

BEFORE CHRISTMAS OF YEAR 11 YOU SHOULD:

- Do your [Careers Research](#)- use careers websites to think about your future. (List of useful careers websites attached)
- Get hold of [Prospectuses](#)- booklets of information about colleges or training organisations that you are interested in. You can pick these up, get them sent to you, or download them if you prefer.
- Use college and training organisation [Websites](#) to get the most up to date information quickly.
- Find out when college [Open Evenings](#) are, and make sure that you go. Check details really carefully, as some colleges might have to change dates, venues, or run 'virtual' events.
- [Check](#) what grades you need for the courses you want to apply for.
- Check if they are running any [Taster Sessions](#) and book yourself a place.
- [Talk](#) to family, teachers, or adults whose opinions you value. How do they see your strengths and abilities? [Think](#) about what you enjoy doing, what you do well. Be positive!
- [Make An Action Plan](#) to help you remember what you need to do. Be clear about what grades you need to get to get onto your course.
- [Apply](#) to your chosen option or options. This is best done before Christmas for college, or a little later for apprenticeships. Most colleges have online applications now. Be sure to check closing dates carefully.

AFTER CHRISTMAS IN YEAR 11 YOU SHOULD:

- [Attend Your Interview](#) to secure your place at college or on your apprenticeship or training programme. Some colleges will include some assessment at this point, checking out your basic skills, or practical skills if needed in the course. Some will interview you on your own, some will get applicants together in groups.
- Make sure you have a [Back-Up Plan](#)- especially if your first choice is an apprenticeship, unfortunately not all pupils who would like an apprenticeship are successful in finding one straight away.
- Ask your parent or carer to help you think about [Transport & Finance](#). How are you going to get to college or training? Is there any financial help that you are entitled to?





SEEDS OF CHANGE



Applying for an Apprenticeship

WHEN SHOULD I APPLY?

The timescale for apprenticeship applications is variable, with adverts for positions being posted throughout the year. The busiest time for school leaver vacancies tends to be from March to September. If you have a specific employer in mind, it is never too early to approach them. They might ask you to come back later in the year but will be impressed with your keen attitude.

HOW DO I FIND OPPORTUNITIES?

Use the 'National Apprenticeship Service'

 <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

There is a national website where many vacancies are advertised. You will need to create an account. It is important to keep your username and password details safe. You can search for and apply for most apprenticeships using this site.

You will need a working email that you access regularly - it would be a good idea to make sure it has a sensible email address that you would be happy for a possible future employer to see.

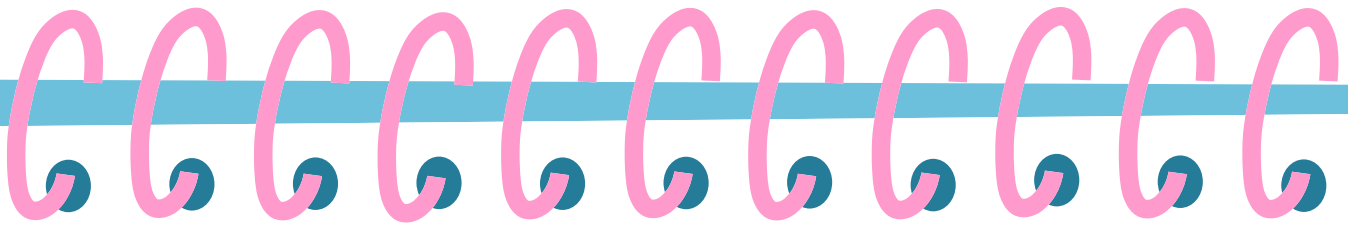
Once your account is set up:

You can save a search and set up alerts. That means you can search for a type of work in a specific area e.g. All motor vehicle vacancies within 10 miles of your home address. You can then save that search, and by setting up an alert - you will get a text message every time new vacancies that match your search get added.

