

CIPD

Championing better
work and working lives

in partnership with:

THE CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE
COMPANY

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GUIDE TO POST-16 CAREER OPTIONS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE, TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE

The CIPD is the professional body for HR and people development. The not-for-profit organisation champions better work and working lives and has been setting the benchmark for excellence in people and organisation development for more than 100 years. It has more than 145,000 members across the world, provides thought leadership through independent research on the world of work, and offers professional training and accreditation for those working in HR and learning and development.

Our purpose supports young people being able to access the labour market and opportunities to develop their talents.

We encourage HR professionals to offer a wide range of access routes into their organisations and ensure their recruitment and management practices are youth-friendly. We partner with the Careers & Enterprise Company to recruit HR professionals to become Enterprise Adviser volunteers in schools across England, with the aim of providing strategic leadership support, connecting schools with employers and engaging young people in more business encounters each year.

Guide to post-16 career options for parents and carers

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About this guide

It's difficult to know at any age what career or job you want, but helping advise and inform a young person about education and training pathways can be a real challenge. This guide is designed to help you if you are a parent or carer supporting a young person in their post-16 decisions.

We'll explain the different options available from university and apprenticeships, to internships and other options.

This guide has been written as part of the CIPD's ongoing partnership with the Careers & Enterprise Company to support the development of careers provision in schools in England.

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The future of work

The way we work is changing. Technological advancements, globalisation, the opening up of new areas of business mean numerous new opportunities are being created for today's young people – some of which don't exist today! Currently, the average person changes jobs seven times in their lifetime and it is likely that this number will rise in the future.

While qualifications continue to be crucial in the world of work, skills, work experience and exposure to the workplace is increasingly important to employers who are looking to secure the young talent of the future and for young people to navigate a path through their career.

What jobs could be available in the future?

Many jobs will remain the same and will still require people to do them! However recent research has shown that young people's job expectations don't match with the roles that employers will want to recruit for in the future. This could mean that some young people will be aiming for jobs that are in short supply. But there are things your child can do to maximise their chances of success.

- Begin thinking about what sort of job would be right for them – talk to friends, family and people in the community, their school or college, to think about the world of work.
- Be realistic about their aspirations – it's great to have aspirations but it's important that they gain the qualifications and skills they need to secure

a job. A solid foundation of education, training and skills will help a young person stand out – regardless of the job they wish to do.

- Take advantage of jobs fairs, open days and employer talks at school or college – this can be a great way to open their eyes to careers they may never have considered.

What skills are employers looking for in young people?

Even if a young person doesn't know what they want to do, they can still begin to develop the skills employers are looking for.

Skills can be gained at school, home, via hobbies or via work experience they might have completed.

The great thing about skills is that we're constantly acquiring them without knowing it! However, there are things a young person can do to help build their existing skills and impress potential future employers:

- Get some work experience – it's a great way to see what work is like and test out career options, but it can also help build your child's skills
- Volunteer – not only does it help develop skills employers are looking for, such as teamwork and communication, it can also provide plenty of opportunities to meet new people and learn from others
- Seek out opportunities to build skills at home – does your child help out with the childcare at home? Do they help classmates

or younger siblings with their homework? Have they helped organise an event? All these activities are skills-generating!

- Consider a Saturday job – this can often be a young person's first taste of working life, building a number of foundation skills such as time-keeping, punctuality and commitment.
- These experiences do not necessarily have to be in the role or industry a young person wishes to end up in – mere experiences of the workplace, the rules of work and being with adults who aren't their parent or teacher will provide important skills and knowledge.

Where can my child go to learn more about careers?

Depending on the age of your child, their school or college should be able to guide you towards some useful materials to help them understand their skills, think about jobs and plan for their future. This can sometimes take the form of a careers library of materials, a careers adviser, or an individual in charge of careers education.

There are also a number of helpful websites designed to help match your young person's experience, skills and interests with different job roles and to provide the latest information on the labour market and specific roles. A list of resources is included at the end of this guide.

