

# Post 16 options

You can leave school on the last Friday in June if you'll be 16 by the end of the summer holidays. You must then choose whether to:

- stay in full-time education - for example at school, sixth form college, further education college or [University Technical College \(UTC\)](#)
- start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering while also doing part-time education or training

Your local authority has a duty to make sure you are offered a suitable place by the end of September. This is known as the September Guarantee. Contact your [local authority](#) for information on who can help find you a suitable offer.

You may be eligible for the [16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#), which can help with things like books, travel or equipment if you will struggle with education or training costs.

If you have an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan, you can get support to choose your next steps and extra help when you are in education, training or work.

## Stay in full-time education

You could take a range of subjects that lead to qualifications that keep your options open, like GCSE or A levels. Courses like T Levels or BTEC allow you to focus on a chosen career area like construction, healthcare science or digital careers. Some careers may ask for specific qualifications, so always do some research into where the course you are interested in might lead.

## Combine work and study

Gain practical skills, get work experience and a qualification that employers need.

## A levels

- **Description:** Carry on studying subjects you took for GCSE to a higher level, or pick new ones you may not have done before like economics, law or psychology. You could take 3 very different subjects you are interested in to keep your career options open or choose more closely related subjects if you need them for a specific career.
- **Duration:** 2 years
- **Assessment:** Mostly exams at the end of the course
- **[Level of study:](#)** 3

- Entry requirements: Typically 5 GCSEs Grade 9-4 (usually including English and maths)
- Work experience: Your school or college may offer short periods of work experience, usually during year 12
- Leads to: University or college courses, higher and degree apprenticeships, work
- Find out more: [UCAS Information about A levels](#)

## T Levels

- Description: Designed in partnership with employers to give you the skills and knowledge to get on in the workplace. You'll combine classroom learning with real work placements. 1 T Level is the equivalent of 3 A levels.
- Duration: 2 years
- Assessment: Exams, projects and practical assignments
- [Level of study](#): 3
- Entry requirements: Course dependent
- Work experience: At least 45 days on industry placement
- Leads to: Work, higher and degree apprenticeships, college and university courses
- Find out more: [Gov.uk information about T Levels](#)

## Vocational and technical qualifications

- Description: These courses teach you the practical skills and knowledge for a particular area of employment. They can prepare you for a broad employment sector, like engineering or travel and tourism, or for a specific job like a chef or a hairdresser. Qualifications which teach you how to do tasks specifically related to the industry and role you want to be involved in.
- Duration: 1 or more years
- Assessment: Can include coursework, skills tests and exams
- [Level of study](#): 1+
- Entry requirements: Course dependent
- Work experience: You'll learn in real situations in college, for example in a college restaurant or a salon that is open to the public. You may also have the chance to go out on a work placement with an employer.
- Leads to: Apprenticeship, work, college or university
- Find out more: Speak to your local college or training provider or talk to an adviser

## Applied qualifications

- Description: Qualifications that give you a broad overview of working in a specific sector, like business, media, engineering, leisure or science and technology. A mix of classroom-based learning with the chance to get some practical skills.
- Duration: Course dependent
- Assessment: Course dependent (coursework and exams)
- [Level of study](#): 3
- Entry requirements: Course dependent
- Work experience: Course dependent
- Leads to: University/college, apprenticeship, work
- Find out more: [Gov.uk information about applied qualifications](#)

## Traineeships

- Description: A course that includes a work placement that will get you ready for an apprenticeship or a job. You'll get work experience and some help to apply for your next steps. You can also improve your maths and English skills. You'll get work experience and some help to apply for whatever you do next.
- Location: You'll spend a minimum of 70 hours in a work placement with the rest of your time in college or a training centre
- Duration: 6 weeks to 1 year
- Entry requirements: You need to be aged between 16 to 24 or up to 25 with an [Education Health and Care Plan](#) with no higher than a [level 3 qualification](#)
- Qualifications: English, maths, digital and work-related qualifications
- Leads to: Apprenticeship, further education, work
- Find out more:
  - ask your local college or training provider
  - speak to your school careers adviser
  - speak to your Jobcentre Plus adviser if you receive benefits
  - [find a traineeship](#) in your area

## Supported internships

- Description: Supported internships are for young people with learning difficulties or learning disabilities, who need extra support to get a job.
- Location: You'll spend most of your time on placements with an employer, learning skills for work. You'll also get help from a tutor and a job coach in college or with a specialist provider.

- Duration: A minimum of 6 months
- Entry requirements: Aged 16-24 with an [Education Health and Care Plan](#)
- Qualifications: GCSE English and maths
- Leads to: Work, traineeship, apprenticeship
- Find out more:
  - from your school or local college
  - speak to your social worker or a transition worker
  - speak to your Jobcentre Plus adviser

## Apprenticeships

- Description: Intermediate, advanced higher and degree apprenticeships combine practical on-the-job skills training with off-the-job learning. You'll get training that is relevant to your job and be paid a salary. Start at a level to suit you, with support if you have special needs or a disability.
- Location: You'll spend 80% of your time in the workplace and 20% off-the-job with some study in a college, training centre or Institute of Technology (IoT)
- Duration: A minimum of 1 year
- Entry requirements: Will be dependent on the industry, job role and apprenticeship level
- Qualifications: apprenticeship certificate, diploma, degree and masters depending on level
- Leads to: Work, next level of apprenticeship, further education, higher education
- Find out more: [Gov.uk information about Apprenticeships](#)

## School leaver schemes

- Description: A chance to learn and train with a large company while earning a wage. Offered in sectors like accountancy, engineering, finance, IT, law, leisure and retail. Similar to graduate employment schemes run over a longer period of time.
- Location: You'll often rotate between different locations with the same company to get experience and it can include distance learning or time in college or university
- Duration: 3 to 7 years
- Entry requirements: Usually high grade A levels or equivalent and a keen interest in the sector you want to work in
- Qualifications: A university degree and/or professional qualification
- Leads to: Professional employment
- Find out more: Directly from company websites

## Other opportunities

You could look at what [work and study options](#) will be available to you at 18.

You could also consider [volunteering](#) to strengthen your job and study opportunities.

**Resource:** <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>