

**Harrow Way  
Community  
School**



Learning for Life, Success for All

**A guide to help you choose the right path for your future**

# Parents' Guide to post-16 options



**Decisions, Decisions, Decisions**



It is now a legal requirement that all young people stay in education or training until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The following options meet this requirement:

- Full-time education in a school or 6<sup>th</sup> form
- Work-based learning such as an apprenticeship, traineeship or employment leading to an accredited qualification
- Part-time education leading to an accredited qualification where the young person is employed, self-employed or volunteering for at least 20 hours a week.

### **SCHOOL CONTACTS**

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## **Full-time education**

Full-time education can be at either a college or a school 6th form. A wide range of courses and qualifications are available e.g.

- Academic courses such as A levels
- Vocational courses such as BTECs
- Occupational courses which are preparation for specific jobs such as hairdressing, motor mechanics and catering

Courses are offered at different levels depending on GCSE grades. These are:

- Level 3 courses (e.g. A levels, BTEC level 3) which require at least 5 A\*-C grades at GCSE including English Language and Maths
- Level 2 courses require at least 4 grade D grades at GCSE including English Language and Maths
- Level 1 courses require mostly E/F grades at GCSE

Students who do not achieve a grade C in English Language or Maths will be required to retake these subjects alongside their other courses.

More detailed information about college courses and qualifications can be found in the Careers section of the VLE under 'Information about Qualifications'. A levels are currently undergoing significant changes and it is important that you check the latest situation with colleges

## **Apprenticeships**

An Apprenticeship is a job with training which allows young people to earn while gaining nationally recognised qualifications. Training is mostly delivered in the workplace but there is always an element of off-job training, e.g. day release to college. It can also involve block release, attendance at a training centre or time away from work to study.

Apprenticeships are offered in a wide range of occupations. Some are in industries that have traditionally recruited Apprentices such as engineering, construction and hairdressing. Others are in less traditional areas such as animal care, IT and leisure. Although some apprenticeships do not specify particular GCSE grades, increasingly employers are asking for good grades particularly in Maths and English.

Apprenticeships are available at 3 different levels – Intermediate, Advanced and Higher. Most 16 year old school leavers start on an Intermediate Apprenticeship which leads to a level 2 qualification (equivalent to 5 GCSE grade A\*-C). Some may start on an Advanced Apprenticeship depending on GCSE grades and the employer's requirement. Advanced Apprenticeships lead to a level 3 qualification (equivalent to A levels). Higher Apprenticeships are equivalent to University level qualifications.

Apprenticeships last on average 2 years. However, it can be anything between 1 year and 4 years.

The minimum hourly rate for Apprentices is currently £3.30. However, many employers pay more.

Apprenticeships are advertised on the website of the National Apprenticeship Service ([www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)). Students can register on the site from early Year 11 onwards. Once registered, they will be sent a text to alert them when suitable vacancies appear on the site. Applications are made online.

Other ways to find apprenticeships are by contacting potential employers direct or by using personal contacts. Potential employers can find out about funding for Apprenticeships on the National Apprenticeship Service website.

Occasionally Apprenticeship vacancies are notified directly to the school. Students are made aware of these via e-mail.

More information about apprenticeships can be found in the Careers section of the VLE under 'Apprenticeships – Information for Parents & Applicants.'

## Traineeships

A traineeship is an education and training programme aimed at young people aged 16-24. It includes work preparation, English and Maths support and work experience. It is suitable for those young people who are motivated to work but don't yet have the skills or experience required by employers.

## Useful Websites

### General Careers

#### **[www.plotr.co.uk](http://www.plotr.co.uk)**

This site is used by students in careers lessons. Contains a careers guidance programme and careers information.

#### **[www.eclips-online.co.uk](http://www.eclips-online.co.uk)**

A wide range of careers information with links to professional bodies. Can be searched by specific career, by job groups or by subject. (To access use login harrowwaycs).

#### **<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>**

National Careers Service website. An all age service. Probably more useful for adults but has useful job profiles including up-to-date labour market information.

#### **[www3.hants.gov.uk/youthtube](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/youthtube)**

Hampshire County Council's site for young people. Limited careers information but a good section on CV writing.

## Apprenticeships

**[www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)**

The National Apprenticeship Service. Contains information about apprenticeships. Apprenticeships are advertised here. Students can search for vacancies by area and occupation and apply online.

## Specific Career Areas

**[www.creativeskillset.org](http://www.creativeskillset.org)**

For information about careers in the media including film, TV, computer games, photography, radio, animation, publishing, special effects.

**[www.citb.co.uk](http://www.citb.co.uk)**

Careers in the construction industry

**[www.lantra.co.uk/careers](http://www.lantra.co.uk/careers)**

Careers in land-based industries and the environment.

**[www.thetechpartnership.com](http://www.thetechpartnership.com)**

Careers in IT

**[www.nhscareers.nhs.uk](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk)**

Medical careers

**[www.armyjobs.mod.uk](http://www.armyjobs.mod.uk)**

**[www.royalnavy.mod.uk/careers](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/careers)**

**[www.raf.mod.uk/recruitment](http://www.raf.mod.uk/recruitment)**

Careers in the armed forces

## University

### **[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)**

Lists all UK degree courses with information about entry requirements and links to University websites. Also contains useful information about applying to University including funding.

### **[www.russellgroup.ac.uk](http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk)**

Website for the 24 most highly rated Universities in the country. Contains a useful guide (Informed Choices) to choosing post-16 courses.

### **[www.fulbright.org.uk](http://www.fulbright.org.uk)**

Gives advice to students planning to study in USA. It is the only reliable, impartial source of information about sports scholarships.

### **[www.lnat.ac.uk](http://www.lnat.ac.uk)**

For information about the aptitude test required for entry to Law degrees by many Universities, including sample papers.

### **[www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk)**

For information about the aptitude test required for entry to Medicine and Dentistry degrees, including sample papers.

## Self-employment

**[www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk)** and **[www.shell-livewire.org](http://www.shell-livewire.org)** advise young people who want to start their own business.

## Volunteering

**[www.vinspired.com](http://www.vinspired.com)** provides advice about volunteering.