



October 2020

Year 11 Post 16 Options

A guide for Pupils, Parents & Carers



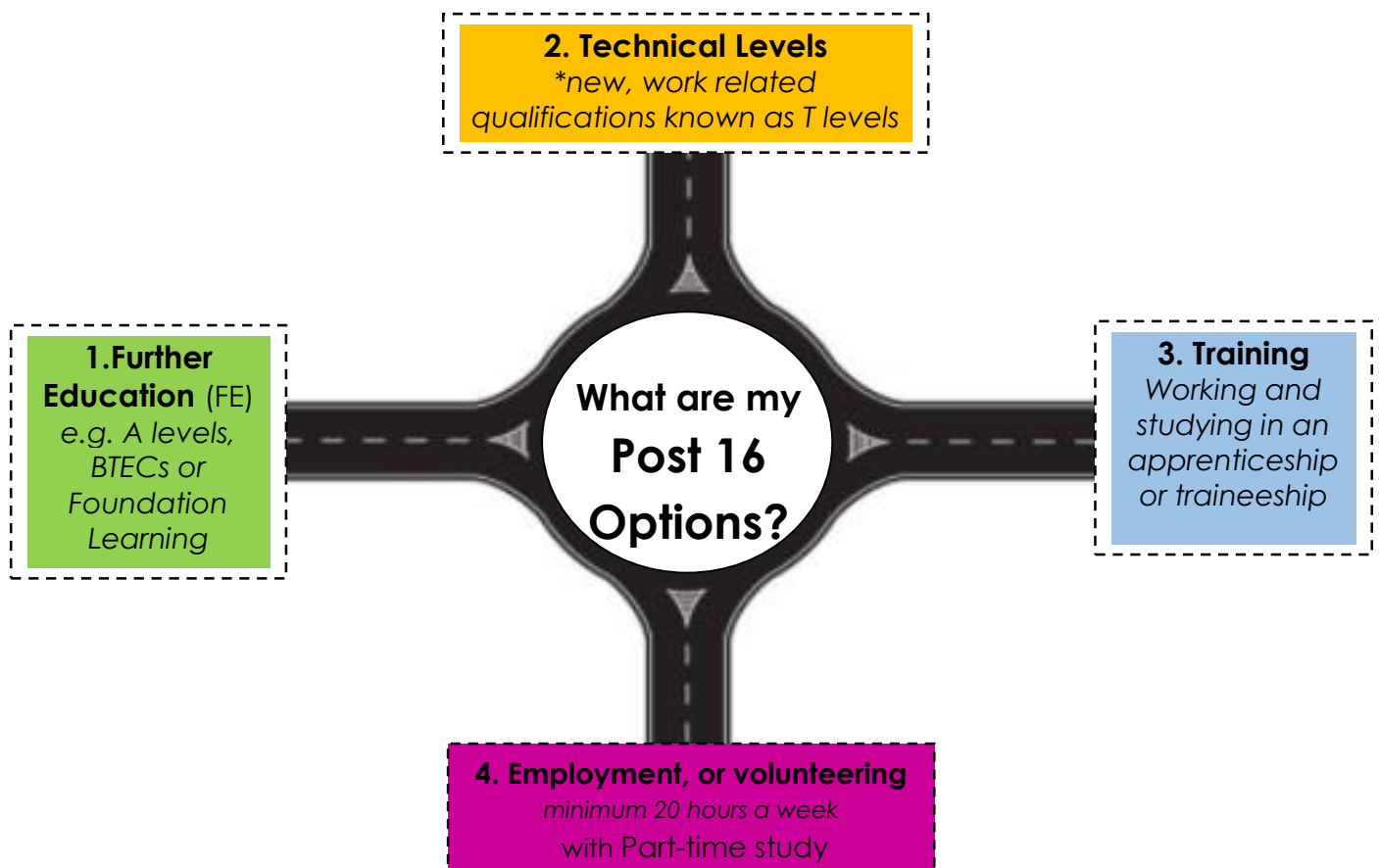
This guidance booklet has been put together to help you understand the options available to you when you leave school and to inform you of the processes of applying and gaining a place in further education or training. Young people today have more options available for their future than ever before but there are factors that affect them. With an ever-changing workplace landscape, it is even more important for them to make informed choices for their education, training and employment. While for many young people a career may seem a long way off, decisions they make about education and training now may affect their options later on.

Raising the Participation Age	2
What are my Post 16 Options?	2
Types of Provider	4
How do qualifications compare?	6
Where can I find out more?	7
Labour Market Information	8
The Application Process	9
Once I know what I want to apply for, what do I do next?	10
Further Support	12
Challenging Stereotypes	12
Creating a Professional Social Media Presence	13
The impact of COVID-19 on jobs	13
Online Resources	15
What subjects can I choose?	15
Advice for Post 16 Interviews & Virtual Interviews	16
Apprenticeships, Traineeships & study programmes in Birmingham & Solihull	19
Some of the T Level Providers in The West Midlands	20
Writing a Personal Statement	21
How to develop your employability/soft skills	23
Next Steps Timeline	25
Career Motivation	25
Careers Quiz	27
Glossary	28

Raising the Participation Age

From September 2015, young people are required to stay in education or training up to the age of **18**. Gaining more qualifications, recognised by employers will increase your earning power and improve your life chances. We all know that our own and the world economy is changing. Today, **more jobs require higher levels of skills** than in the past. Young people without qualifications are at a disadvantage. If young people are disadvantaged, then so is our economy as we need to compete with other countries for jobs.

Your career starts now. Like a road map there are choices you have to make and pathways that lead you in a particular direction.



There is no right or wrong pathway. We are all unique with our own set of skills, interests and careers goals. We have to choose what is right for us as individuals.

We are all on our own exciting journey!

1. Further Education

A Levels Known as Advanced levels are the traditional qualifications offered to **16-19 year olds**. They are highly valued by universities and employers and focus on **academic** subjects.

Some are called '**Applied**' making them more work-related. With the A level reforms many subjects will now be taught as a two-year linear course with exams at the end of the 2nd year. You are usually offered **3** subjects, however, some able pupils may do 4. There is a wide range of subjects to choose from (see Appendix A). You are usually required to obtain at least **5 GCSEs at grades 9-4** including including English and Maths. Some providers require **two grade 6s**. For some subjects such as Maths and Science you might be required to get at least grade **6** in that GCSE to continue on into the A level. You will need to check with individual providers as to what their entry requirements are, that is why it is best to aim as high as you can to give yourself the best choices.

BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) are vocational (job or work-related) qualifications. They're designed for people interested in a particular sector or industry. These qualifications accommodate the needs of employers as well as allowing progression to university. They provide a more practical, real-world approach to learning alongside a theoretical background. Emphasis is on coursework, on-going assessment, work-based assignments although some include exams. There is also an element of work experience.

There are providers such as Cadbury that offer a **hybrid study** programme that allow you to do a combination of both A levels and BTEC subjects.

Foundation Learning/Access to Further Education are courses for those who have few or no formal qualifications or are unsure about which educational or career route they want to follow. These courses enable you to achieve qualifications whilst keeping your options open. This course can lead onto Level 1 or Level 2 courses or a training programmes along with developing your skills in English and Maths. Some of these courses offer 5 'taster' subjects to help you decide what you want to specialise in after completion.

