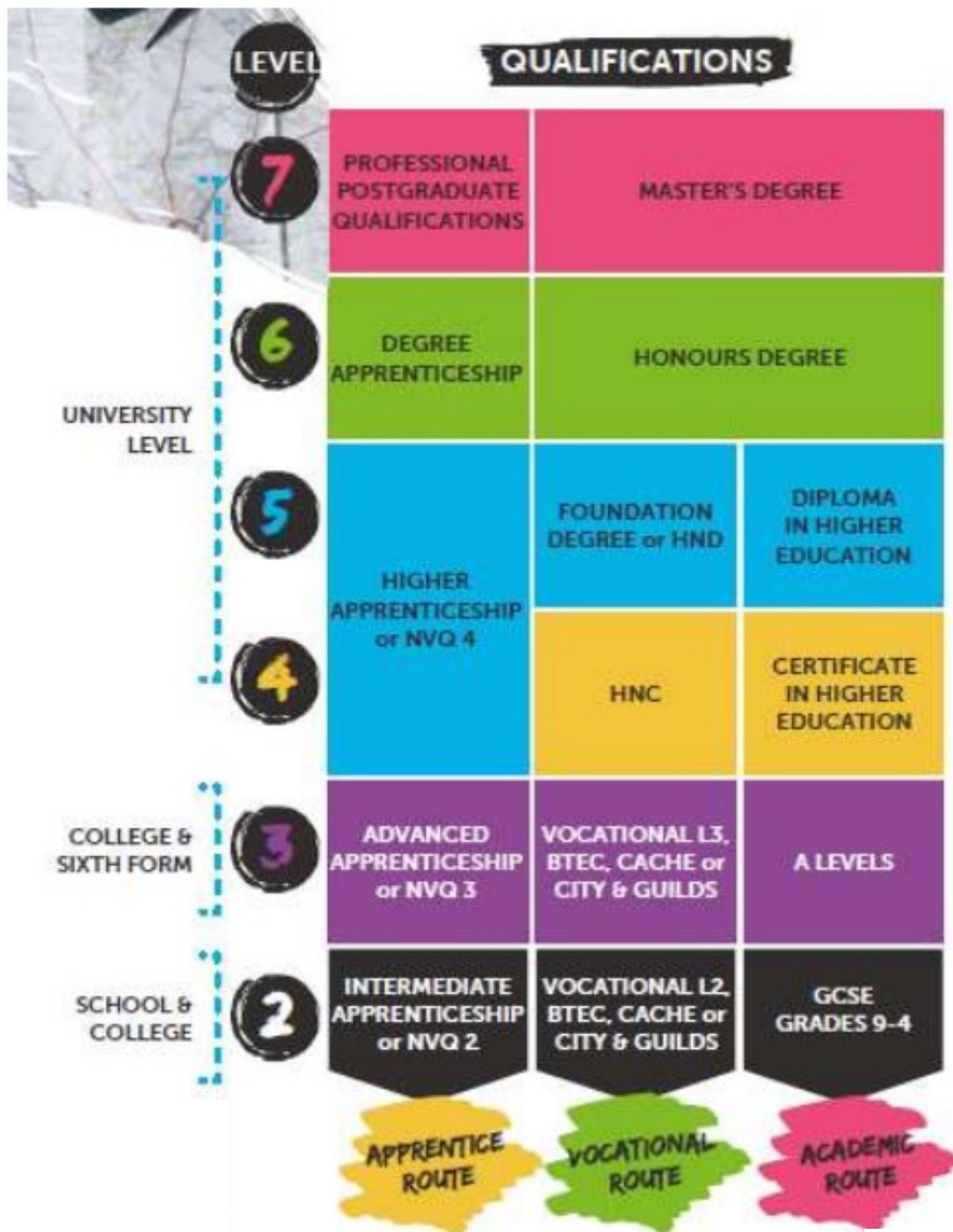
What could I do with my predicted grades?



Remember: Entry requirements will be different. So make sure that you check!

A guide to the different levels

Both colleges and sixth forms refer to different levels. These can be confusing, therefore the diagram below should help to simplify what level you should be considering.



Sixth Form

Sixth form typically focuses on A-Level (Advance Level) qualifications—These are 2 year courses that end in an overall examination and a grade between 9-1, It has a similar structure to GCSE's but looks at the subject in more depth.

At sixth form students can study:



Traditional A-Levels—Subjects like Biology, English Literature, History etc.

Alternative A-Levels—Subjects such as Law, Sociology and Media Studies.

BTEC L3 Diplomas—Subjects such as Applied Science, Applied Psychology and Performing Arts.

Students studying A-Levels usually select 3 or 4 subjects (dependant on their GCSE grades) that they want to study at sixth form.

Entry Requirements

Most sixth form colleges usually ask students have 5 GCSE's at Grade 5 or above. Specific subjects may require a higher grade in that subject at GCSE as well so make sure you do your research as this will change dependant on each sixth form.



Colleges

Colleges offer a whole range of different courses and study programmes ranging from those that do not need any specific GCSE grades such as an entry level course through to apprenticeships, higher education degrees and professional or technical qualifications. Rather than choosing 3 different subjects like you do at a sixth form you will specify an area of interest at college and will study just one course.

GCSE Retakes—All colleges will offer English and Maths to those who have not achieved a minimum grade 4 at GCSE.

Vocational Subjects and Courses—Courses at college are often specialized in an area of interest such as plumbing or equine management.

