



Post-16 Options: What Next?

2024 Leavers

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Alderman White School

A member of The White Hills Park Trust

Alderman White Specific Support/Provision

All students in Year 10 have received his document to support them with making plans for after their GCSEs. They will also receive information about where they will get careers support and how they can help themselves, links to college websites where information about virtual open evenings and a guide to questions they might want to ask at open evenings.

In September, Year 11 students will complete a 'Tracking Form' so that we are aware of their current post-16 thinking. This information is held on a spreadsheet which is used to record any careers related interventions and conversations so that we have a central 'picture' of each student.

At Alderman White, we also buy in support from a specialist company, Ideas4Careers, to provide professional careers guidance for our Year 11 students. This year we have Abbie Chambers, who is vastly experienced in this field and is qualified to Level 6 in careers guidance, with us. Abbie will be in school for sixteen days during the year which means she will be able to work with about three quarters of the year group. We will use our knowledge of the students, supplemented by the information from the 'tracking form', to assess their clarity and progress with their post-16 plans and to prioritise students for meetings with Abbie.

Students are informed of their meeting times via tutors and if they forget, they are collected from the lesson.

Following the meeting, Abbie produces an Action Plan which is uploaded to Bromcom, accessible on the Student Portal and MCAS. This can be printed on request. This is a working document for the student to help them progress their preparations for next September and is followed up with support from their tutor. For those students in need of additional support to make a successful post-16 transition, there will be additional meetings with Abbie.

In September we will be encouraging students to start attending college open evenings to help them make their post-16 plans. We hope that these events will return to 'normal' after some disruption due to Covid. Please note, they will usually need to pre-register prior to the event.

We always advise students hoping to secure an apprenticeship to apply for a college place anyway, 'just in case', but this is more important than ever this year as we would anticipate that unemployment is still likely to be high next summer and our young people would be competing for apprenticeships with people who have lots of experience of the world of work. If they start college in September 2024, they can continue applying for apprenticeships and leave when they secure one. When the participation age was raised this meant that young people must be in education or training until they are 18 so they will need to attend college until they secure an apprenticeship.

Please encourage your son/daughter to check their school email and Google Classroom regularly. We send out whole year group careers information as well as specific information to individual students. The information from the Tracking Form is used to target information to individual students.

Questions to ask at open evenings and interviews

College

- What support is there if I have problems or am struggling to keep up?
- When should I apply?
- If I am offered a place, but do not get the grades, do you offer alternative courses I can drop down to?
- What are your interviews like?
- When do you hold your interviews?
- How can I get more information about a course I am interested in?
- Does the course include any relevant work experience?
- How is the course taught?
- On average how many students are in a class?
- How many teachers will I be taught by?
- What access is there to ICT facilities?
- What skills/qualifications do I need to get on the course?
- How will I be assessed?
- Do I need any special equipment or clothing?
- What do people who have finished the course go on to do?
- What percentage of students who start the course actually finish it?

Apprenticeships

- When do you start/stop recruiting?
- Do I have to take any tests?
- How is the training organized? – block/day release, at college or specialist centre?
- What percentage of apprentices get jobs at the end of their apprenticeships?
- These are my skills and qualities; do you think this would be a good job for me? What else would you suggest?
- How many apprentices do you take on and how many people apply?
- Do you help me find a work placement or do I have to do that on my own (if this is a training provider, not an employer)?
- What grades do I need to get in my GCSEs?

Where will I get the rest of my Careers education from?

- Your Citizenship lessons at AW.
- Tutor time programme.

- Individual meetings - you may have an individual meeting with a senior member of the schools' staff or your tutor. You will be expected to talk about your targets and plans.
- Careers Fairs – this will involve lots of Post-16 providers and you will be able to find out lots of information if you ask the right questions.

How will I know if I have a One-to-one Careers Meeting?

You will be given a message via your tutor telling you what time and day your meeting is.

If you are concerned about anything or would like to speak to the advisor individually, please see Mr Hallam or Mrs Matthews for a referral. It is very important you attend your interview – each one costs the school almost £50. You will have an “Action Plan” following your meeting and this will be uploaded to Bromcom so that you can access it via the Student Portal and parents can access it via MCAS.

Help - I do not know where to start!

If you have no idea of where to start and you are struggling to think of ideas, read through this booklet and then speak to a member of key staff listed below. They will be able to direct you to helpful information or set you up with a careers guidance appointment.