2. T Levels - Technical Qualifications are a new two-year course (*equivalent to three levels*). They have been designed by employers to meet the needs of the work place. There will be 3 will be available from September 2020, **digital production, design and development, design, surveying and planning, education**. These courses include a 45 day placement with an employer. From September 2021 there will be *building services, engineering for construction, healthcare science and Science*. Find out more about where you can study them.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels/introduction-of-t-levels>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providers-selected-to-deliver-t-levels>

3. Apprenticeships/Traineeships

An **Apprenticeship** is a *real* job with contract and training which allows you to earn while you learn, whilst gaining a nationally recognised qualification. Apprenticeships take between one and five years to complete and cover 1500 job roles in a wide range of industries, from engineering to accountancy, public relations to veterinary nursing, law to paramedics. Apprenticeships are now available at degree level and beyond. The current minimum starting wage is **£4.15** per hour. This increases the older you get and as you complete the course. The average weekly wage is £170, depending on the company, it can be a lot higher.

A **traineeship** is an education and training programme with work experience that usually lasts from 6 weeks to 6 months unlocking the great potential of young people by helping them to become 'work ready' helping them to secure an apprenticeship or employment.

In **National Apprenticeships Week** there will be an assembly on **Monday 8th February** and information going out during form time. On

Monday 22nd February there will be a lunchtime and after school session to register on the government's apprenticeship website. Where you can search and apply for vacancies www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch

If this is something you are interested in, you should be conducting some research in the meantime. Check out <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/apprentices>

You can also search for vacancies and apply through some of the colleges too such as Solihull College, South & City, Stratford and Birmingham Metropolitan.



From February there will be a Live Vacancies report saved in **studentcommon>Careers>Apprenticeships** listing all the vacancies in Birmingham and Solihull. Keep a look out! Please note the start dates as you won't be able to start until July 2021, after your exams. Be aware that some large companies have earlier deadlines such as JaguarLandRover www.jaguarlandrovercareers.com/go/Advanced-Apprenticeship

If you don't feel work ready at 16 you might consider a **higher or degree apprenticeship** at 18 instead of full time university if it suits you and your career ideas?

E.g. Rolls Royce, PricehouseWaterCoopers, Highways Agency, Ernst Young, KPMG, Capgemini



Even if you are absolutely set on doing an apprenticeship you must apply for a college place in case you are unsuccessful.

4. Work and part-time study

If you are not in full time further education or training, you will be required to undertake a minimum of 20 hours of employment or volunteering whilst studying part time course.

Types of Provider

Further Education Colleges

- are for people aged 16+
- they offer a wide range of courses, some offer both academic (A-levels) and vocational and practical qualifications at all levels (*giving you skills and knowledge for a particular industry*)
- Some offer apprenticeship training
- you might be studying with people who are a different age to you
- Some have level 4-6 courses to go onto



Sixth Form Colleges

- are for young people aged 16 to 19
- they offer a range of courses, usually a large range of A' levels and BTEC diploma qualifications
- most courses are level 3, some offer a few level 2



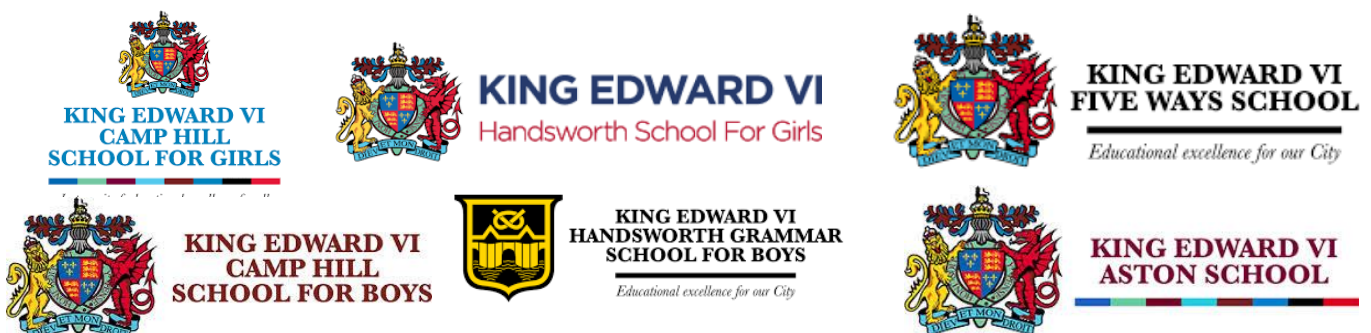
School Sixth Forms

- are for young people aged 16 to 18
- offer a smaller range of courses, A' levels and some also diploma qualifications
- most courses are level 3
- Some people favour having a bigger sized building and less students



Grammar School Sixth Forms

- Have high levels achievement
- A high number go onto university including the Russell Group of the most prestigious universities



University Technology Centres (UTCs)

Specialist Technology colleges such as Aston University Engineering Academy and WMG Academy Coventry and WMG Academy Solihull, aims of encourage young people to study science, technology, engineering and maths.



