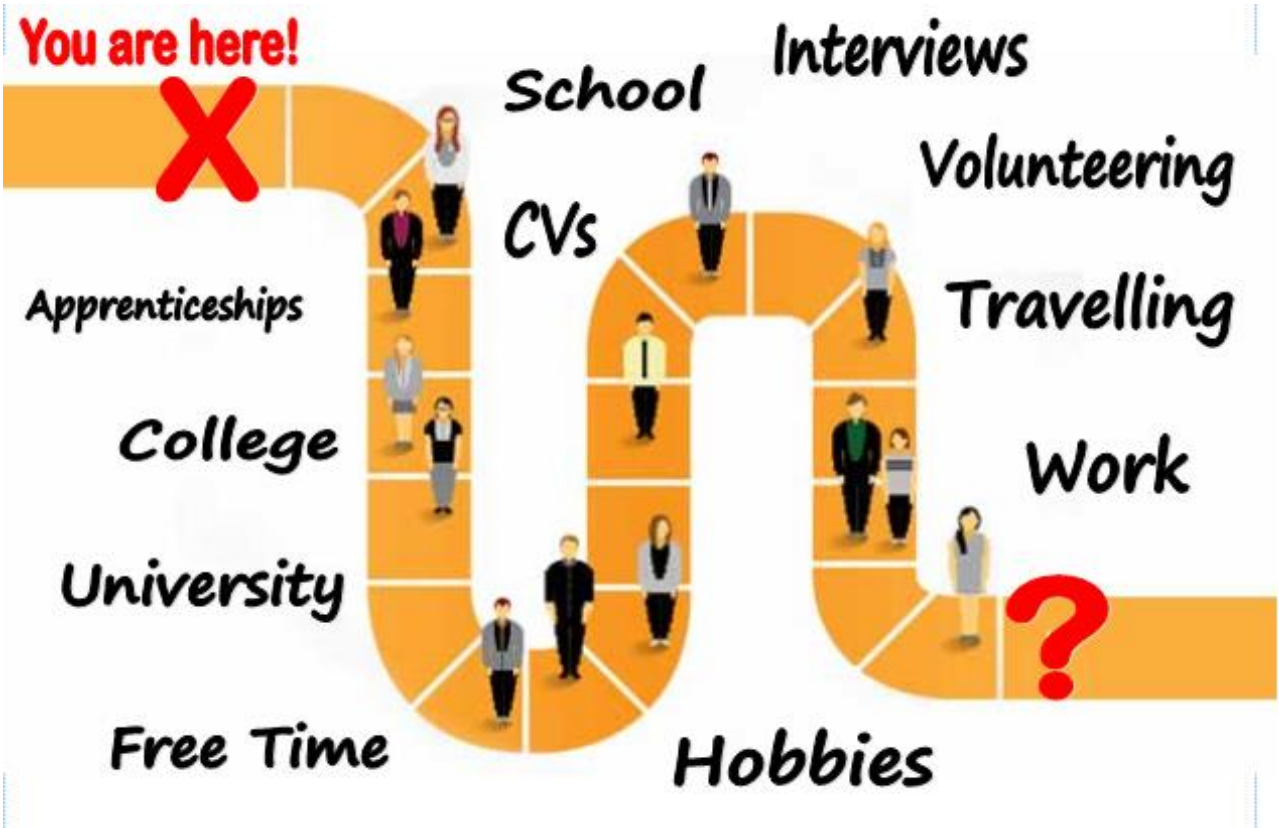
Careers

Post-16 Options:

How does it all work?



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What are the options?

Since 2013, the Raising of the Participation Age law has stated that young people must be in some form of 'education or training' until they are 18. This can include:

Full-Time Study – this could be a qualification taken at a sixth form, college or training provider, totalling 540 hours of learning time per year, or around 18 hours per week.

Apprenticeships – this involves working for an employer while studying for a qualification as part of your training. Usually, work makes up 80% of an apprenticeship and at least 20% (or one day a week) should be dedicated to studying.

Traineeships – this is an option for students who would like to do an apprenticeship but may not have the experience, skills or qualifications to do so yet. Traineeships can last up to six months and involve a work placement, Maths and English qualifications and support with finding an apprenticeship.

Part-Time Study with Employment or Volunteering – this could be working in a full-time job (classed as any work that takes place over more than two months and is over 20 hours per week) or volunteering (again, over 20 hours per week) while studying part-time at a college or training provider (totalling 280 hours of learning per year).