Key decisions in your child's future

As a parent or carer, being aware of when your child will make important choices can help ensure they have all the information, advice and guidance they need to take their next step with confidence. To help, the below timeline shows at which stage in

your child's school or college career these decision points typically fall. (The range of qualifications and activities available to your child will differ depending on where they live in the UK. To find out more, visit GOV.UK)

Age	School year	Education/training choices	Other activity
11-14 years old	Years 7, 8 and 9	During Year 8 or 9 your child will choose which subjects to study through to the end of Year 11. Depending on their school, they will be able to choose from GCSEs, diplomas and vocational qualifications.	Volunteering Encounters with employers Enterprise or skills challenges
14-16 years old	Years 10 and 11	They will need to choose between a number of options, with A-levels, vocational qualifications, international baccalaureates and apprenticeships being the most popular routes. For many, they will also need to decide whether they intend to consider going to university as this may influence what they choose to do.	Work experience Volunteering Encounters with more employers Apprenticeship information and encounters Higher Education encounters
16-18 years old (Note all young people are now expected to stay in learning – full or part time until their 18th birthday)	Sixth form/ college	Young people complete the qualifications they chose in Year 11 and consider life beyond school. Choices will include university, apprenticeships, traineeships, work-based alternatives, school-leaver programmes and employment.	Work experience Volunteering Part time work Higher Education visits Apprenticeship encounters Financial education
18-21 years old	Beyond school or college	The choices available to young people after completing university or a vocational qualification are wide-ranging.	Internships Work experience Employability courses Volunteering Post-graduate qualifications Graduate scheme Employment

What are the options?

During Year 11, pupils must decide on the future of their education. The Government's recent Raising the Participation Age (RPA) means that all young people in England will be required to continue in education or training until their 18th birthday.

This doesn't necessarily mean staying in school. Young people can opt to study or train in any of the following ways:

- by studying full-time in a school, college or with a training provider (many young people also take a part time job alongside)
- by working or volunteering full-time, combined with part-time education or training
- by taking up an apprenticeship or traineeship

The vast majority of 16 and 17 year-olds already choose to continue in education or training after school because it gives them the best chance to get the skills and knowledge that universities and employers are looking for. Those young people who continue in education or training after they reach 16 are more likely to achieve higher qualifications, which helps them earn more over their lifetime – on average, young people with 2 or more A-Levels earn around 14% more than those without. Young people can still work full-time, volunteer or even set up their own business, but will also need to undertake part-time training, or study in order to meet the duty to participate – this will allow them to get accredited qualifications.



Volunteering

Volunteering is an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment, or someone/a group of people, outside of just family and friends. Volunteering can be done at any age, but can be particularly useful for young people who are looking to boost their skills or are thinking ahead to their CVs.

Employers are getting more interested in volunteering and some will even ask applicants to specify any volunteering they might have done when they apply for a role. It can be a great way to get noticed!

Whilst it can be a great addition to a CV, employers won't automatically assume a young person has volunteered, so young people must be proactive about mentioning it. When they do talk about their volunteering, they

shouldn't simply say they've done it, but explain the background, the role they played, the results and the skills they learned (such as time-keeping, communication and teamwork).

There's plenty of ways to get involved which include:

- Getting involved with Girlguiding or the Scout Association
- Volunteering in a local charity shop
- Helping out in an old people's home
- Volunteering at a local youth club or community centre
- Taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, which some schools offer to their students
- Being a volunteer sports coach
- Further links to volunteer organisations are provided at the end of this guide.



'In the context of high youth unemployment, volunteering offers an opportunity for young people to gain experience and develop the all-important skills needed for employment.'

Work experience

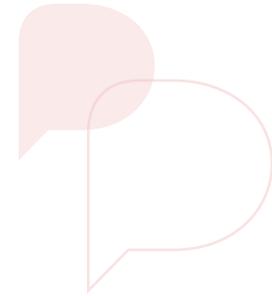
Whilst many schools offer the chance for work experience placements, not all do. For those that do, work experience allows young people to experience what it is like to undertake a job supervised by staff who already work in the environment. Most work experience placements last for up to two weeks and are a useful addition to a CV when young people start job-hunting or looking for vocational or university courses.