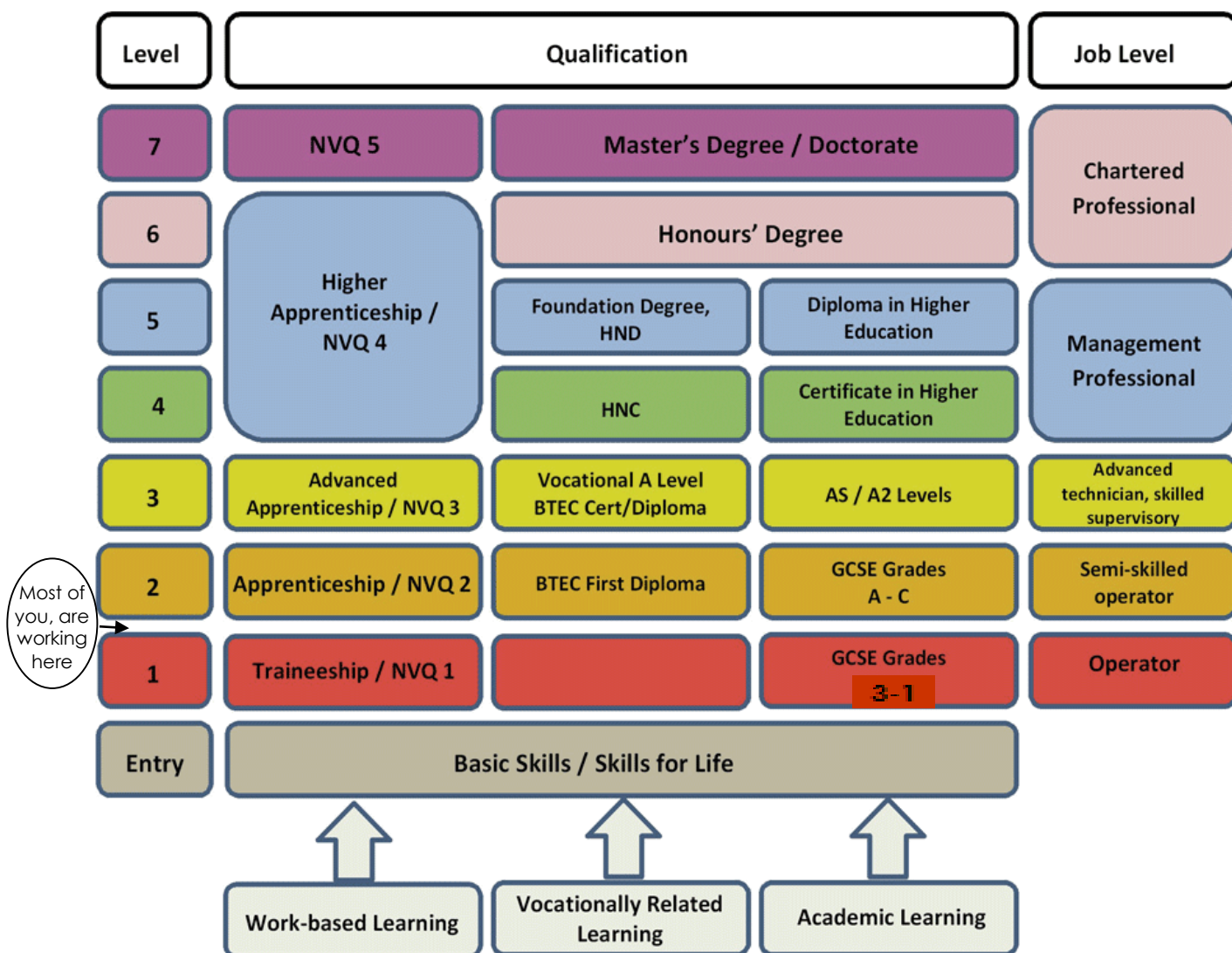
Training Providers

- are a place you would study for your apprenticeship qualification
- some often have a specialist area
- Often you spend 1 day a week and the rest of the week

in the workplace



How do qualifications compare?



Where can I find out more?

Watch the form time Post 16 Options videos and read this booklet

This will help you to understand what your options are and how to go about researching and applying. Please start to discuss your ideas with your family.

Attend the Open Day events

Sign up to the providers' open days to see their facilities and speak to the specialist subject tutors. This will help you decide if you want to apply for a place. Please be aware that currently most open days are being offered as virtual events. Often you will need to pre-register on the providers' website. See the list attached of dates.

You can find a list here <https://www.birminghamcareersservice.co.uk/colleges/>

Research providers' websites and collect prospectuses

Gather as much information about as many colleges you are interested in. Try to find out their latest results and the post 18 destinations of their students to gauge how successful they are.

You can compare their attainment on this website. <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/compare-schools?for=16to18>

Prospectuses are available to collect from the 'Careers Corner' of our school library.

But what type of course is right for me?

There are some good videos that explain the different types of courses and a short 4 question quiz looking at your own learning styles and preferences. <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/16-18-choices/getting-started/what-are-my-options/what-qualifications-are-there-for-16-18>

BIRMINGHAM CAREERS SERVICE guiding young people

Birmingham Careers Service 1-to-1 Careers Meetings

All Year 11 pupils are offered a 30 minute careers guidance meeting, please ensure you attend this. This is your opportunity to receive impartial Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) about careers, colleges, apprenticeships, universities or anything you may need support with. This is with our independent advisor from the Birmingham Careers Service, Helen Richards. If you would like to make an appointment to be seen sooner rather than later, please see Miss Homer. You will then either receive an emailed invite on Microsoft Teams few days before or a calendar invite when the meetings can be done face to face in school. You should note down the time and date and any questions you might have in your planner/phone. Following this you will be emailed a personalised **Careers Action Plan** as a record of your discussion and to help you understand what your next steps are. <https://www.birminghamcareersservice.co.uk/>

King Edwards Camp Hill Boys and Girls Sixth Form Talks

For pupils hoping to achieve grades 6 and above in 5 or more subjects including English and Maths, who may be considering going to a grammar sixth form. There will be a lunchtime talks from Camp Hill taking place Tuesday 3rd November for the girls and Wednesday 4th November for the boys from 1.30pm- 2pm. The appropriate pupils will receive a letter and email to invite them to this session.

Labour Market Information

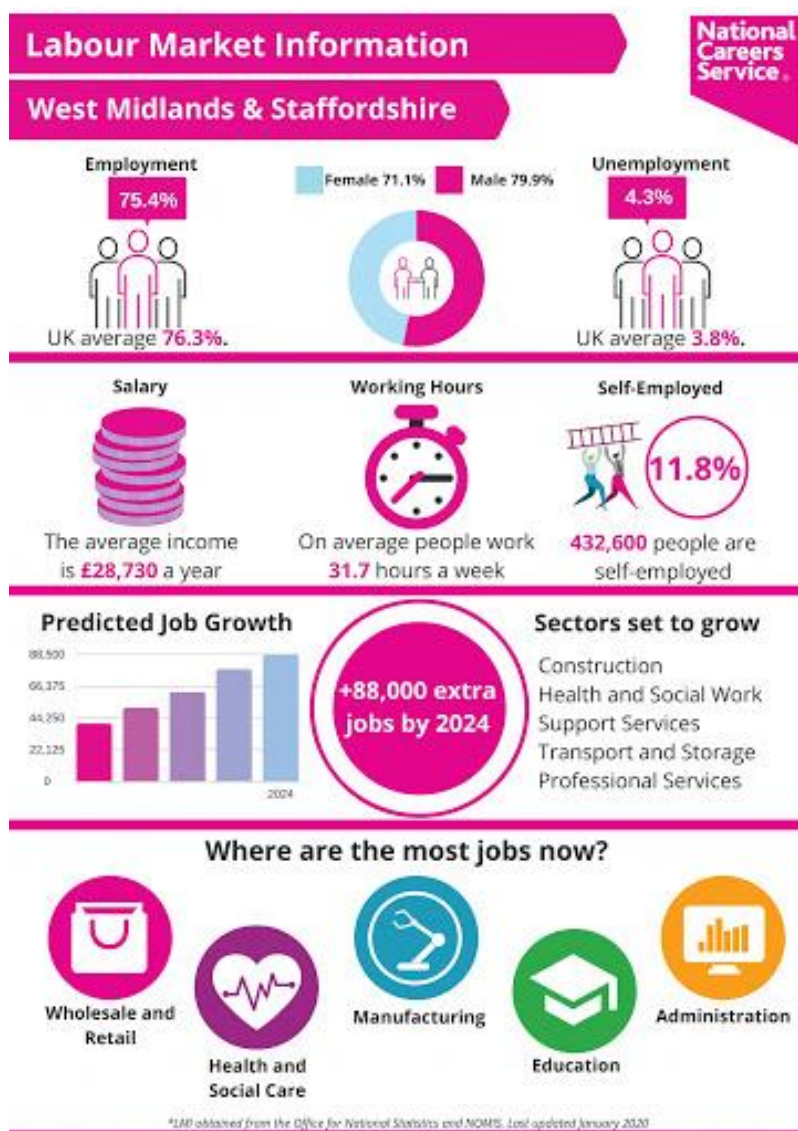
This is information about the current economic and employment situation. It includes data on graduate destinations, average starting salaries, current trends in employment sectors and recruitment patterns.