Key People

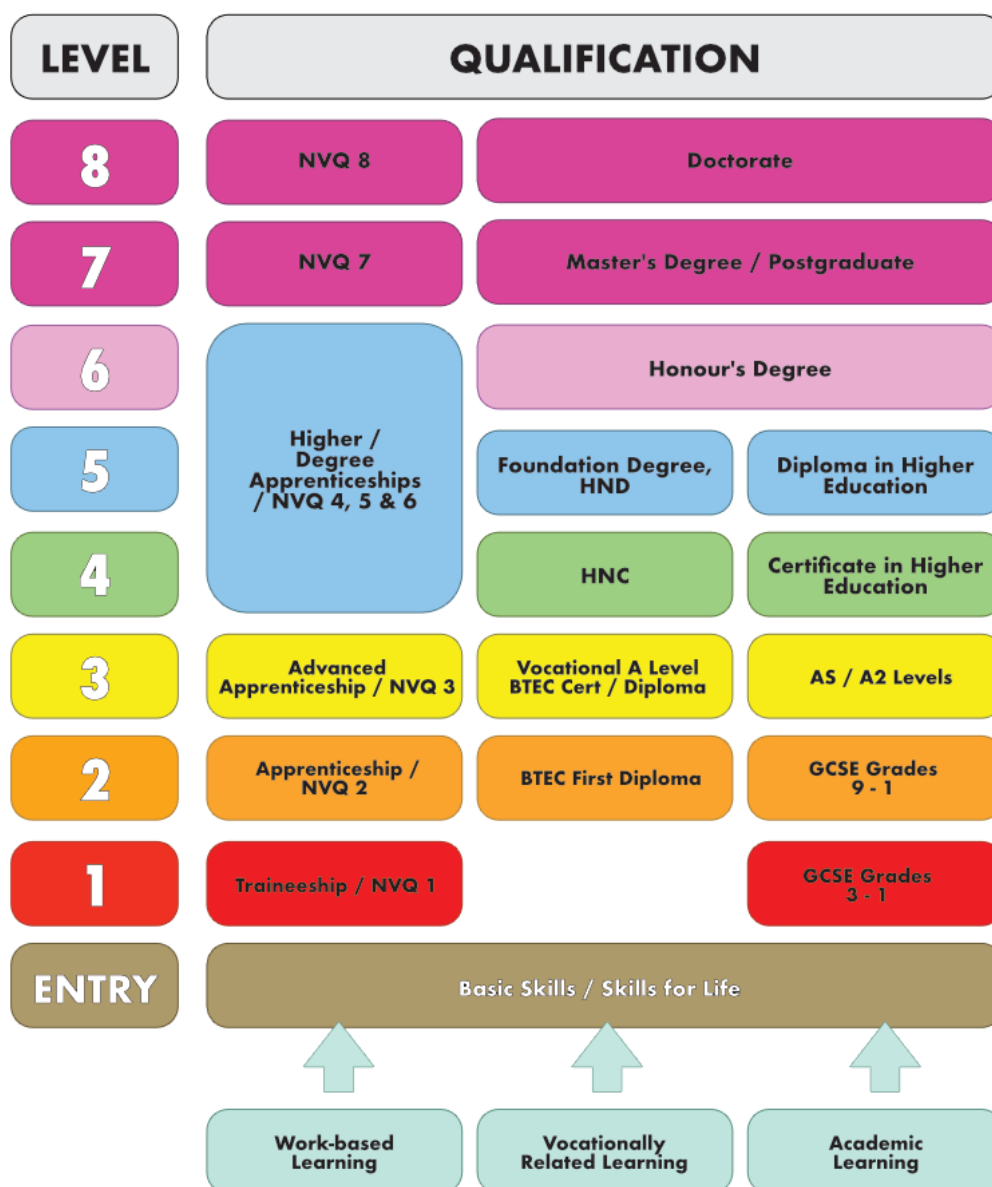
- Your Tutor
- Mr Hallam - Careers Leader
- Mr Young - Assistant Headteacher and Year 11 Strategy Lead
- Mrs Matthews - Progress Leader for Year 10 (Year 11 from September)
- Your parents/carers - they have your best interests at heart and know you best.