How do I pay for post-16 education and training?

Education and training in the UK are free for young people until they turn 19. In addition, there is a **16-19 Bursary Fund** to help students from low income families pay for things like transport, food and stationery, which can be accessed at any sixth form, college or training provider you attend after Year 11 - www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

If you receive financial benefits from the government, it is important that you are aware of how these can be affected once your child leaves school. If your child is in full-time education, such as sixth form or college, your benefits will remain the same but if your child progresses into paid employment or an apprenticeship, they will no longer be considered your dependant and your benefits for them will stop. More information can be found via the **Gingerbread** website: https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/information/benefits-tax-credits-and-universal-credit/money-when-your-child-turns-16/

Many organisations also have their own financial support for students, so check first!

Useful Links:

http://www.parentalguidance.org.uk/help-information/raising-the-participation-age-rpa

https://www.gov.uk/know-when-you-can-leave-school

Notes

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Sixth Forms and Sixth Form Colleges

Sixth form at school or sixth form college typically focuses on A-Level (Advanced Level) qualifications – two-year courses that end in an overall examination and a grade from A*-E, with a similar structure to GCSEs but looking at the subject in a lot more depth. Students can study:

Traditional A-Levels – Subjects like **Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English Literature, English Language, Mathematics, Geography, History, Languages, Music, Art**

Newer A-Levels – Subjects like **Photography, Psychology, Business Studies, Media Studies, Economics**

BTEC L3 Diplomas – sixth forms often offer BTEC qualifications that can be taken alongside A-Levels. These are usually made up of a number of separate modules and include practical assessments and coursework, as well as exams. Subjects include **Health and Social Care, Business, Creative Media Production and Computing.**

Students studying A-Levels usually select three subjects that they want to study at sixth form. Sixth forms also offer something called the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), an independent project that can provide students with UCAS 'points' to put towards university.

Entry Requirements – Most sixth forms ask students to have at least 5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above. Usually this will need to include Maths and English but there may be an option to re-sit these GCSEs for students who have achieved a grade 2 or 3. Often students will need a grade 5 or 6 in the subjects chosen for A Level but make sure that you do your research, as entry requirements vary.

Some Local Options:

Range Sixth Form **www.range.sefton.sch.uk**

Range Sixth Form offers a wide variety of traditional and newer A Level subjects, a number of BTEC qualifications and the Extended Project Qualification.

Other schools in Sefton which have sixth forms: **Christ the King Catholic High School, Sacred Heart Catholic College, Holy Family Catholic High School, Formby High School, Chesterfield High School, St Michael's High School, Maricourt High School, Deyes High School** and **Maghull High School.**

King George V Sixth Form College www.kgv.ac.uk

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Further Education Colleges

Colleges usually offer BTECs or other vocational qualifications that focus on a specific area of study in a practical way. AS they specialise in vocational qualifications, there is usually a wider range of subject choice for BTEC than you would find in a school sixth form or sixth form college. FE colleges also offer a range of levels of qualification, from Entry Level to Level 3 (A Level equivalent).

BTECs are available in a wide range of subjects and levels including:

Public Services Business Sport Art and Design Graphic Design
Hospitality and Catering Travel and Tourism *and many more…*

College Entry Requirements:

Entry Level/Level 1 – Can require anything from no qualifications up to 3 GCSEs (any grade)

Level 2 – Usually requires 3 GCSEs at Grade 3 D or above

Level 3 – Usually requires 4/5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above

Some Local Options:

Southport College www.southport.ac.uk

Hugh Baird College www.hughbaird.ac.uk

Myerscough College www.myerscough.ac.uk

City of Liverpool College www.liv-coll.ac.uk

Specialist Sixth Form and Further Education Colleges

The Liverpool Media Academy (www.lma.ac.uk) offers BTEC courses in a number of subjects

LIPA Sixth Form College (lipasixthformcollege.org)offers UAL Diploma courses (similar to BTECS) in a number of subjects related to the Media and Performing Arts.

