

Helping your son/daughter with their subject and career choices

This information is to help parents/carers that have students in year 11 who are making their decision on their next step when they leave School.

A Levels

Involves studying 3 or 4 subjects in depth, preparing teenagers for higher level learning and for work.

Vocational qualifications

BTEC courses that develop specialised skills relating to a particular area of work. They are qualifications that can take you on to further training, apprenticeship or a degree and offer teenagers insights into the world of work. NVQ qualifications offer a more practical style of learning.

Apprenticeships

These allow teenagers to learn skills and gain qualifications whilst earning money. Apprenticeships are now available in over 80 industry sectors, not just the traditional sectors such as engineering and hairdressing.

Traineeships

This new programme will support young people in developing the skills they need to secure and succeed in employment, including an Apprenticeship. Traineeships were introduced from August 2013 for 16 to 19 year olds and for young people with learning difficulties up to the end of the academic year in which they turn 25. Further information on traineeships is available on the Department of Education's website.

Foundation Learning

This provide options for teenagers who need more time to build their confidence and skills. They can go on to take more qualifications, apply for an Apprenticeship or prepare for supported employment.

Helpful tips :

- Help your son/daughter to find out as much as possible about the courses and qualifications they can do.
- Help your son/daughter to identify their interests and abilities.
- Help your son/daughter to consider the consequences of their choices.
- Encourage visits to several college open days.
- Ensure applications are made well before the deadline date.
- Apply to at least two colleges.
- Use college prospectuses and websites to research options and course requirements thoroughly.
- Explore and encourage all extra-curricular activities.
- Gently challenge any choices that concern you.

- Support your son/daughter's decision.
- Encourage your son/daughter to make a back-up plan.
- Be ready to help them deal with personal problems.
- Encourage use of careers packages.
- Encourage them to make the most of opportunities like mentoring, coaching, volunteering and schemes like the Duke of Edinburgh Award.
- Work experience can really benefit your son/daughter when make future applications. Increasingly many universities are looking for students to have relevant work experience. Ask your friends and family for opportunities to spend time in their work place.
- If you are unsure about anything please ask.

School support for your son/daughter during Year 11

- Visiting speakers from college and training providers.
- 1 to 1 support from careers staff ; providing careers information, advice and guidance
- Drop in sessions during lunch, afternoon registration and after school for individual support.
- CV writing, letters of application and interview preparation sessions.
- Extra support for students who require additional guidance and for those with a statement of educational needs.