Qualifications Table

It can be a little confusing at first, as all qualifications are given a Level, and depending on what you are applying for - there might be a different qualifying Level. Use the table below to help you understand the different Levels and some examples of qualifications.

For a full list of qualifications at each level please follow this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>



Post-16 Education – What are my options?

Since 2013, the Raising of the Participation Age law has stated that young people must be in some form of 'education or training' until they are 18.

There are 3 main pathways to consider.

- **Academic route** - A Levels (Level 3), These can be taken at a school sixth form e.g. BC6F), a stand-alone sixth form college (e.g. Bilborough College) or a further education college (e.g. Nottingham College)

- **Vocational Route** – Vocational courses are available at levels 1, 2 and 3. For example BTECs are available at all three levels, but the new **T Levels** are level 3, the same as A levels.

- **Apprenticeships/Traineeships** (Intermediate (level 2) and Advanced (level 3) are options after GCSEs.

Full-Time Study – a qualification, usually A Levels or Vocational Course, taken at a sixth form, college or with a training provider, totalling at least 540 hours of learning time per year, or around 18 hours per week.

Apprenticeships – Working for an employer whilst studying for a qualification as part of your training. Usually, work makes up 80% of an apprenticeship and at least 20% (or one day a week) should be dedicated to studying.

Traineeships – An option for students who would like to do an apprenticeship but may not have the experience, skills, or qualifications to do so yet. Traineeships can last up to six months and involve a work placement, Maths and English qualifications and support with finding an apprenticeship.

T Levels – two year courses, equivalent to three A Levels. T Levels offer students a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days).

There are lots of things to think about when you leave school. To help you choose what to do next you might need to think about:

- What career you want to do in the future – some jobs need you to choose certain routes to get into them
- Your predicted grades
- Whether you want to carry on learning in an academic way like school or in a more work-related way
- How you want to learn – you might enjoy school, and might like to continue; you might prefer more hands-on ways of doing things, so you might want to think about an apprenticeship

How do I pay for post-16 education and training?

Education and training in the UK are free for young people until they turn 19. In addition, there is a 16-19 Bursary Fund to help students from low-income families pay for things like transport, food, and stationery, which can be accessed at any sixth form, college, or training provider you attend after Year 11 - www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

Many organisations also have their own financial support for students, so check first!

Useful Links:

<https://www.gov.uk/know-when-you-can-leave-school>

More information is also available on this [government website](#).

Sixth Form Colleges

Sixth form colleges typically focus on A-Level (Advanced Level) qualifications – two-year courses that end in an overall examination and a grade from A*-E, with a similar structure to GCSEs but looking at the subject in a lot more depth.

Students can study:

Traditional A-Levels – Subjects like **Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English Literature, English Language, Mathematics, Geography, History, Languages, Religious Education, Music, Art**

Alternative A-Levels – Subjects like **Photography, Law, Sociology, Psychology, Business Studies, Film Studies, Media Studies, Economics, Politics, Sports Science**

BTEC L3 Diplomas – Some sixth form colleges offer BTEC qualifications that can be taken alongside A-Levels. These are usually made up of several separate modules and include practical assessments and coursework, as well as exams. Subjects can include **Health and Social Care, Applied Science, Travel and Tourism and Engineering**. They may be offered as a single or double option. It would be different to taking a full BTEC at college where you would only study that one subject but covering eighteen modules rather than six or twelve.

Students studying A-Levels usually select three subjects that they wish to study at sixth form. Sixth forms also offer something called the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), an independent project that can provide students with UCAS points to put towards university.

Entry Requirements – Most sixth form colleges usually ask students to have five GCSEs at Grade 4 or above but make sure that you do your research, as some ask for Grade 5s as a minimum and may require Grade 6 or 7 for specific subjects to demonstrate their deeper understanding of that subject.

Further Education (FE) Options

Further education (sometimes referred to as FE) colleges are for students aged 16 and over so you could study alongside people of all ages. Further education colleges often offer you a much wider choice of courses at all different levels, including A levels and vocational qualifications. It is worth exploring the different courses they offer.

Traditional A-Levels: For A levels at an FE college, you would study three subjects as you would in a sixth form.