Liverpool Life Sciences UTC (https://lifesciencesutc.co.uk) Life Sciences and Health related courses

The Studio School, Liverpool (https://thestudioliverpool.uk) Digital and Media related courses

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Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Apprenticeships – These involve working for an employer in a specific role while being trained to do the job by experienced staff, in a combination of on-the-job and off-the-job training at a college or training provider (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 £3.90 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** (and can be started as soon as an individual turns 16 and has left full-time education, although you can apply beforehand). Apprenticeships come in 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 – These are an 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. Students are not paid for taking part but can apply for a 16-19 Bursary Fund to help with costs.

Useful Links:

https://amazingapprenticeships.com/

http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk/

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-parents-guide-to-apprenticeships

Maths and English resits – What are the rules?

It is important to remember that if you get lower than a Grade 4/C in your GCSE Maths and English exams, you will need to re-sit these qualifications as part of any course you study at school or college or as part of an apprenticeship. It is nothing to worry about, as the college or training provider will help you with studying for these qualifications or if necessary, get you to complete an alternative qualification called Functional Skills Maths and English, which is available for any students who achieve lower than a Grade 3 in their GCSE Maths/English.

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T Levels are new courses coming in September 2020, which will follow GCSEs and will be equivalent to 3 A Levels. These 2-year courses have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for work.

T Levels will offer students a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days). They will provide the knowledge and experience needed to open the door into skilled employment, further study or a higher apprenticeship.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels/introduction-of-t-levels

T-LEVELS
THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

Applying for post-16 – How does it work?

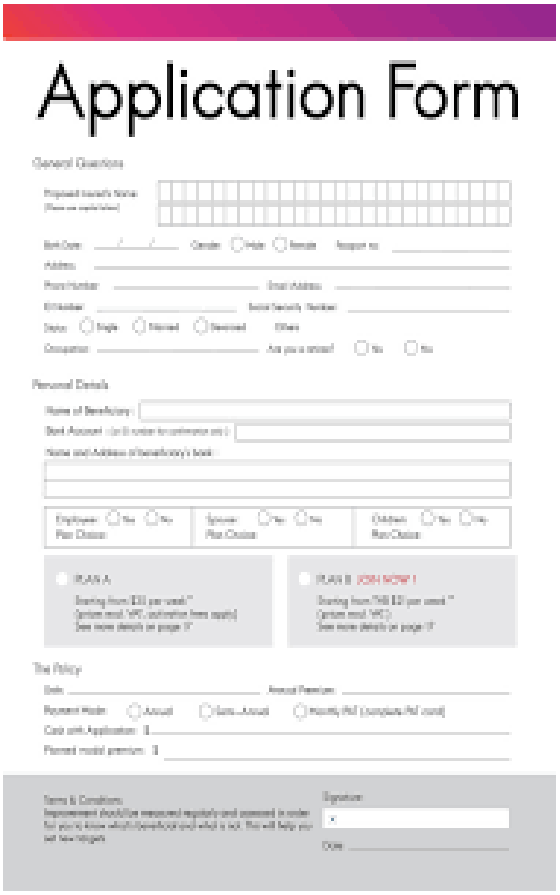
There are different ways for students to apply for **sixth form**, **college** and **apprenticeships.** Some have paper applications forms and others are online. Check their websites for details.

https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/ - The government's apprenticeship portal, which allows students to make an account and search and apply for apprenticeships.

Job Sites – Job search engines such as **Indeed**, **Reed** and **GetMyFirstJob** can also be used to find and apply for apprenticeship and traineeship vacancies.

Vinspired – Volunteering website where students can search for local opportunities.

NOTE: Apprenticeship and Traineeship applications run throughout the academic year and students must be 16 and have finished full-time education before starting. Apprenticeships have a much more detailed application process than sixth form or college and may require students to find their own placements if taken via colleges.



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During Year 11, all students will have some lessons about choosing post-16 options plus an interview with our Careers Adviser, Mark Blagbrough, during which they can talk through their ideas and ask questions. Mark works for an organisation called Mploy Solutions, which offers advice to young people across Cheshire and Merseyside.