The National Careers Service

website has current Labour Market Information when view the **Job Profiles**. The profiles include the skills and qualifications needed along with the typical salary you would expect to earn. You can also speak to one of the National Careers advisors on 0800 100 900 or chat online at nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

The influence of **globalisation** on the labour market can be seen in the stiff competition for international markets that has led to the transfer of some manufacturing and customer services jobs to developing countries. Technology and the Internet have made it easy to transfer information between companies and countries and this process now allows even the smallest firm to operate globally, as falling trade barriers make it easier and less expensive for them to serve internationally. This has created new areas of work and occupations in global entrepreneurship, international marketing, finance, distribution, trade research and international legal and trade management.

Businesses can now operate all over the world, and around the clock ('24/7'). While some workers are happy to travel anywhere to follow their chosen career, many will want to stay in their geographical area. However, the influence of globalisation is likely to affect individuals wherever they work. To look at LMI in the West Midlands go to [West Midlands 2018 LMI Report](#)



Business analyst

Business analysts work with organisations to help them change and improve.

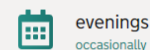
Average salary (a year)



Typical hours (a week)



You could work



Employee jobs (2018)

	Birmingham (Employee Jobs)	Birmingham (%)	West Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)
Total Employee Jobs	512,000	-	-	-
Full-Time	359,000	70.1	68.4	67.6
Part-Time	153,000	29.9	31.6	32.4

Employee Jobs By Industry

B : Mining And Quarrying	20	0.0	0.0	0.2
C : Manufacturing	37,000	7.2	11.9	8.1
D : Electricity, Gas, Steam And Air Conditioning Supply	600	0.1	0.4	0.5
E : Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management And Remediation Activities	3,000	0.6	0.8	0.7
F : Construction	19,000	3.7	4.8	4.7
G : Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair Of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles	74,000	14.5	16.7	15.2
H : Transportation And Storage	25,000	4.9	5.6	4.8
I : Accommodation And Food Service Activities	27,000	5.3	5.7	7.6
J : Information And Communication	14,000	2.7	2.8	4.2
K : Financial And Insurance Activities	23,000	4.5	2.4	3.5
L : Real Estate Activities	9,000	1.8	1.8	1.7
M : Professional, Scientific And Technical Activities	49,000	9.6	7.0	8.7
N : Administrative And Support Service Activities	46,000	9.0	8.7	9.1
O : Public Administration And Defence; Compulsory Social Security	25,000	4.9	3.7	4.3
P : Education	57,000	11.1	9.5	8.9
Q : Human Health And Social Work Activities	80,000	15.6	13.6	13.2
R : Arts, Entertainment And Recreation	8,000	1.6	2.0	2.5
S : Other Service Activities	13,000	2.5	2.4	2.0

Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey : open access

<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157186/report.aspx?pc=B28%200AA>

The Application Process



Do not worry if you don't have to have a clear idea of what job you want to do when you are older, not knowing is good for keeping your options open to lots of different careers. Think about these questions below...



How do I choose which subjects to take?

What do you enjoy? Many of you will be studying these subjects for the next 2 years, so choosing ones you actually enjoy will keep you motivated and help you achieve the best grades possible. Unless the subject is an entry requirement for your degree, or necessary to other future plans you may have, there's no point signing up for it if you don't look forward to lessons.

What are my strengths and recommendations Which subjects do you excel in and why? Talking to your teachers will give you an accurate idea of where your strengths and weaknesses lie, and guide you toward the subjects that may suit you better than others.

Conversations Speak to people who know you well such as parents and teachers,

Meet employers and post 16 providers There will be many virtual events over the coming year where you will gain new ideas. Talking to new people will help broaden your knowledge of different jobs, like at the school Careers Fair in January.

Complete some virtual Work Experience or Insight Days

To help you better understand what a career sector is all about try out some virtual sessions to ask questions and see what would be involved. Ideally everyone should do this before September 2021 they move into post 16 provision. Such as

<https://www.springpod.co.uk/find-work-experience/>

<https://medicmentor.co.uk/university-hospitals-birmingham-trust-virtual-work-experience/>

https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/careers/programmes.html?icid=top_programmes&utm_source=prospects&utm_medium=click-tracker&utm_campaign=early-careers-fy21&utm_term=smsr&utm_content=think-prospecting-1x1-employer-profile&dclid=CPWQo6m-sewCFQUO0wodZzMH8A

<https://www.speakersforschools.org/experience-2/vwex/>

<https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-virtual-work-experience/school/virtual-work-experience>

Check out the 5 stories of work experience with Stacey Dooley.
[/www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles)

Research Take a look at the syllabus or course content for the subjects you are considering, especially if they were not available to you at GCSE level, such as Politics or Psychology. Some students take subjects they think will interest them, but quickly become disappointed when they find it's not what they were expecting. Also see the Cadbury Career Pathways

Future Career Plans If you're considering going to university you need to check the entry requirements for the course(s) you are considering. There are a significant number of subjects where at least one particular A level is compulsory. See www.ucas.com for higher education degrees and courses. E.g. Nursing degrees usually require an A level or Level 3 BTEC in a science subject.

Not going to university? Try to pick subjects that will be valuable to potential employers, and useful in the real world. For example, Mathematics has applications in many industries, as does Biology, Economics and Business Studies. www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

"Soft" subjects Some top universities in the UK have A level "blacklists", made up of subjects they feel do *not* prepare students for a degree as well as more traditional ones such as Chemistry, Mathematics and History. If you are planning to apply to a prestigious or "red brick" university, make sure you're not going to put yourself at a disadvantage by choosing an A level in Media Studies, Photography or Sociology. Russell Group universities recommend you choose at least 2 traditional subjects to ensure you will be considered by their admissions tutors. If you're still uncertain, phone or email the university admissions team and ask for their advice.

Subject Tasters Some of the colleges are offering taster sessions. Try as *many as you want* to give you a deeper insight into the different subjects.

Remember you should never feel pressured into a subject you don't feel comfortable with. You're the one that has to complete the exams, or practical work for it, always pick subjects you feel confident about.



Once I know what I want to apply for, what do I do next?

Application Forms

Once you know where you want to apply to, you need to complete your online application forms on the provider's websites. You should submit a **minimum of 2 applications** giving you a first choice *and* a back-up option. You *can* submit more but remember you will need to attend **all** of the interviews. Support with applications will be available during Monday lunchtimes in the library. If you are a pupil who is projected to obtain 5 or more grades 6s you may want to consider a grammar school 6th form or The University of Birmingham School. For those who want to make applications for apprenticeships they are usually made from March onwards via the apprenticeships.org.uk website.

Personal Statements

Some application forms ask for a personal statement or further detailed information about you. Please see the template on page 20 of what you could include.

References

Form Tutors will be completing your references in November. Your **punctuality, attendance, projected grades** will be noted as well as comments on your character and **attitude to learning**. Please note most colleges will be expecting you to have at least **95%** attendance or higher, unless there has been a genuine reason for your absence.

