

NEXT STEPS

LIFE AFTER YEAR 11



After completing your GCSEs in Year 11, you will need to move onto your next step in education. This is what we call Further Education (FE for short) and consists of studying A-Levels, BTECs or an Apprenticeship. Here we have compiled some key useful information about college, sixth form and the available qualifications.

COLLEGE OR SIXTH FORM?

There is no right or wrong answer when it comes to choosing where you would like to study. However, it's important you do your research and attend an Open Day before applying, whether that's visiting in person or by viewing it virtually!

SIXTH FORMS

- Tend to be smaller than colleges.
- Typically part of a school and so the surroundings are more familiar.
- Perfect for students who enjoyed learning in a school-style environment.
- Typically offer a smaller selection of subjects and courses.
- Tend to offer more academic support, such as teachers chasing students for homework and deadlines.
- Typically wear smart business attire.

COLLEGES

- Tend to be a lot bigger, have their own campuses and have specialised facilities for vocational courses.
- A great opportunity to meet lots of new people from a mix of backgrounds/ages.
- Offer a wide variety of courses and subjects, including A-Levels, BTECs and Apprenticeships.
- Tend to be a lot more independent and students typically need to be a bit more self motivated.
- Students may have free periods where they can leave the college site.
- No uniform!

CHOOSING A COURSE?

When choosing what to study, you should be aiming for Level 3 qualifications. Some careers may require specific qualifications, so make sure you always do your research!

A-LEVELS

- Stands for Advanced Level Qualifications.
- Subject-based qualifications which consist of classroom-based learning.
- Usually assessed by exams.
- Students can typically pick 3-4 subjects.
- Students need at least five GCSEs at grades 4-9 to study A-Levels, but this may vary across different institutions.
- Ideal for students who are not sure what career they'd like to do in the future, studying A-levels can be a good way of keeping their options open.

BTECs

- Stands for the Business and Technology Education Council.
- Specialist work-related qualifications designed for young people who are interested in a particular job sector or industry.
- Usually assessed by course work, but occasionally there will be exams.
- Combine hands on practical learning with subject specific study, and some BTECs will include opportunities for work experience.
- Some courses will require students to complete a Level 2 BTEC first.
- Students can choose to study a combination of BTECs and A-levels or choose a standalone course.

NEXT STEPS

LIFE AFTER YEAR 11



TIPS FOR THE APPLICATION PROCESS AND ONLINE INTERVIEWS

Most applications for colleges and sixth forms will involve filling out an online form, this will include filling out personal details such as name and contact details, as well as information on your current school and predicted GCSE results. The application process may differ depending on where you are applying to and some courses may require an interview! Below are some of our top tips:

- 1 Make sure you have a back-up option by applying to more than one place
- 2 Write down all the application deadlines to make sure you don't miss any
- 3 Be honest on your applications, your school will verify the information!
- 4 Proof reading is essential! Parents and Teachers can check your applications
- 5 For online interviews make sure you practice using the software beforehand
- 6 Try to make sure the camera background is plain and there are no noisy distractions

APPRENTICESHIPS

If you think you may be interested in doing an apprenticeship, you can find out more information here:

<https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk>

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

If you'd like to find out more about your next steps after Year 11, try watching our helpful video.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDID_se44g4



If you have any further questions you can chat to one of our helpful advisors here:

<https://aimhigherwm.ac.uk/speak-to-aimhigher/>

OUR PARTNER COLLEGES

Birmingham Metropolitan College

<https://www.bmet.ac.uk/>

Halesowen College

<https://www.halesowen.ac.uk/>

Heart of Worcestershire College

<https://www.howcollege.ac.uk/>

Hereford College of Arts

<https://www.hca.ac.uk/>

Herefordshire and Ludlow College

<https://www.hlcollege.ac.uk/home>

South and City College Birmingham

<https://www.sccb.ac.uk/>

Solihull College and University Centre

<https://www.solihull.ac.uk/>

Walsall College

<https://www.walsallcollege.ac.uk/>

University College Birmingham

<https://www.ucb.ac.uk/study/college/>