BTEC L3 Extended Diplomas: The BTEC Extended Diplomas offered by FE colleges are made up of more units than the ones offered by sixth forms. They are equal to three A levels. For example, you could choose to take Engineering Level 3 BTEC Extended Diploma and you would spend all your time focussed on engineering modules as opposed to an Engineering A Level, which you would combine with two other subjects. These qualifications offer an alternative route into university, but it is important to check that they are accepted for the degree/university you are interested in, and what grades they will require.

T Levels: T Levels are a relatively new general vocational qualification being offered this September at some colleges. Over the next few years more subjects will be rolled out from more providers. They are aimed at those who have an idea of the industry they would like to go into. In some ways they are like the reversal of an apprenticeship – 80% of the course will be spent at college and 20% (at least 45 days) at an industry placement. The idea is that the industry placement forms a significant part of the course and gives a meaningful experience. It may be in a block or one day a week.

The closest colleges to Alderman White that offer T Levels are Nottingham College, NUSA and Derby College. You can search for T Levels closest to where you live using the link: <https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/students/find>. More specifically follow these links for each provider:

Nottingham College - <https://www.nottinghamcollege.ac.uk/study/courses/t-levels?query=&courseTypes%5B0%5D=fe&courseTypes%5B1%5D=he&courseTypes%5B2%5D=other&subjectAreaFlat%5B0%5D=T+Levels&index=courses>

NUSA - <https://www.nusa16.org.uk/>

Derby College - <https://www.derby-college.ac.uk/t-levels/>

Entry Requirements:

Entry Level/Level 1 – Can require anything from no qualifications up to 3 GCSEs (any grade)

Level 2 – Usually requires 3 GCSEs at Grade 3 or above

Level 3 – Usually requires 5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above. Some specific courses may ask for higher grades.

Entry requirements can vary depending on the course and the provider.

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Apprenticeships – A real job with training so you can earn while you learn and get recognised qualifications as you go. They take between 1 and 4 years to complete.

Your employer provides your on-the-job training and pays your wages. You will work alongside them and learn from some of the best in the business. Your learning provider can be a college, training organisation or university, and they look after the rest of your training. You can complete this off-the-job training on day release (attending one day a week) or over a succession of days in a short period (block-release).

Apprenticeships can now be undertaken in a variety of industries, including **Engineering, Graphic Design, Software Development, Hair and Beauty and Catering** (and can be started as soon as an individual turns 16 and has left full-time education).

Apprenticeships Levels:

Intermediate/Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE) – usually requires Maths/English at GCSE

Advanced/Level 3 (equivalent to A-Level) – usually requires 5 GCSEs at Grade 4+

Higher/Level 4-5 (equivalent to Foundation Degree) – usually requires L3 or A-Levels

Degree/Level 6-7 (equivalent to University Degree) – usually requires 3 A-Levels or similar

Traineeships – Opportunity for students aged 16-24 who do not have the relevant qualifications, experience, or skills to start an apprenticeship but are interested in progressing on to one in the future.

Traineeships involve a programme of up to six months of study, including a work placement, qualifications in Maths and English and support with finding a job or apprenticeship once the course is completed. Students are not paid for taking part but can apply for a 16-19 Bursary Fund to help with costs.

You can [find a traineeship](#) on GOV.UK.

Useful Links:

<http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk/>

<https://www.tlevels.gov.uk>

[Get The Jump](#)

[Become an apprentice](#)

[Higher and degree apprenticeships](#)

Applying for Post-16 Courses

Students begin applying for their Post-16 options in the Autumn term and the application process for sixth form, college and apprenticeships takes place throughout the course of the academic year.

Projected timeline for 2023-24:

October 2023 – Application windows start to open and Open Events scheduled (these will mostly be online this year).

Mid-January 2024 – General closing dates for applications to some sixth forms and colleges, but it is advisable to apply before Christmas.

Mid-March 2024 – Students typically start receiving offers from sixth forms and colleges.

Late-March 2024 – Students accept or reject offers from sixth forms and colleges.

March-September 2024 – Students apply for Post-16 options that they might not have been able to apply for until now, such as some apprenticeship opportunities or courses with training providers.

August 2024 – Students receive GCSE/BTEC results and confirm offers with colleges/providers.

Early-September 2024 – Students start new courses

How to Apply:

Sixth Form and College Websites – Most colleges have online application forms on their websites.

Find an apprenticeship - The government's apprenticeship portal, which allows students to create an account and search and apply for apprenticeships in their area.