Deadlines

Applications should ideally be submitted by the **end of December**. Post 16 providers do have various deadline dates please be aware of this so you do not leave it too late. You can make adjustments to your subject choices if necessary in writing an email to the provider to explain your reason why.

Confirmation

You should receive an email, letter or text from the post 16 provider to say they have received your application. If you do not receive any confirmation you may need to check it has been received. The provider will then usually request a reference form from the school.

Interviews

Some colleges will start their interview process quickly and some in the new year, depending on how soon you apply. If this is during school time you **must** show the letter/text/email to **reception** when you sign in or out of school. Some colleges, such as Cadbury College, have a new online booking system allowing you to choose a time that is most convenient for you. If for any reason you cannot attend an interview it is imperative and courteous to let the college know in order for them to give that time to interview somebody else. Politely inform them with a call or email explaining who you are and when your interview is. It will reflect badly on yourself and the school if you 'don't show up'. For further guidance please see the 'Advice for Post 16 Interviews' sheet page 16.

If your interview is during the school day you will only be given enough time to travel to the interview e.g. The Sixth Form Solihull 1 hour. Therefore, you must bring your Progress File and anything else you need into school. You *be not* be given time to go home.

Joseph Chamberlain College interviews will take place in school on Thursday 11th February.

Conditional Place

If a college offers you a conditional place (based on particular predicted grades and reference) that's great, but do accept **all** offers so that you can make a decision in the Summer of which college you would prefer to go to and just in case for any reason you do not get the grades you expected or you change your mind.

Intended destinations

Please let Miss Homer know when you have accepted your offers so she can ensure all pupils have secured a place for September. Evidence of our applications will be requested to be seen in January.

Further support

16 to 19 Bursary Fund

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- bursaries for defined vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 a year
- discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books, ICT and equipment.

The criteria includes those who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner
- receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

Check with the providers of what they might be able to support you with. And for general information go to <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2019-to-2020-academic-year>

Careers Noticeboard

Keep an eye out for updates on the canteen notice board.

Library Resources

The **Careers Corner** area in the library also has lots of college and university prospectuses, leaflets, books & magazines for you to view.

Work Experience/Volunteering

Look out for opportunities on the display board outside the careers office to build on your skills and experience and to have extra evidence on your CV this will really help you to 'stand out from the crowd'. Once you have completed your GCSE exams why not join 'The Challenge'

there will be an assembly to tell you more about this summer programme inspiring and connecting people in order to strengthen your local community www.the-challenge.org

Gender Stereotypes

Think about the following fields: nursing, engineering, banking, hairdressing — do you automatically assign each career path a typical gender in your head?

Much work has recently been publicised about closing the gender wages gap and informing young people that their **gender should NOT stop you from going into the career you want to do**. Times are changing. There has been a 50% increase of men applying for nursing degrees over the last 10 years. We are also seeing more women going into STEM (*Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths*) careers than ever before. You shouldn't let stereotypes get in the way of your subject choices.



Taken from <https://www.wisecampaign.org.uk/statistics/women-on-stem-apprenticeships-2016-17/>

Creating a Professional Social Media

Your social media presence is now becoming as **important** as your CV. When used properly, social media can positively impact college, university, apprenticeships, scholarships, internships, work experience, volunteering and employment opportunities.



You may want to consider a separate professional 'Twitter', 'LinkedIn' 'Instagram' purely for your career progression.

Colleges and employers are using social media to search for, identify and recruit talented students and employees.





This way you can follow all the organisations and people that relate to your career ideas. This not only keeps you up to date with what the organisations are doing but also notifies you of opportunities you might want to apply for.

As a starting point you can create an account which doesn't necessarily have to have a photo of you but something simple and formal. Then you can add the colleges and employers you are interested in finding out more about.

Here are some examples...

Post 16 Providers	Apprenticeship Employers	Careers Guidance
@sfcSolihull	@JLRCareers	@LearnLiveUK
@southandcitycollege	@NetworkRail	@birminghamcareersservice
@jcsfcollege	@Pwc_uk_careers	@notgoingtouni
@solihullcollege	@WilmottDixon	@ucas_online
@cadburycollege	@uhbtrust	@careersweek
@bmetcollege	@lbgtalent	@careersandenterprise
@stratforduponavoncollege	@mondelez_international	@springpod

The impact of COVID-19 on jobs

Around 8 million people in the UK are now working from home. Businesses have furloughed a large number of their employees in sectors like:

- accommodation and food services
- tourism and leisure
- construction
- creative arts
- non-food retail

People in all sectors, on the lowest incomes, are most at risk of becoming unemployed.

Right now, there is a growing demand for people to work in sectors like **IT**, **logistics** and **food sales**.

Employers are also looking for workers with good digital skills. You are more likely to bounce back from any setbacks in the labour market if you have [transferable skills](#).

You can check how the skills you have might match to new career opportunities using our [skills assessment tools](#).

To get a new job, you'll need to know about virtual recruitment methods. This includes things like:

- [online applications](#)
- video interviews
- telephone interviews

You might need to [learn new digital skills](#) for your current job, like:

- remote team leading
- team working online
- video conferencing
- online selling

Find out about online learning opportunities using [The Skills Toolkit](#).

Sudden changes can be unsettling. We can help you understand what's going on in the labour market. This, in turn, can help you to think about what might lie ahead and plan for your future.

Online Resources

www.vinsipred.com Search for local volunteering opportunities.

www.icould.com is a good place to look for inspirational careers articles and videos.

www.careersbox.co.uk online library of careers related films, news and information.

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/ opportunities that exist outside of the traditional university route

www.advancingaccess.ac.uk/ 24 Russell Group universities offering case study videos from students

www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk

www.barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-virtual-work-experience/school/virtual-work-experience

www.futurelearn.com/ after you've completed your GCSEs you might like to do develop your knowledge in an area that interests you with a free, short course.

www.careerpilot.org.uk

www.bbc.co.uk/careers Interviews, explore subjects, stories, videos, work experience with Stacey Doooley

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/FindYourCareer Healthcare professions and quiz

www.ucas.com Post 16 and Post 18 options. Research degree courses

What subjects can I choose?

Advanced Levels *(availability depends on the provider)*

Accounting	Fine Art	Modern History
Ancient History	French	Music
Biology	Further Mathematics	Philosophy
Business	Geography	Photography
Chemistry	Geology	Physical Education
Classical Civilisation	German	Physics
Computer Science	Graphics	Politics & Government
Criminology	Health & Social Care	Psychology
Dance	History	Religious Studies
Drama & Theatre	IT	Russian
Economics	Law	Sociology
English Language	Mathematics	Spanish
English Literature	Media Studies	Statistics
Film Studies		Textiles

BTEC Diplomas, technical and vocational subjects *(these are often full time courses)*

Accounting	. Carpentry and Joinery	Hair & Media Make up
Aerospace Engineering	Electrical Installation	Health and Social care
Animal	. Painting & Decorating	Horticulture/Conservation
Care/Management	. Plastering	Hospitality/Event Planning
Applied Science	. Plumbing	ICT/ Games Design
Art and Design	Criminology and Cyber	Law
Beauty	Security	Media/Digital Graphics
Broadcasting	Dental	Motor Vehicle/Motor Sport
Business	Digital Media/Technology	Music Performance/Production
Bakery/Catering/Food	Engineering	Performing Arts
Technology	Forensic & Criminal	Public Services
Early Years/ Supporting	investigation	Psychology, Criminology & Law
Teaching and Learning	Foundation Learning <i>(often</i>	Fashion/Retail
(schools)	<i>made up of a few different</i>	Sport
Construction	<i>subjects to try out)</i>	Sport (with Boxing Academy)
. Bricklaying	Hairdressing/Barbering	Travel & Tourism/Cabin Crew

Check the entry requirements on www.ucas.com depending on the course, grades and university, you **can** access degree level courses with a level 3 BTEC.