MPLOY
SOLUTIONS
Pathways to Work
for the Youth Sector

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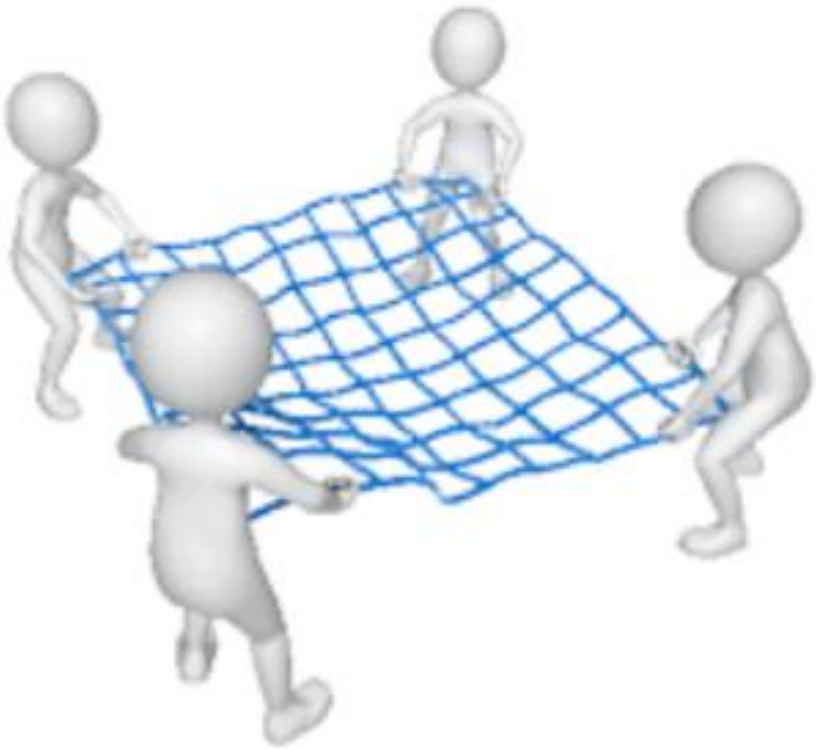
Preparing Your Safety Net

Although many students achieve the grades that they want from their GCSE examinations, it is important to prepare a back-up option in case students change their minds about what subjects they want to study or are unsuccessful in getting the grades required in order to progress on to their college/apprenticeship/course of choice.

The great news is that students can apply and accept offers from as many sixth forms, colleges and training providers as they want and can then make their mind up about which one they want to progress on to in September after visiting the environment, meeting the staff and finding out what GCSE grades they have received in August 2020!

REMEMBER – Always prepare your '***Safety Net***'!



Entry Requirements – What do I need to get in?

The recent changes to the GCSE grading system have confused some people, so take a look at the information below to make sure you know what grades you might need to get at GCSE in order to move on to your chosen destination after Year 11:

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

Key Points:

- A **Grade 4** is a ***Standard Pass***, while a **Grade 5** is a ***Strong Pass***
- Only around 2-3% of students will achieve a **Grade 9**, making it a little higher than the old **A***
- Although the new grades don't exactly match the old grades, colleges will mostly view them as follows:

  9-7 = A*- A **6** = B **4-5** = C **1-3** = D and below

- Vocational qualifications like ***BTEC*** match up with GCSEs as follows:
  L1 = GCSE grades 1-3 (Pass - Distinction)
  L2 = GCSE grades 4-9 (Pass – Distinction)
- Most colleges, sixth forms and apprenticeships accept BTEC-type qualifications, as do **95%** of universities.

Do your research!

No matter what you read online, it is important to check all information carefully. Although the Department for Education have stated that a Grade 4 will be considered the official 'Pass Mark' for students (https://www.tes.com/news/new-gcse-pass-lowered-grade-5-4-dfe-u-turn), not all colleges or universities may agree with this. For example, Kings College London and UCL both now ask for a Grade 5 at GCSE in English and Maths as part of their entry requirements, but Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool (all Russell Group universities) still consider Grade 4 the equivalent to a C.

Use ALL the information available!

As stated above, different post-16 and post-18 pathways may ask for different entry requirements depending on the course and/or college. For example, some apprenticeships require only GCSE English and Maths at Grade 3 (D) and above, while some sixth form colleges ask for a Grade 5/6 (high C/B) in the subject students are wanting to take up from GCSE to A-Level. Using the following websites can help you to find the exact entry requirements you need:

Hot Courses - https://www.hotcourses.com/ **Get in Go Far** - http://www.getingofar.gov.uk/

Some useful references:

Which University – How important are my GCSEs?
https://university.which.co.uk/advice/gcse-choices-university/how-important-are-my-gcse-grades

Ofqual - https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2018/03/02/gcse-9-to-1-grades-a-brief-guide-for-parents/

The Student Room - https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/gcse/exams/new-gcse-grades-explained