TRY THESE OTHER WAYS TO SPOT OPPORTUNITIES:

- Some vacancies are found through friends, relatives, contacts. Make sure everyone that knows you knows what you are looking for. Someone might spot an opportunity that is ideal for you.
- Some vacancies develop out of work experience placements - take any chances you get to try out work experience. If an employer is impressed with you - it might inspire them to create an apprenticeship.
- Some vacancies might be advertised in the local papers, or in shop windows, on notice boards etc. Keep a really good lookout.

- Consider starting on a pre-apprenticeship programme or a traineeship. These are unpaid programmes based around getting more work experience and skills to build your confidence up. They can offer a 'stepping stone' onto an apprenticeship.
- Join the Facebook jobs page for your local area - there are pages run by local people to allow job adverts to be shared. The 'Shrewsbury jobs' and 'Oswestry jobs' pages both often have apprenticeship vacancies shared through them.
- Follow the 'ladder for Shropshire' apprenticeship page on Facebook. This is a local resource which regularly highlights great opportunities.



SEEDS OF CHANGE

Applying for an Apprenticeship



YOU CAN ALSO REGISTER DIRECTLY WITH LOCAL APPRENTICESHIP PROVIDERS

Some of these providers will then invite you in for an interview, and then provide support to match you to a suitable placement. Remember that not all these providers will cover all areas of work. Check their websites to see what they offer...

Shrewsbury Colleges Group Apprenticeship Team

<https://www.shrewsbury.ac.uk/apprenticeships>

Telford College Apprenticeship Team

<https://www.tcat.ac.uk/apprenticeship-vacancies>

County Training

<http://www.ctapprenticeships.co.uk>

SBC

<http://www.sbc-training.co.uk/>

Juniper Training

<https://www.junipertraining.co.uk>

MCMT

<https://mcmt-bridgnorth.co.uk/>

JTL are a national specialist electrical apprenticeship provider who you

could also approach:

<https://www.jtltraining.com/>

HOW DO I APPLY?

- If you have found a vacancy on the apprenticeships.gov site, you can usually complete an application form within this site that you can use for several different vacancies. Click on the green 'Apply now' button.
- Some companies ask the training provider to manage the application process for them.
- Some companies will ask you to fill in their specific company application forms.
- Some companies might ask you to send a CV or ask you to visit them for an informal discussion to start with.



REMEMBER!

- It takes time to secure an apprenticeship
- Don't get disheartened if you are not successful straight away.
- Hang in there and be aware that some types of work are more difficult to find than others.
- Some apprenticeships are aimed at those young people who already have a year or two of experience, so you may be competing against older applicants.
- Make sure you have a back-up plan in place.

All About A-Levels...



THEY ARE CHALLENGING!

A-levels are a step up and require you to undertake a lot of independent study, so you want to be sure that this way of studying is right for you, and that you are choosing subjects that fit with your strengths and preferences.

To keep your options for the future really flexible it can help to keep some core subjects in the mix. It will rarely be essential to offer an A level in a newer more specialist subject e.g., Law, Psychology, Economics even if you are applying for a degree course in one of those subjects. However, some Law courses might ask for an essay subject which could be Law or could be English, History etc. Some (not all) Psychology courses will insist on a Science. Some (not all) Economics courses will ask for Math's.

Keeping one or two core subjects in the mix is not essential but can give you more flexibility particularly if your career ideas are still developing. Core subjects include:

- Biology
- Geography
- Math's
- Chemistry
- History
- English
- Physics
- Languages

THEY ALLOW YOU TO KEEP OPTIONS OPEN IF YOU CHOOSE WELL

One of the great things about taking A levels is that you get to pick 3 or sometimes 4 subjects. How you mix subjects is usually entirely up to you as long as you achieve the entry requirements.

The reasons that you pick particular A-level subjects will usually be based on a combination of 3 main factors:

- It's a subject you enjoy or think you will enjoy.
- It's a subject you are good at, or think you are likely to do well in.
- It's a subject that will be useful to you in your future career plans.

It is still a great idea to consider subjects which are new to you as doing so can help you to identify new strengths and test out new interests. It can be exciting to take a new subject and inspire you to new career ideas.

