



Post 16 Options: A Brief Guide for Parents

Adapted from Career Pilot - Parent Zone

<http://www.careerpilot.org.uk/parent/info/what-are-the-choices-for-my-chil/?topic=5976>

What are the choices for my child at 16?

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The main post-16 options for young people are...

- **Full time education** at a school or college e.g. A Levels or Vocational Qualifications;
- An **Apprenticeship** or **Traineeship**;
- **Part time education or training** - this must be in addition to employment, self-employment or volunteering for a minimum of 20 hours per week.

All young people must be in some form of education or recognised training until they are 18

Your **Child Benefit** stops on 31 August on or after your child's 16th birthday if they leave education or training. It continues if they stay in approved education or training. **Child Tax Credit** usually stops on 31 August after your child turns 16 but can continue for children under 20 in approved education, training or registered with a careers service.

From the academic year starting August 2015, any student achieving a GCSE grade D to G at the end of year 11 in maths and/or English will continue to study Maths and English no matter which of the above post-16 options is chosen. Those achieving GCSE grade D must be enrolled on a GCSE qualification in Maths and/or English.

For a summary of the options at 16, read on...

A levels



Many young people choose to do A Levels (and AS Levels) and these are excellent general qualifications that are valued by employers and also universities. A Levels offer a great route to degree-level study, but there are also routes to higher education from the vocational qualifications offered in colleges and in some schools.

A Levels give young people a chance to find out about their GCSE subjects in greater depth or to do one of the subjects that many schools and colleges only offer at A Level, such as Law, Economics or Psychology. It is possible to combine vocational qualifications such as BTEC Level 3 qualifications or OCR qualifications with A Levels. These qualifications attract UCAS points in the same way as A Levels. (Many universities indicate the number of UCAS points needed for entry to their courses.)

From September 2015, A Levels and AS Levels are beginning to change. The main changes are:

- New AS Levels will now be a separate qualification and no longer count towards the A level grade
- New AS Levels will earn 40% of the UCAS points of an A Level rather than 50%, as for 'old' AS Levels
- Both AS and A levels will now be assessed only at the end of the course, not after each module
- Assessment will be mostly through exams
- These changes to A and AS Levels will be taking place from September 2015 until (?)2017

Vocational qualifications

At 16 your child could choose to study towards a vocational qualification.

Vocational qualifications offer practical learning programmes that relate to specific job roles or employment sectors.

There are many different types of vocational qualifications in a wide range of subjects at all levels, from Entry Level right up to Level 8 (*GCSEs are level 2, A levels are level 3, an honours degree is level 6 and a Doctorate(PhD) is level 8.*)

Vocational courses are designed to help young people learn in a practical way about a specific job area, helping them to get the skills needed to start a job, to progress in a career or to go on to higher levels of education.

Immediately after year 11, these courses are often delivered by colleges. Local examples include Central College Nottingham, New College Nottingham, Loughborough College, Stephenson College, Brooksby Melton College. For more information on the courses available and the course entry requirements, please see each college's own website.



Vocational qualifications include:

- Vocational subjects that are related to a broad employment area such as business, engineering, IT, health and social care
- Vocational courses that lead to specific jobs such as hairdressing, accountancy, professional cookery, plumbing, dental nursing
- Apprenticeships are 'work-related', where you will be trained for a job role and get paid as you learn.

Apprenticeships



If your child has a particular job sector or career in mind, then an Apprenticeship could be a choice worth considering.

Apprenticeships provide an opportunity:

- To gain an insight into the reality of working in a job area;
- To develop the skills required to work in that type of employment;
- To get paid while continuing to study

Your child would also have an improved chance of getting a job at the end of the Apprenticeship - research shows that around 90% of apprentices stay in work on completion of their training and 71% of apprentices stay with the same employer.

There is a wide range of different Apprenticeships in almost every type of work, although not all options are available in every job sector; some young people find that they need to travel or, sometimes, to temporarily move location to undertake the Apprenticeship they have chosen. Competition for some of the more popular Apprenticeship placements is intense.

Further useful information about Apprenticeships is available in the Parent's Guide to Apprenticeships <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-parents-guide-to-apprenticeships> and on the Apprenticeships website <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

Traineeships



If your child is aged 16 to 24 and not quite ready to start an Apprenticeship, they could consider a Traineeship. Traineeships are designed to help young people who want to get an Apprenticeship or job, but don't yet have the appropriate skills or experience. Traineeships aim to prepare young people for their future careers by helping them to become 'work ready'.

Further information about Traineeships is available on <https://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship>

Things you could do to help your child make their post-16 choices

- Encourage your child to think carefully about their skills, interests and ambitions and help them to translate these into potential employment possibilities for the future. The National Careers Service website has lots of information about different work sectors and job profiles of different types of career <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

- Suggest that your child takes a look at the information and advice available on the East Leake Academy website www.eastleake-ac.org.uk under “Careers” for help with choosing their post 16 options – particularly the Russell Group *Informed Choices* booklet, the National Careers Service website and the Career Pilot website. There are also career-matching programs (e.g. Fast Tomato) which generate career ideas from the responses to a series of questions about skills, interests and work-related preferences.

- Be informed. There is a section under “Careers” on the East Leake Academy website dedicated to websites which parents may find helpful and informative in supporting their child in planning his/her future.

- Suggest they complete the Careerpilot Profile which will help them identify skills, experiences and achievement they already have - useful to promote in applications and at interviews.

- Help your child to edit and update the CV they created in their English lessons earlier this year in preparation for the Interview Skills Day in February 2016. Resources to support this are available on www.eastleake-ac.org.uk under “Careers” -> “CV Advice”