Apprenticeships—A student is based predominantly or completely within a paying employer and is assessed in that workplace by a visiting assessor or by attending college for a day or a week at a time.

T-Levels— These offer students a mixture of classroom learning and “on the job” experience. 80% of your time will be spent in the classroom and 20% will be on a high level placement. They provide the experience and knowledge required to get straight into employment after the 2 year T-Level course.

Foundation Courses—Also known as “Supported Learning.” or “English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)” These focus on preparing for life and working skills.

Our local colleges are: Moulton College, Northampton College and Tresham College



Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships



Involve working for an employer in a specific role whilst being trained to do the job by experienced staff, in a combination of on-the-job and off-the-job training at a college (this must be at least 20% of the apprenticeship).

Apprenticeships must be at least one year long and all apprentices must be paid a minimum of £4.81 per hour (although many companies pay more).

Apprenticeships can now be undertaken in a variety of industries, including Engineering, Graphic Design, Software Development, Hair and Beauty and Catering.

When looking for an apprenticeship you will need to be well prepared, you should do some research into the company, look at the different roles on offer and decide which one most interest you.

Apprenticeship Levels

Apprenticeships are offered at four different levels:

Intermediate/Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE) – usually requires Maths/English at GCSE

Advanced/Level 3 (equivalent to A-Level) – usually requires 5 GCSEs at Grade 4+

Higher/Level 4-5 (equivalent to Foundation Degree) – usually requires L3 or A-Levels

Degree/Level 6-7 (equivalent to University Degree) – usually requires 3 A-Levels or similar

Traineeships – Opportunity for students aged 16-24 who do not have the relevant qualifications, experience or skills to start an apprenticeship but are interested in progressing on to one in the future. Traineeships involve a programme of up to six months of study, including a work placement, qualifications in Maths and English and support with finding a job or apprenticeship once the course is completed. you are not paid for taking part but can apply for a 16-19 Bursary Fund to help with costs.

Remember—you will be competing with others for these roles!



Applying for Post-16—How does it work?

You will begin applying for your Post-16 options during your first term of your GCSE year. The application process for sixth forms, colleges and apprenticeships take place throughout the course of the academic year.

It is important to keep an eye on the closing dates for each sixth form. Colleges do not have the same deadlines but early applications are advised!

You will begin to receive offers from both sixth forms and colleges during March of your GCSE year. You may be asked to attend either a telephone interview or a face to face interview prior to an offer being given, these are a chance for you to explain why you would like to study the course you have applied for. Once you have received your offer you will need to accept it, you can accept all offers given and make your final decision on your GCSE results day.



How to Apply

Sixth Form and Colleges—Each individual college / sixth form's website will allow you to apply direct to them. You can apply to as many colleges and sixth forms as you like, but you can only choose 1 course per college.

Apprenticeships—Finding an apprenticeship can be challenging, the government's apprenticeships portal is a good place to start, (<https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch?ga=2.136893232.1835292119.1663148893-611908474.1663148893>) you could also use Unifrog or a job search engine as these could find some local apprenticeships. Applications run throughout the academic year and you must be 16 and have finished full time education before starting so please take note of the state dates.

Volunteering—Vinspired (<https://vinspired.com/>) is a Volunteering website where you can search for local opportunities.

NOTE: Always make sure that you have a back up option in place.

How do I make my decision?



Making a decision about where to go after Year 11 can be tricky, particularly while you are busy revising for your final GCSE exams, so it is important to consider the following that might help with decision making:

What will doing this option be like?

Whatever you choose to do after Year 11, you will probably be doing it for at least one year, so it is important that you know that the learning environment and style of learning will be right for you.

Attend Open Days—There are many open days that happen at both Sixth Forms and Colleges throughout the year – their websites will publish these dates .

Careers Interviews—In Year 11 you will be given a Careers Interview. This is where you will have the chance to speak to a fully qualified, external careers advisor about your future interests and plans, they can then provide you with some additional information and tools to help you make this decision.



Speak to Someone—Your teachers / Heads of Year / Careers Lead are here to help, so talk to us about your plans and any concerns you may have. We are all here to listen and help as best we can.

Ways to get prepared



- ◇ Be proactive
- ◇ Search for courses you are interested in doing after year 11 and check the requirements
- ◇ Search and apply for apprenticeships online, taking note of start dates and requirements.

How do I make my decision?

- ◇ Learn more about options available after finishing school, including sixth form, colleges, apprenticeships and universities— <https://careerpilot.org.uk/> is a useful resource for this.
- ◇ Learn more about how your subjects link to different careers— <https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/my-career-options/choosing-my-subjects> can help with this.
- ◇ Think about your skills and qualities, what career might suit you? The Buzz Quiz is a good place to start for this. <https://icould.com/buzz-quiz/>
- ◇ Think about how you can improve your employability skills and start recording these in a CV—Think back to your Barclays Life Skills sessions in Year 10. (www.barclayslifeskills.com)



Questions you may need to ask?

How will I physically get to College / Sixth Form?

What is my back up plan?

What GCSE grades do I need for this course / apprenticeship?

If I am applying for a one-year Level 1 or 2 course, what can I move on to afterwards?

What do students typically progress on to after completing the course?

Are specific grades required to move on to the next level?

What opportunities are there for work experience as part of the course?

If, once I have started the course, I feel that it is not right for me who should I speak to?

Do you need GCSE grades in particular subjects and what happens if I do not achieve particular entry grades?