Advice for Post 16 Interviews & Virtual Interviews

Applying to a 6th form or apprenticeship can be a particularly competitive, even more so for the grammar 6th forms. Where ever you are applying to you need to think about the sort of student they are looking for. They will need to see what you are academically capable of, which they will see from your projected grades and (possibly Mock results). How you come across in your interview and your teacher reference are also crucial as well as your attendance and punctuality figures.

Once you've applied, you will receive a letter, email or text to invite to an interview, if this is during the school day it is your responsibility to **inform your subject teachers** from the lessons that you miss

and to catch up with the work. Read the letter carefully. Are there particular things you should take? e.g. *full school report, attendance print out.*

You will need to show the interview invite to the **school reception** to be authorised to leave to school. If you do not show this evidence it will go on your record as time missed unauthorised. Many of the post 16 provider will be looking for 95% attendance.

If in person every pupil should take their '**Progress File**' (their blue folder). This should contain your certificates, letters of achievement, awards, school reports, work experience report and certificate, possibly examples of work, perhaps photographs of work, experiences gained or design work. Where possible you should keep an electronic folder of this evidence if needed to send to a provider or employer.

'You only get one chance to make a first impression'



- Before you start take a deep, slow breath to compose yourself.
- Remember to be dressed in clean, smart clothes – shirt tucked in and tie done.
- Sit up straight in your chair (if you are slouched it will look like you don't want to be there)
- Use formal language, refrain from saying slang words e.g. *mate* or *whatever*
- Make good eye contact when the interviewer is asking you questions
- Try to answer questions as fully as possible as opposed to just a *yes* or *no*
- Not should you only be on time you should aim to get there at least 5-10 minutes early.
- If online move your phone and any other distractions well away from you.
- Your interviewer will want you to have prepared some (written) questions.

Possible Interview Questions

○ **Why do you want to do this course?**

- Interested in/passionate about subject
- Works towards a career in the field
- Want to further my studies
- Gain knowledge/experience before going to university/higher apprenticeship

○ **What do you enjoy about school?**

- Be honest, if yes say why,
- If no, as you don't really want to give a negative impression, give reasons why, such as didn't like to atmosphere, wanted to be in a more grown up environment etc

○ **What is your favourite subject at school?**

- Say your favourite subject and why, e.g. want a career relating to art, enjoy more hands on subjects, enjoy studying theories etc

○ **What do you plan to do after the course?**

- This might be university, another higher level course, work in the field the course is in e.g. if you are studying sports that you might want to go onto work in a gym or leisure centre etc (never say be unemployed), you can of course say you unsure at the moment and that you are considering a couple different options.

- **What skills can you contribute to the course?**
 - Good timekeeping
 - Organised
 - Good subject related experience
 - Perhaps previous or current voluntary work
 - Work as part of a team
 - Willingness to study hard/independently
- **What skills do you think you need to develop?**
 - Be honest you may say for example communication, you want to become more confident and mature,
 - Analysis/research skills
 - Anything else you would like to improve
- **How do you work within groups?**
 - You say you are excellent in a team (give example for school when you worked in a team, e.g. sports teams, school council, productions etc), also say you are also able to work alone.
- **Do you have any work experience? If so, tell me what you learnt from it.**
 - Tell them what work experience you did at school or by yourself, tell them the skills you gained such as team working, timekeeping, reliability, communication, hand eye co-ordination, use of machinery, caring and work ethics
- **What is your one of your greatest achievements?**
 - Tell them about something great you have done in your life such as a course or certificate, when you have helped someone or achieved something you have been really proud of. E.g. Prefect, Peer Mentor, winning a tournament etc
- **What are your weaknesses?**
 - You can say your weakness but always follow it up with a positive e.g. I am a little shy **but** once I get to know people I am an excellent communicator and work well with others.
- **What are your strengths?**
 - Tell them about your skills, good communicator, organised, reliable, ability to work to deadlines, team worker, good research skills, attendance, good spokesperson etc give examples.
- **Why did you choose to apply to this institution?**
 - Recommended/ Heard good things about the college
 - Seen adverts/ impressed with what you read on their website/ prospectus
 - Good range of courses/ suited to your preferences
 - Good qualifications gained/Good pass rate
 - Ability to move on after the course/ Good progression to Higher Education

Possible questions you could ask

Your interviewer will appreciate you asking questions to show you are interested in their institution and what they are offering:

- How many students progress onto Higher Education/University?
- What kind of employment students go onto after they've completed the course?
- Will I need any particular items, uniform or equipment?
- How many hours a week is the course?
- How many hours are expected for homework/ independent study?
- What is the pass rate of the course? (A*-C grades/ Distinctions/Merits with BTEC)
- What support is available if I need it?
- Will I need to complete work experience? Do I get the option to try more than one placement?

Some of the T Level Providers in The West Midlands	T Level Transition Programme		T LEVEL ROUTE DELIVERY BY ACADEMIC YEAR													
			Digital Route			Construction Route			Education and Childcare Route			Health and Science Route		Financ e and Accoun ting	Busine ss and Admini stratio n	Engine ering and Manuf acturin g
	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2022/ 23	2022/ 23	2022/ 23
Access Creative College (Access to Music Ltd)		x		x	x											
Dudley College of Technology	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Halesowen College					x					x	x	x	x		x	
Heart of Worcestershire College		x		x	x					x	x				x	x
Lordswood Girls' School & Sixth Form Centre	x	x							x	x	x					
Sandwell Academy				x	x							x	x			
Sandwell College		x		x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Solihull College & University Centre		x		x	x						x					x
South & City College Birmingham					x			x			x		x		x	x
Thomas Telford UTC (formerly West Mids UTC)		x					x	x								
University College Birmingham		x			x					x	x	x	x	x	x	
Walsall Academy					x								x		x	
Walsall College			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Walsall Studio School		x		x	x											
Warwickshire College Group		x		x	x			x					x			x

**WMG Academy for Young
Engineers**

x

Writing a Personal Statement

This is to help you think about what you could include in your personal statement.

Why are you applying for the course?

Why does this course or subject interest you? What would like to find out more about?

Let the provider know how much you enjoy a subject by writing about a course that you may have already studied at GCSE that you found really interesting or that you were good at.

Somebody who wanted to work with animals might write: *I would like to study BTEC in Animal Care as I am passionate about understanding and looking after animals. I already look after two dogs and it will help me in my future career plans.*

Skills and Achievements

Write about anything that you are proud of e.g. passing Grade 2 in piano, being selected for a sports team. Also include any awards you have done e.g. Duke of Edinburgh. You can also add any positions of responsibility that you have held e.g. a house position, student council or peer mentoring.

