



What's next after Year 11?

If you're in Year 11, it's time to start thinking about what you want to do after Key Stage 4. What you can do after Year 11 depends on things like where you live, what kind of grades you're likely to get, what you're interested in and what kind of environment you want to learn in.

This booklet includes useful information about these options so that you and your parents can make informed decisions about your future.

Remember: Students must continue in education or training until they are at least 18 years old:

The Government has changed the law and young people now have to continue in education or training until they are at least 18. This does not necessarily mean that you need to stay on at school for sixth form, unless you choose to.

You may decide to continue in education or training post 16 through:

- Full time study in a school or college
- An Apprenticeship or Traineeship
- Part time work, or volunteering combined with part time education or training

This booklet aims to give details about these options so that you and your parents can make informed decisions about your future



Where will the future jobs be?

Whatever choices you make at 16, it is important that you start thinking about the future career area that you would like to get into and how your education and training choices fit in to that future career plan.

When you are making your choices, it is important to make sure that you have information about the jobs market and what this is likely to look like in the future. Predicting the future job market is difficult because it is constantly changing. Jobs that weren't even thought of fifteen years ago are now mainstream, such as social media marketing. Oxfordshire has a particularly strong job market for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). Other growth areas are logistics and health and social care.

It is also important to consider the current impact of Covid-19 on different sectors and job roles. The change in some sectors will affect the roles on offer. For example, there may be fewer shop-floor roles in retail moving forward, but more roles created that relate to online shopping such as in call centres and logistics.

Skills for Work

There has been a recent drop in the number of jobs available to people with few or no qualifications and an increase in the number of jobs requiring the core qualifications of Maths and English. This is why you have to retake these exams at college if you don't get them in Year 11.

Although qualifications are important in getting a job, employers are also looking for young people who have 'employability skills' such as communication skills, problem solving, creativity, taking responsibility, team working, self-motivation and having a good work attitude.

You can evidence you have these skills through any work experience you may have, or through your interests and hobbies. You will have a session on skills recognition in year 11 in PSHE to help you with this.



What are my options at 16?

There are three main learning routes:

- A-levels at Sixth Form
- A course/s at Further Education College (e.g. A-levels, Extended Diplomas and T Levels)
- Employment with training, most likely as part of an Apprenticeship

A-Level at Sixth form

Developing your knowledge and skills in academic subjects with an aim of either university or a high level apprenticeship. Entry will depend on academic achievement in GCSE exams.

Further Education (FE) College

Colleges can offer A-level like school sixth forms but offer a different learning environment.

They also offer vocational courses linked to a particular job area at different levels, including Extended Diplomas and T Levels (both equivalent to 3 A-levels and accepted by Universities for undergraduate studies). Vocational qualifications cover a range of academic levels and should be researched by all students as a possible post 16 option.

Employment with Training

The main options are:

Apprenticeships – an apprenticeship is a job. Apprentices are employed and paid by their employer but have 20% of their time in role as training. Each apprenticeship has a standard that apprentices work toward which includes nationally recognised qualifications and competency standards alongside practical experience to gain.

Traineeships – A six month programme with an employer (unpaid) for those not ready for an apprenticeship. This may lead to an apprenticeship.

Jobs with training – Some employers offer jobs with in-house training. The quality of this training will vary. Although the government may not recognise this training, larger employers training schemes can be very good and enable young employees to progress through the company.



Year 11 – The Year Ahead

This calendar is to help you and your parents/carers plan what to do in order to make well informed and realistic decisions about your options after Year 11.

Autumn Term

- Research courses available at sixth form and local colleges.
- Find out when the open evenings are – go to at least one –even if it is virtual this year.
- Most colleges accept applications from October onwards and some popular courses fill up quickly. You can apply to more than one place and for more than one course especially if you are unsure about how you will do in GCSE exams.
- All Year 11 students will have at least one guidance interview with Mrs Haines during the year. At this appointment we will discuss your subjects, options available and offer support you to make choices.
- In October students will have sessions on skills recognition, applications and interviews in PSHE.
- In November students will have a Virtual Mock Interview.
- If sixth form interests you then sign up for a Taster Day

Spring Term

- Colleges will offer another round of open events (maybe virtual)
- Colleges will start interviewing and offering places.
- Most companies will start advertising their apprenticeships and this will continue through to the spring/summer. Register on www.apprenticeships.gov.uk to find out what is available in our area and how and when to apply for apprenticeships.
- Following your mock GCSE results, make sure that your plans are realistic. Will you get the grades you will need for your course? Do you need to have a back-up plan? Contact Mrs Haines if you need help.

Summer Term

- If you still don't have a confirmed plan for after Year 11 see Mrs Haines before exams start.
- Official leaving date is the last week of June.
- You should have received your National Insurance card by now. If not, ring the helpline on: 0300 200 3500
- Colleges and sixth forms will hold induction events before your official start in September
- Make sure that you come in and collect your results on GCSE Results Day in August. It is not advisable to be away on holiday on this day - just in case you need to change your plans.



Checklist of things to find out at sixth form and college open events

☐ See if the course is appropriate for your future plans- whether that university, an apprenticeship or job role

If you know what you want to do at university, are the subjects that you have chosen accepted by the university that you hope to go to and for the degree course you plan to study? See www.ucas.com to find out what qualifications are required for each degree level course.

If you are hoping to be an apprentice after sixth form or college, will the course be thought of positively by a future employer? Is work experience part of the course? See www.apprenticeships.gov.uk to get an idea of employer expectations.

☐ Find out the entry requirements for the course that you are interested in.

It is important you know the entry requirements for courses/apprenticeships you plan to apply for. You must compare them with your predicted or mock grades for GCSE. Are they realistic? Do you need a back-up plan?

☐ Look at the learning environment

Sixth forms can vary in their approach and are different to college. Things to consider include class sizes, the balance between independent study and classroom-based learning, extra-curricular activities you may need to do and how many days you are expected to be on site for learning. Some college courses are delivered over 4 days a week rather than 5, and some include placements with employers.

☐ What happens if there are not enough young people enrolled on the course, or if you don't get the grades needed?

See what alternative courses there are at different levels or in similar areas.

☐ How is the course assessed – how much is course work and how much exam based?

Think about which learning style suits you best – are you better on a course with regular assessment and/or portfolio building or do you prefer exams?

☐ Pass rates and destinations.

It is important to consider what you will do after your course ends. Ask about progression routes and what have previous students gone on to. You will need support for post 18 options – so ask/see what careers support the school/college has to help you with making decisions at that point.



Useful Information

[Burford School Website](#): useful to see the sixth form offer, how to apply etc.

[BBC Bitesize](#): general careers information about making choices in year 11

[National Careers Service](#): provide information, advice and guidance to help you make decisions on learning, training and work.

[OXME](#): Support and information for young people in Oxfordshire

[Abingdon & Witney College](#): provider of further education courses

[Cirencester College](#): provider of further education courses

[Activate Learning – City of Oxford College](#): provider of further education courses

[Hartpury College](#): provider of further education courses

[T Levels](#): New courses which follow GCSEs and are equivalent to 3 A-levels. These 2 year courses, which launched in September 2020, have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for work, further training or study.

T Levels offer students a mixture of classroom learning and ‘on-the-job’ experience during an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days).

[Amazing Apprenticeships](#): a leading organisation founded to tackle misconceptions about apprenticeships and promote the benefits. Has lots of useful resources and information about apprenticeships.

[National Apprenticeship find a vacancy site](#): Search for apprenticeship vacancies in England, create an apprenticeship account to manage applications and get alerts about new apprenticeships