If you're unsure of whether your child's school offers work experience opportunities, you can either contact the school directly or check their website. Some schools have successful partnerships and links with local employers who offer a number of placements for their students. Many schools now access an Enterprise Adviser (via the Careers and Enterprise Company) who is a volunteer from the business world, tasked with brokering

relationships between the world of work and school. One of their main areas of focus is to support the school's senior leadership team in doing this and encouraging more business contacts to come in and talk to pupils about different career roles. By 2020 the Government is hopeful that all schools will access a business volunteer in this way.

Some schools will spend time with the student to find out where their interests lie and find a placement with an employer in their network. However, in some cases, schools make students responsible for finding their own placements to encourage them to interact with employers and give them experience of applying for opportunities.

Any post 16 learning is now expected to have an element of work experience included in it.



‘Work experience works. It works for young people, who get the opportunity to participate in the world of work and gain practical experience that will enable them to believe and prove that they can be valuable and productive members of the workforce.’

Staying in education – A levels and vocational qualifications

To study three A-levels young people will need at least five GCSE passes grades 9-4 (previously A*-C) including Grade 4/C in GCSE English Language and Maths. Exact entry requirements will vary from school or college, so it is worth checking. Any student not achieving at least a grade 4 in English Language or Maths needs to continue with this subject as part of their post 16 study programme. For many, A levels are the most popular route for those hoping to go to university. Until recently, students sat their AS levels at the end of year one, which counted towards 50% of their final A level grade. However, the government has introduced a new system whereby students can still choose to sit AS levels, but they will no longer count towards A level grades.

Another option open to students could be to pursue higher-level continuations of vocational qualifications, including NVQs,

BTECs and from September 2020 T Levels. These qualifications are designed to lead to either a job or further study. High level qualifications in BTECs and NVQs can lead to a professional qualification, and can also be a route into higher education, such as a higher national certificate, a higher national diploma or degree apprenticeships.

The IB (International Baccalaureate) is a programme of education for 16-19 year old students that is internationally recognised and taken by students all around the world. Until recently in the UK it was only taught in a minority of independent schools, but is now on offer at some state schools. It leads to a qualification called the IB Diploma, which is well respected by universities and is also an advantage for young people hoping to study overseas.



Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a real job with training so you can earn while you learn and pick up recognised qualifications as you go. If you are over the age of 16, live in England and are not currently in full-time study, you're able to start an apprenticeship. Apprenticeships take anywhere between one and four years to complete depending on their level, and there are also no

set entry requirements (although some employers do have their own eligibility criteria depending on the sector or job).

Importantly the employer pays apprentices, including degree apprentices. Subjects cover a whole remit from law, engineering to design and hospitality, so there really is something for everyone.

The current apprentice minimum wage is £3.70 an hour for those aged 16-18, although some employers choose to pay their apprentices more. The same applies if you're 19 and over and in the first year of your apprenticeship. After that you are entitled to the National Minimum wage.

There are many reasons why an apprenticeship could be the right choice for a young person, including:

- young people can earn while they learn
- apprentices gain hands-on experience
- they provide opportunities to study towards a related qualification
- they provide demanding but rewarding work
- no study debt or student loan required
- employers like apprenticeships as a means to grow their own staff

Apprenticeships can be undertaken at different qualification levels:

- Level 2 – equivalent to GCSE
- Level 3 – A level/BTEC National equivalent
- Level 4 – First year of Bachelors degree/Foundation degree
- Level 5 – Second year of Bachelors degree/Foundation degree
- Level 6 – Final year of Bachelors degree
- Level 7 – Postgraduate degree



Higher and degree apprenticeships

If your child has achieved five good GCSE's (grades 9-4/previously A*-C) and good post-16 results at Level 3 (A levels, BTECs, advanced apprenticeship and so on), they might want to do a higher or degree apprenticeship.

