

# Careers Guidance E-Pack

for schools and colleges



**National  
Careers  
Service**

Helping you take  
the next step

Grade	Tariff points
A*	56
A	48
B	40
C	32
D	24
E	16

## College

The teachers at your child's school are likely to have a lot more information about A level options than other areas; this is simply because it is the route they will most likely have taken to get into teaching and can draw on their own experiences when offering advice. However, for a lot of young people, staying in a school environment is not the best thing for them, as their abilities may lie with more practical or vocational learning.

There are a wide range of college courses your child can choose from and it will all depend upon the grades they receive at school in their GCSEs. Further education college qualifications are listed below:

**Entry level qualifications** – Designed to support students who received no GCSE grades and need support with basic Maths and English.

**Level 1 NVQ** – Designed to support students who may have left with some GCSE grades but at a low level 2-1 (E–G), student likely to focus on one specific subject.

**Level 2 NVQ** – Likely to be offered to students who achieved grades 3/2 (D/E) and as above students will focus on one specific subject.

**Level 1 BTEC Introductory Diplomas and Certificates** – This gives you basic knowledge and skills to show you can do a certain job.



**Level 2 BTEC First Diplomas and Certificates** – Equivalent to GCSEs in a specific subject and are generally offered to students who achieve 4/3/2s (C/D/Es) at GCSE.

**Level 3 BTEC National Diploma** – Equivalent to two A levels and can be used as a pathway to university. It is likely to be in one specific subject.

**Level 3 BTEC Extended National Diploma** – Equivalent to three full A levels and widely accepted by universities as an alternative to A levels for degree courses, again likely to be in one solid subject.

**Functional/Key Skills** – Can be a mandatory part of your course at college and are generally levels 1–3 in Numeracy, Literacy and ICT.

Both sixth forms and colleges will hold open days where students can visit and look around, speak to current students and teachers, check out the resources and facilities; basically see if they can picture themselves there in the future.

Visit – [www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com) to find out more.



# Apprenticeships

## Apprenticeship/traineeship options

Apprenticeships and Traineeships are becoming a real alternative route for those leaving school as it allows them to gain real life work experience, study towards a relevant qualification in that industry field and receive a wage for their work. There has never been a better time to consider an apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships are stereotyped as a 'second rate' option but this couldn't be more misguided; there are many subject options which allow an apprentice to study to degree level, same as what they would receive at university and get the benefit of combining these qualifications with years of practical experience.

Apprenticeships take between one and six years to complete, and cover 1,500 job roles in a wide range of industries, from engineering to accountancy, public relations to veterinary nursing.

The **parent's guide to apprenticeships** on **GOV.UK** offers useful downloads as well as more information on the benefits of an apprenticeship and the entry requirements.

We would recommend all young people start their research and vacancy searches using the following website – [www.getingofar.gov.uk](http://www.getingofar.gov.uk)

## Facts about apprenticeships

- The National Minimum Wage for an apprentice is £3.70 per hour (as of April 2018) with apprentices aged 16–18 taking home around £151.88 (on average) per week.
- After finishing, the majority of apprentices (90%) will stay in employment (including 2% self-employed), with seven in ten (71%) staying with the same employer.
- A quarter of former apprentices had received a promotion (23%) within 12 months of finishing, and for intermediate and advance apprentices, three quarters reported taking on more responsibility in their job after completing their apprenticeship.
- All apprentices work towards an accredited qualification which could include: NVQ, BTEC, HND/HNC, foundation degree, and undergraduate degree and in some industries masters degrees.
- Most apprenticeships will support individuals with their maths and English if they were not able to achieve a C grade at GCSE level.

## Facts about traineeships

- A traineeship is an education and training programme with work experience that unlocks the great potential of young people and prepares them for their future careers by helping them to become 'work ready'.
- Designed to help young people aged 16 to 24 who don't yet have the appropriate skills or experience, traineeships provide the essential work preparation training, English, maths and work experience needed to secure an apprenticeship or employment.