Qualification Levels Guide – GCSE to Degree Level

L6	University Degree (BA/BSc/BEng)	University Degree (BA/BSc/BEng)	Degree Apprenticeship (NVQ L5 + L6)
Grades Needed:	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4/5 and 2-3 A-Levels/BTEC L3 Extended Diploma (check first!)	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4/5 and 2-3 A-Levels/BTEC L3 Extended Diploma (check first!)	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4/5 and 2-3 A-Levels/BTEC L3 Extended Diploma (check first!)
L5	Foundation Degree (FdA, FSc) / HND (Higher National Diploma – L5)	Foundation Degree (FdA, FSc) / HND (Higher National Diploma – L5)	Higher/Degree Apprenticeship (NVQ L4 + L5)
L4	HNC (Higher National Certificate – L4)	HNC (Higher National Certificate – L4)	
Grades Needed:	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4 and 1-2 A-Levels/ L3 Diploma/Extended Diploma	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4 and 1-2 A-Levels/ L3 Diploma/Extended Diploma	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4 and 1-2 A-Levels/ L3 Diploma/Extended Diploma
L3	A-Levels	L3 Diploma / Extended Diploma (BTEC or other) / Access to HE courses	Advanced Apprenticeship (NVQ L3)
Entry Grades Needed:	Usually 5 GCSEs at grade 5 or higher, including Maths and English	5 GCSEs at grade 4 or higher (usually including Maths and English)	Usually at least 3-5 GCSEs (but sometimes no formal qualifications)
L2	GCSEs (grades 9-4)	L2 National / BTEC Diploma / Functional Skills	Intermediate Apprenticeship (NVQ L2)
Entry Grades Needed:	None	3-4 GCSEs at grade 3 or higher (usually including Maths and English)	Usually none, although sometimes GCSE Maths and English and a skills test
L1	GCSEs (grades 3-1)	L1 Diploma / Functional Skills	Traineeship (preparation for apprenticeship)
Entry Grades Needed:	None	None (sometimes basic Maths and English)	None
Entry Level 3	Key Stage 3	E3 Diploma (Foundation)	–
Entry Grades Needed:	None	None	-
	School / 6th Form	College / Further Education	Apprenticeships

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How do I make my final decision about post-16?

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 factors that might can help with decision making:

- **Where can this option take me in the future?** If you are thinking about a destination after post-16, such as university or higher/degree apprenticeships, it is important to know whether the qualifications you are taking from 16-18 can help you to progress on to these pathways. Use websites like the Russell Group's **Informed Choices** (https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/) or **Success at School** (https://successatschool.org/) to find out whether the course you choose after Y11 will allow you to progress on to what you want to do or speak with staff at the sixth form, college or apprenticeship you are applying to in order to get further details!

For example:

- **If you want to study Dentistry at university, you usually need to take A-Levels in Chemistry and Biology/Maths/Physics.**
- **Some universities do not accept BTEC L3 Extended Diplomas (although 95% do!)**
- **Apprenticeships have varying entry requirements – some ask for 5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above while others ask for 2-3 A-Levels**

- **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 (usually two), so it is important that you know that the learning environment and style of learning will be right for you. Why not…

  - **Speak to sixth form or college staff and students at one of the many Open Days or Open Evenings that take place throughout the year – the websites for each sixth form or college will have these dates on.**

  - **Research more about the sixth form, college or apprenticeship provider online to find out about what you would study as part of your qualification or what support the organisation can provide you with while you are studying e.g. help finding work experience, financial support like a free bus pass or food allowance, assistance from the careers team to help you move on after finishing your course etc. Sixth form and college websites have all the information you need!**

Want to get prepared over the summer holidays?

Search and apply for apprenticeships online – https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/

Learn more about the options available after finishing school, including sixth form, college, apprenticeships and university – https://careerpilot.org.uk/

Free careers software to help you connect your skills, hobbies and subject interests to what you might want to do once you leave school – https://www.startprofile.com/

Start volunteering to gain valuable work-related skills and experience – https://vinspired.com

Improve your employability skills and start recording your experiences in a CV – www.barclayslifeskills.com

The school Careers Adviser will be working with all Year 11 students from September. You can also email him on mbl@range.sefton.sch.uk or email Ms Gooding (Careers Co-ordinator) on rg@range.sefton.sch.uk if you have any questions.