Hobbies and Interests

Think about how they show your skills and ability. Try and link them to skills and experience you might need on your chosen course(s).

Work Experience/Work History/Virtual Encounters

Write about any volunteering, work experience or any part time/summer jobs. What skills have you gained?

<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

Career Plans

Explain how you would like to use the course(s) you have applied for to help you reach your future career goals.

<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

This sheet will also help you think about what to include on apprenticeship applications and future university personal statements too.



Dos and Don'ts when writing a personal statement

- **Do** use your best English and check for spelling and grammar to make sure it is right.
- **Do** be enthusiastic – if you show your interest in the course it will help you.
- **Do** ask your teacher/adviser/parent/carer to read through what you have written and give you feedback.
- **Don't** exaggerate – you may well be asked about what you have written if you attend an interview with a provider.
- **Don't** leave it until the last minute – it is a good idea to give yourself time to think about what you write to make sure that you don't forget anything.

How to develop your employability/soft skills

These skills that most employers look for when recruiting and are needed for most jobs. They are sometimes called transferable skills or employability skills by employers.

Hard skills are skills needed to do a specific job, generally gained through work, learning or training.

These skills are more likely to be the kind you pick up through life experience, like how you:

- communicate and behave with others
- make decisions
- organise yourself and work

Employers will be looking for people with skills that fit the culture of their company. Your [application and interview](#) will need to show that your soft skills match theirs.

You may want to develop new soft skills or need advice on how to show that you have them when you are in job interviews.

Here we focus on the top 5 soft skills employers are looking for. See our advice on how you can develop these skills and stand out from other candidates in the interview process.

Communication Skills are an important skill for a wide range of jobs and sectors, like:

- digital and IT – clear email communication
- marketing – write good communications for your audience
- retail – dealing with customers
- care and social work - helping and caring for people

Develop your communication skills by meeting new people and working with them. You could:

- join a sports team or creative arts club
- volunteer somewhere you will talk to the public
- try public speaking
- take an online course - like how to give work presentations

If you want to build your confidence, you could practice and build your communications skills with family and friends like:

- organise an activity - like a quiz
- practice situations - 'how would you handle a customer complaint'
- practice writing emails or letters
- role-play with an interview

Leadership skills are what Employers associate with management skills. But it also shows employees can look after their own workload. Even if you are not a manager, you are likely to have had leadership experience, like:

- time management
- conflict management
- problem solving
- mentoring
- tutor a student
- organise your schedule by creating a timetable
- resolve conflict between friends or colleagues
- motivate others – you could do this by organising activities, fun or educational like a quiz
- teach skills to others – you could create instruction manuals or videos to share with family and friends

Positivity skills are a good attitude, something a lot of employers look for. Employers look for people who see solutions, not problems.

This soft skill is easier to show an employer in an interview stage. You could show that you have a good attitude and are happy to meet people.

Employers want someone that will be happy to be at work and get along with the other members of the team. To develop your positivity skills you could:

- motivate a team – sports team or creative arts club
- try to get the best out of a hard situation
- [network](#) - whether for work or education, this shows a good attitude to learning and growing
- be part of a team, like sports or creative arts – show you're a team player

Flexibility skills tells employers that you are adaptable to different situations. It shows you can handle change and adapt at short notice.

It also tells employers that you will help in situations that are not part of your job role. That you are willing to go over and above what you need to do sometimes. To develop your flexibility skills you could:

- have to rearrange your day because of an emergency
- doing more than one task at a time
- do something outside of your comfort zone
- do a challenge that stretches you
- change your plans to help someone at short notice

Problem solving skills shows you can find problems and fix them. To develop your problem solving skills you could:

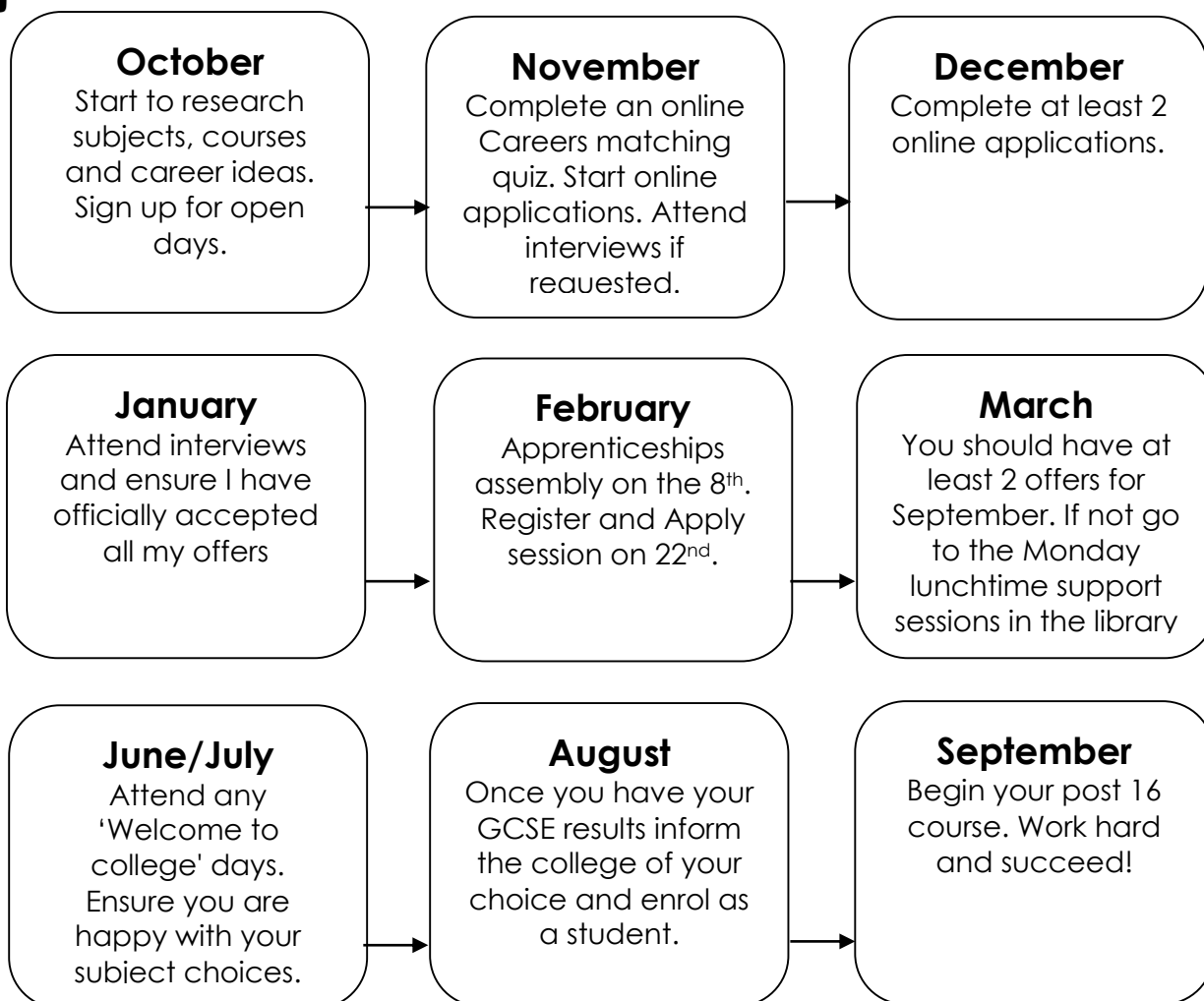
- play logic puzzles and games
- keep a journal – looking at your mindset and how you look at solving problems
- develop your communication skills