- You will not be paid a training wage on a traineeship however young people should be aiming to progress onto an apprenticeship upon completion of a traineeship.
- It's important that young people speak to their employers on the traineeship as they may be able to offer financial support with transport or equipment costs.

## University

While there is a lot of information available, it can seem overwhelming, with so many things that students need to take into account when making what is probably their most important decision so far!

Your child's teachers are usually the main source of information about applying for university as it's something they deal with year in, year out but there are plenty of instances where your son or daughter will need a bit of extra support from home.

For example, their teacher will have a good idea about their academic ability, what sort of grades they are likely to achieve and if a particular set of subjects would be suited to them. However, you are much more likely to know more about their personal and emotional needs. Gaining an impartial perspective from a service such as National Careers Service can help your child make a well rounded and realistic decision.

UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) is a great source of information for both students and parents. All students will apply for their university places through UCAS so it's certainly worth becoming familiar with.

One of the main things you may be worried about is the cost of university and over the past few years, these costs have been significantly increased. £9250 is now the maximum amount a university can charge, so finding the funds to ensure your child is able to move forward towards university can seem daunting. However, there are a number of financial aids on offer depending on your situation which you might be able to take advantage of.

## Facts about Student Finance England

- It's important to know that everyone is eligible for the financial support in the form of the 'Tuition Fee Loan' from the Government which is offered regardless of household income for their first undergraduate degree.
- Everyone is eligible for 4 years' worth of student finance for an undergraduate degree.
- As well as a tuition loan, you can also apply for maintenance loans (means tested) and maintenance grants (non-repayable). The university you choose to go to may also offer bursaries and grants to support students which you do not need to pay back.
- As the threshold for tuition fees is now £9250 with many universities charging the full amount allowed, Student Finance have raised the threshold for which you start making repayments which is now £22,000 a year.
- Once you are earning over £22,000 a year, you will automatically start making repayments through the tax system. Student Finance will take 9% of your taxable earnings. For example if your monthly earning was £1833 you would pay back £7 to Student Finance each month.

The **Gov.uk** website has more information about applying for student finance.

## How can you get involved?

You may be struggling to figure out how you can best help your son or daughter so we've created a short checklist of ideas that might prove useful.

- Try to speak with your child as soon as possible about what type of career or job they might enjoy. This doesn't need to be an in depth conversation at first, just enough to allow them to be aware that they can come to you to ask about anything they aren't sure about.
- Encourage your child to speak with their career adviser at school. Every school has a responsibility to provide impartial careers advice for their students, which means the school can't just promote their own offers, such as sixth form for students whom it may not be best suited for.
- Get in touch with an adviser yourself. When your child comes to you to ask any questions, you'll want to make sure the information you have is as up to date as possible. Try speaking with our advisers to find out more about how you can best help.
- Have a look through the online resources together. The National Careers Service website is an excellent starting point no matter which stage of education your child is currently in.

- Seek impartial advice and guidance. Knowing all of your options and not just one or two is really important to ensure that your child takes the right next steps in their education and career. National Careers Service is dedicated to offering young people and adults the right advice at the right time and we are free to contact on **0800 100 900**, online through our webchat, via email or text, 7 days a week from 8am till 10pm.

## Useful terminology

**NVQ** – National Vocational Qualification

**GCSE** – General Certificate of Secondary Education

**UCAS** – University and Colleges Admissions Service

**BTEC** – Business and Technology Education Council

**A level** – Advanced Levels

**FE Colleges** – Further Education Colleges

**LAs** – Local Authorities

**PRU** – Pupil Referral Unit

**SEN** – Special Educational Needs

**AQA** – Assessment and Qualifications Alliance

**HE** – Higher Education

**DfE** – Department for Education

**Dip** – Diploma

**HND/HNC** – Higher National Diploma/Certificate