A common approach is to consider a mixture of courses that are familiar to you and those that are newer. Consider your options carefully but remember not to lose sight of your passions and interests!

YOU MAY NEED TO HAVE TAKEN SPECIFIC A-LEVELS TO BE ABLE TO APPLY FOR SOME UNIVERSITY COURSES

This is really important if you already have strong ideas about what degree you want to take. University entrance requirements can be quite flexible or very specific. They might say that an A-level subject is 'essential', 'preferred' or 'ideally offered'. They might be reluctant to consider certain combinations of A-levels e.g., subjects with too much overlap, too many practical subjects. Some universities even have a list of 'non-preferred' subjects.

You should never discount a subject that you are really keen on based solely on 'sensible' advice but think about how you combine different subjects and how much flexibility you might want later on.

BTEC & Other Vocational Courses



VOCATIONAL COURSES MEANS COURSES WHICH ARE RELATED TO WORK!

Our local colleges offer vocational courses at levels 1, 2, and 3, as well as entry level options for students who need additional support. BTECs are one common type of vocational course. They are available in lots of different subject areas and at all levels. The level that you take will depend on your GCSE results.

BTECs are assessed very differently to A-levels. A-levels are assessed mainly by exams. BTEC assessment is more varied. There will be written/online tests, but also folder work, and depending on the subject there might be practical tests as well. Some students achieve especially well through varied BTEC assessment and find that they progress to university with a huge boost to their confidence after taking a BTEC.

BTECS ARE NOT THE ONLY TYPE OF VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AVAILABLE TO SCHOOL LEAVERS.

Some vocational courses you can take at college are focused on learning skills for a career. These are usually the most practical college courses you can take. These are courses which train you to be a 'chef.....hairstylist...mechanic.....bricklayer etc. Students who choose very skills-based courses all usually start at level 1.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS YOU CAN CURRENTLY STUDY AT LOCAL COLLEGES



Some of these will be BTEC courses and can be used to progress onto university. Some of these will be very similar to BTEC and can also lead onto university. Some of these will be much more practical hands-on programmes and will train you in the skills needed to succeed in a job. Visit local colleges online or in person to find out much more about the vocational courses that on offer to you. Course offers change each year – so double check!

If you are considering University longer-term then BTEC is definitely an option you can consider. BTECs come in different sizes as well as being available at different levels. The Level 3 Extended BTEC diplomas are equivalent to 3 x A-levels, and are accepted on their own for entry to a wide range of university courses.

It is however still important to look carefully at entry requirements especially if you have a particular university or course in mind.

-> You can be asked for an A level in addition to your BTEC.

-> BTEC is not considered to be acceptable preparation for every course at every university

You should double check before you decide which pathway is right for you.

Some 6th forms and Colleges allow you to combine A-levels and smaller 1 x A-level equivalent BTECs.

Music	Business	Equine	Agriculture
Hair and Beauty	Countryside Management	Public Uniformed Services	Computing and IT
Sports and Outdoor Activities	Creative Media	Performing Arts	Art and Design
Construction Trades	Engineering	Health and Social Care	Childcare and Education
Music Technology	Hospitality and Catering	Music Technology	Animal Management
Motor Vehicle	Photography	Fashion and Textiles	Travel and Tourism

All About T-Levels... (VOCATIONAL COURSE)



WANT SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

T Levels are another option post GCSE's that you may not be aware of; the T standing for 'Technical'. T- Levels are 2-year vocational courses, which are similar to Apprenticeships whereby they are designed alongside Employers to make sure you learn the correct things you need to go into your chosen industry.