PLEASE NOTE: Apprenticeship and Traineeship applications run throughout the academic year and students must be 16 and have finished full-time education before being eligible to start. Apprenticeships have a much more detailed and competitive application and recruitment process than sixth form or college and will require students to find their own placements if taken via colleges.

<https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch?searchMode=Category>

Useful Links:

<https://www.ucas.com/further-education>

Entry Requirements – What do I need to get in?

The recent changes to the GCSE grading system have confused some people, so look at the information below to make sure you know what grades you might need to get at GCSE to move on to your chosen destination after Year 11:

Key Points:

- A Grade 4 is a Standard Pass, while a Grade 5 is a Strong Pass
- Only around 2-3% of students will achieve a Grade 9, making it a little higher than the old A*
- Although the new grades do not exactly match the old grades, colleges will mostly view them as follows: 9-7 = A*- A 6 = B 4-5 = C 3-1 = D and below
- Vocational qualifications like BTEC and VCERT match up with GCSEs as follows: L1 = GCSE grades 1-3 (Pass - Distinction) L2 = GCSE grades 4-9 (Pass – Distinction)
- Most colleges, sixth forms and apprenticeships accept BTEC-type qualifications, as do 95% of universities, including the Russell Group and Oxford!

Do your research!

No matter what you read online, it is important to check all information carefully. Although the Department for Education have stated that a Grade 4 is considered the official 'Pass Mark' for students, not all colleges or universities may agree with this. For example, Kings College London and UCL both now ask for a Grade 5 at GCSE in English and Maths as part of their entry requirements, but Manchester, Leeds, and Liverpool (all Russell Group universities) still consider Grade 4 the equivalent to a C.

Useful references:

Which University – How important are my GCSEs?

<https://university.which.co.uk/advice/gcse-choices-university/how-important-are-my-gcse-grades>

Ofqual

<https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2018/03/02/gcse-9-to-1-grades-a-brief-guide-for-parents/>

The Student Room

<https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/gcse/exams/new-gcse-grades-explained>

Unifrog

In keeping with our commitment to provide students with outstanding careers guidance and tailored support when choosing their next step after school, we are now using Unifrog; an award-winning, online careers platform. All students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 have access to this excellent website.

The Unifrog platform is designed to support learners in making the most informed decisions about their futures and has a range of tools that are suitable for all year groups. Each student has their own personal account that provides a wide range of information related to their interests and aspirations. Key features of the platform include:

- Exploring Pathways – personality quizzes, career and subject profiles, MOOCs and webinars
- Recording – self-reflection about extracurricular activities and key employability skills
- Opportunities – search tools showing live vacancies/courses/placements for apprenticeships, universities (in the UK and abroad), FE, virtual work experience and much more
- Applications – tools to help students build applications for a range of pathways (e.g., CVs, Personal Statements, Common App Essays)

All students have their own login and have been using Unifrog in their Citizenship lessons this year. Students will continue to use Unifrog next year to support their post-16 careers guidance and research. We would encourage you to use the platform with your child so you can support them through the process of deciding their next step.

For more information, go to www.unifrog.org or contact Mr Hallam – james.hallam@whptrust.org.



How do I make my final decision about post-16?

Deciding where to go after Year 11 can be tricky, particularly while you are busy revising for your final GCSE exams, so it is important to consider the following factors that might help with decision making:

Where can this option take me in the future?

If you are thinking about a destination after post-16, such as university or higher/degree apprenticeships, it is important to know whether the qualifications you are taking from 16-18 can help you to progress on to these pathways.

Use websites such as:

Which University <https://university.which.co.uk/>

Success at School <https://successatschool.org/>

UCAS <https://www.ucas.com/>

to find out whether the course you want to do after Year 11 will allow you to progress on to what you want to do afterwards. Speak with staff at the sixth form, college, or apprenticeship you are applying to get further details!

Be Prepared:

Learn more about the options available after Year 11, including sixth form, college, apprenticeships, and university – <https://careerpilot.org.uk/>

Read about how your subjects link to different careers – <https://futurefinder.yourlife.org.uk>

Improve your employability skills and start recording your experiences in a CV – www.barclayslifefskills.com

Six things you need to know before making A Level choices - <https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/advice/a-level-choices/six-things-you-need-to-know-before-making-your-a-level-choices>

If you want to speak to a **careers advisor** you can also visit the [National Careers Service](#).



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