- learn to do data analysis
- try brainstorming and developing plans for problems you have

[Match soft skills to your employer](#)



Next Steps Timeline



Career Motivation

Motivation is a key factor within **your** control that impacts on the quality of your work and your overall future career success. Year 11 will go quickly, have no regrets. Do your very best and ask for support if you need it. The more successful you are in your GCSEs the more options there are available to you. **Be proud of what you have achieved.**

Staying focused and driven can be tricky, especially when things feel uncertain. If you're looking for some tips for staying motivated now that term has started, check out the advice below.

Growth Mindset

You must have self-belief and understand that success doesn't come to you. You go to it.

1. Set goals

Focus on what you're trying to achieve. Make sure your goals are realistic. You could even share your goals with a family member or friend you trust for an extra boost of motivation.

2. Break things down

When you feel like you have a mountain of things to do, or that you're behind on everything, try breaking them down into manageable chunks to make them feel more achievable. List and prioritise what you need to do. Then reward yourself when you complete a step!

3. Write it down

Why not try writing down one or two positive things you've achieved each day? Taking notice of small achievements can be a really helpful to remind ourselves of the positives when we're feeling demotivated.

4. Take breaks!

Even if the work is piling up, you need to take regular, short breaks to keep up your concentration levels. And remind yourself there are lots of different things that make you who you are, not just your school work.

5. Talk to someone

If you've tried to get motivated and it hasn't worked, it can be helpful to talk to someone you trust. Having a support network can help you to stay motivated.

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zfb2dp3?xtor=CS8-1000-\[Discovery_Cards\]-\[Multi_Site\]-\[SL07\]-\[PS_BITESIZE~N~~P_HowToStayMotivated\]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zfb2dp3?xtor=CS8-1000-[Discovery_Cards]-[Multi_Site]-[SL07]-[PS_BITESIZE~N~~P_HowToStayMotivated])

Well-Being

Be sure to look after yourself and others. You do not want the added stress of fall-outs with friends or family. If you've argued with someone apologise, show respect and put it behind you, so you can all move onto a better, healthier relationship.

- **Eat well** – incorporate food and vegetables in your diet
- **Sleep** - at least 7 hours a night,
- **Drink** - plenty of water
- **Exercise** – try to move around in some way for at least 20 minutes a day such as a walk, Youtube workout, dance, kick around, basketball
- **Enjoy** – doing the things you love in your down time such as cooking, reading, listening to music, playing an instrument, drawing, colouring, playing sports & visiting new places.

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zfb2dp3?xtor=CS8-1000-\[Discovery_Cards\]-\[Multi_Site\]-\[SL07\]-\[PS_BITESIZE~N~~P_HowToStayMotivated\]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zfb2dp3?xtor=CS8-1000-[Discovery_Cards]-[Multi_Site]-[SL07]-[PS_BITESIZE~N~~P_HowToStayMotivated])



How much do you know?

1. At what age must you remain in compulsory education or training?	
2. What are your four main options when you leave school?	1. 2. 3. 4.
3. The New T Level is equivalent to how many A levels?	
4. Name one of the T Levels you could start in 2021?	
5. What is a level 3 apprenticeship called?	
6. What is the minimum amount of applications I should complete by the end of January?	
7. Can you do a BTEC in Biology?	
8. How many A levels can you usually choose?	
9. What is the attendance percentage post 16 providers looking for?	
10. Name a training provider you could do an electrical and plumbing apprenticeship?	
11. What website can I look up the details of degree courses?	
12. What should I do if I cannot attend a scheduled interview?	
13. Who has the most control over my success?	



Careers Glossary

Artificial intelligence (AI)	Computers which can perform tasks normally needing human intelligence such as speech recognition and decision making.
Brexit	A term referred to Britain's withdrawal from the European Union scheduled on 31 October 2019. Many European workers are free to move to the UK to work at the moment and can often be found in jobs which employers have had difficulty recruiting for. Once Britain leaves the EU, some employers may struggle to find the right workers.
Bursary	Financial support given during college or university. The NHS offers some bursaries for health related degrees.
Cyber security	The technologies and methods for preventing crime from taking place via computers, computer systems and mobile devices.
Degree	An academic qualification studied at university or a university college. The bachelor's degree can be taken in hundreds of subjects is usually 3 years.
Degree apprenticeships	A programme offered by some universities, where you can achieve a full bachelor's or master's degree spending part time at university and the rest with your employer.
Digital skills	Being able to find, use, share, evaluate and create content using digital technologies and the internet, such as data handling.
Diverse workforce	A balance of people across a range of characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, age, religion, ability and sexual orientation.
E- CV/ Resume	A CV that is sent to the employer electronically, either via email or via a website.
Enterprising	An enterprising person shares the same skills as an entrepreneur; leadership, project management, communicative, resourceful, organised, proactive and opportunistic, highly motivated, positive when faced with challenges and seeks solutions
Entrepreneurial	A person is concerned with the development of an idea into a business venture start-up and demonstrates skills such as initiative, risk-taking, commitment, problem solving, flexibility and optimism as a small example.
FE	Further education, after you have turned 16.
Fintech	Financial Technologies such as computer programmes which can support banking and financial services such as moving money around.
Furlough	Temporary period of absence from work
Graduate	Someone who has been awarded a degree
Gap Year	This is when you have a year
HE	Higher Education is level 4 and above, after you are 18.
Internship	a period of work experience offered by an employer to give students and graduates exposure to the working environment, within a specific industry , which relates to their field of study. They can be 1 week - 12 months. They can be paid or voluntary. You could do it in another country. www.goabroad.com
NUS	National Union of Students – giving help and advice.
Post Graduate	Someone who studying a degree after gaining an initial degree qualification.
Private sector	Companies that are not run or owned by the government and which can make a profit.
Public sector	Organisations that are run by the government
Sandwich Course	A degree course that includes a placement year with an employer. Usually making it a 4 year course.
Self-Employed	working for oneself as a freelance or the owner of a business rather than for an employer
SME	Small to medium enterprise. A small enterprise is a business that employs fewer than 50 people, a medium enterprise has fewer than 250 employees.
Supply chain	A network of manufacturers, distributors, transporters, storage facilities, suppliers and retailers that help to bring a product or service to the customer.
UCAS	University and college Admission Service
UTCs	University Technical Colleges are government funded schools for 14-19 year olds developed in partnership with universities and employers. They specialise in technical and scientific subjects.
Vocational	Leading to a job or skills relevant to a career
Zero-hours contract	A contract between a worker and employer where the employer does not have to offer the worker a fixed number of hours a week and therefore there is no guarantee of work.