



Students section:

Options choice post 16:

Year 11 may mark the end of your school days, but you still have to stay in education or training until the end of the school year when you turn 18.

So what can you do next? Your main choices are:

- Full-time study, such as for A-levels or different college course
- An apprenticeship or traineeship
- A mix of work with part-time study

It's worth looking ahead, as decisions you make now may narrow your choices later. Fancy a particular course? Find out where it's likely to lead in future. Have a career or university course in mind? Work out what do you need to do now to set you on the right path.

Look out for open days or evenings where you can visit the college, find out about the courses on offer and speak to staff and students. See what courses involve – the topics you will cover, amount of exams and coursework, and ask what previous students have gone on to do next.

A-levels tend to focus on academic subjects and are one of the main routes to university. Courses usually take two years and you sit your exams at the end of the course.

Students often sit AS-level exams at the end of their first year at sixth form in the subjects they are studying for A-level. AS-levels are now a standalone qualification, so your marks won't count towards your final A-level grades, but they are good practice for your final year exams.

Vocational qualifications are more practical and provide you with the knowledge and skills needed for certain jobs and types of work. You can study vocational courses which are linked to careers such as engineering, computing and hospitality, childcare or applied general qualifications which have a broader focus, such as applied science, business or sport.

Getting back on track

Don't worry if your GCSEs didn't go well. Colleges often offer the opportunity to sit retakes and study for new GCSEs or other qualifications. And you may find that life at college, rather than in school, is the change you need to bring a focus to your studies.

How to apply: UCAS progress, search and applications, website and other methods of application.

UCAS Progress is a website for information, advice and admissions service for young people making decisions about what and where to study after their GCSEs irrespective of whether or not they're thinking about higher education. Each year 11 student is provided with a username and password to search, apply and track applications. There are also other methods of application for post 16 options and each student is guided in the most appropriate way with their applications. Explore and compare courses at hundreds of schools and colleges through [www.UCAS Progress.com](http://www.UCASProgress.com) please note not all colleges and sixth forms or apprenticeship providers use UCAS progress so it is worth checking with our careers advisor what is the best application method. Applications usually take place in the autumn term of year 11 and there are often deadlines which guarantee a place if you meet them. It is worth visiting colleges, training providers and joining school arranged visits during year 10 where students can try out courses before making an application. There are open days during the year too so it's worth attending these and speaking to tutors and student ambassadors.