T Levels are also equivalent to 3 A Levels, however, 80% of your time is spent in school or college studying and 20% of your time is spent on a work placement. In simple terms, T Levels are a combination of elements of A Levels and elements of an Apprenticeship put into one. The work placement you do as part of your T Level Course will be at least 315 hours (approx. 45 days)

Qualification	Time Split
T- Levels	80% classroom learning; 20% industry placement
Apprenticeship	80% working in industry; 20% classroom learning

T-Level Course Subject Area's Currently Available:

- Agriculture, environmental and animal care
- Business and administration
- Construction
- Digital
- Engineering & Manufacturing
- Education and Early Years
- Health and Science
- Legal, Finance & Accounting

Available from September 2024 onwards

- Animal Care and Management
- Catering (start date to be confirmed)
- Craft and Design
- Hairdressing, Barbering and Beauty Therapy
- Media, Broadcast and Production

Post T-Level Progression Options:

- skilled employment
- an apprenticeship
- higher education

When applying to universities, if Higher Education is something you want to pursue, whether you can get into university will be based, mainly, on how many UCAS points you achieve from Post GCSE Education.

112 UCAS Points is the minimum entry level into university which equates to a 'Pass' in T-Levels.

See below for the interpreted grading chart

UCAS tariff points	T Level overall grade	A level
168	Distinction* (A* on the core and distinction in the occupational specialism)	AAA*
144	Distinction	AAA
120	Merit	BBB
96	Pass (C or above on the core)	CCC
72	Pass (D or E on the core)	DDD

T Levels might be the right choice for you, if:

- You don't want to start work straight away but you do want to gain some experience in a working environment.
- You have a specific career path in mind.
- You want to focus and study solely on one subject working in-depth.
- You want to study a vocational course.
- You want a more 'hands-on' learning/practical course.

To find out more information on T-Levels and find out where you can do a T-Level near you, go to the link below:

<https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/students>

Or you can speak to your schools Careers Advisor to find out more information or discuss your options further.

Useful Careers Websites

GENERAL SITES

www.unifrog.org

(Use your password to log in)

www.icould.com

(Watch short video clips about careers)

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/home>

(Search the A to Z of job profiles)

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

(Great careers resource for university level careers)

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/after-gcses/find-career-ideas/explore-jobs>

(Great for ideas about jobs which link to your GCSEs. Also search by job type or skills)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/careers>

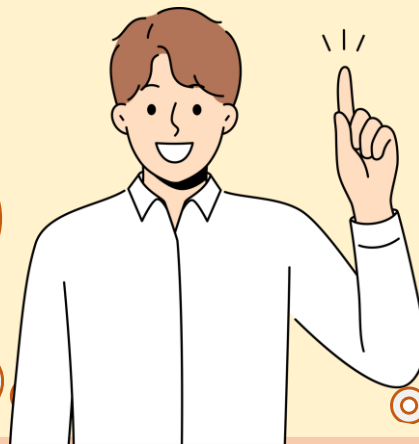
(Loads of careers info in short articles)

THINKING ABOUT APPRENTICESHIPS?

www.apprenticeships.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

www.ucas.com/understanding-apprenticeships



THINKING ABOUT UNIVERSITY?

www.ucas.com

www.theguardian.com/education/universityguide

www.informedchoices.ac.uk/

CAREER SPECIFIC SITES

<https://intogames.org/careers>

(Careers in the Games Industry)

<https://www.screenskills.com/>

(Careers in Film, Media, TV etc.)

<https://www.mathscareers.org.uk/>

(Careers using Maths Skills)

<https://edu.rsc.org/future-in-chemistry/career-options/job-profiles>

(Careers using Chemistry)

www.rsb.org.uk/careers-and-cpd/careers/make-a-difference

(Careers using Biology)

<https://www.iop.org/careers-physics/your-future-with-physics>

(Careers using Physics)

<https://www.stepintothenhs.nhs.uk/>

(NHS Careers – website aimed at young people)

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/

(Health Service Careers – more detailed info)

<https://discovercreative.careers/#/>

(Links to a range of Creative Career websites)

www.autocity.org.uk

(Careers in the Motor Industry)

<https://www.thisisengineering.org.uk/>

(Careers in Engineering)

www.goconstruct.org

(Careers in Construction)

www.history.org.uk/student/resource/2914/careers-in-history

(Careers using History)

<https://www.joiningthepolice.co.uk/>

(Careers in the Police)

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Careers-in-care>

(Careers in Care Industries)

<https://animalowners.rcvs.org.uk/veterinary-careers/>

(Veterinary Careers)