Higher and degree apprenticeships are the same as other apprenticeships – combining on-the-job training while studying – however, they provide the opportunity for young people to work towards a high-level qualification. Higher and degree apprenticeships can include vocational and academic qualifications at levels 4-7 and range from foundation degrees, HNDs up to a full honour's Bachelors or Master's degree in some sectors.

This means a young person needs to have entry qualifications typically at level 3 such as A levels, advanced level diploma, NVQ or T level 3, or an advanced apprenticeship. With higher and degree apprenticeships (and more in development) ranging from aerospace to accountancy, construction to creative and digital media, higher and degree apprenticeships range across the sectors and represent hundreds of different job roles.



'Apprenticeships are a great way to learn as they involve performing tasks and working with professionals in a real workplace.'

T levels

T Levels are new technical study programmes that will sit alongside apprenticeships and A levels within a reformed skills training system. The introduction of T levels aims to streamline technical education and focus on developing skills that sit within 15 industry routes, with the first T level being introduced in September 2020 and full roll-out intended from September 2022.

T levels will be level 3 technical study programmes, based on employer-designed standards and content, which will prepare students for highly skilled jobs and enable them to adapt to meet the skills needs of the future.

Students achieving T levels will be able to progress to the highest levels of skilled employment or technical education and training at levels 4, 5 and 6. Progression options will include higher and degree level apprenticeships or higher technical education, including technical degrees.

Apprenticeships and T levels will be based on the same set of standards designed by employers and others but there will be a difference in the overall content of each programme, to reflect that apprenticeships are mainly delivered in the workplace, and T levels will mainly be delivered in the classroom.

Students achieving a T level will have the numeracy, literacy, digital skills and wider transferable skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to succeed in occupations relevant to their chosen route and the wider workplace of the future.

T level programmes are substantial and will be high quality. They are likely to be equivalent in size to a three A level programme and will have more teaching time built in to enable students to acquire more and better knowledge, skills and behaviours.

‘T Levels are new technical study programmes that will sit alongside apprenticeships and A levels within a reformed skills training system.’



Traineeships

Traineeships are a scheme to help some young people get the key skills and experience they need to get a job. Anyone who does one will get work preparation training, maths and English support, for those who need it, as well as unpaid work experience.

Traineeships are an ideal opportunity if you are keen to get a job but currently lack the skills and experience that employers are looking for. If you have been applying for Apprenticeship vacancies but not getting the job you could be an example of someone who would be a good candidate for a Traineeship.

However they are not designed for anyone who is educated to A level standard or above or who already has a job (or work for less than 16 hours per week). Traineeships are starting to be offered in different areas across the country.

Unlike an apprentice, employers aren't required to pay anyone taking part in a traineeship but may support with expenses such as transport and meals. To find out more you can contact local colleges and training providers to see if they are offering traineeship opportunities. You can also search for traineeship opportunities advertised regularly on the 'Find a Traineeship' section of GOV.UK or www.gov.co.uk/find-traineeship



University

University remains a popular route for many young people and gives them the opportunity to study a subject (or subjects) of their choosing in greater depth, gain a degree, boost their skills and expertise in a particular area and be attractive to employers. There are various things to consider.

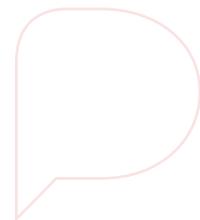
Some of the benefits:

- A degree indicates that your child has achieved a certain level of skill and expertise in an area of knowledge.
- Some jobs and professions require a university degree (for example medicine).
- A university course can help to develop the skills employers want such as research and analytical skills, motivation, independent and team working, and an ability to communicate.
- Some courses require students to do work experience as part of their degree.
- Some degrees offer the opportunity to study abroad.
- It's an opportunity to have a great time and meet lots of new people!

However you need to consider that:

- Although some professions call for a university degree, it's not the only route into work.
- For some young people, the idea of three or four years of study isn't appealing.
- Many people don't end up in jobs which directly relate to their degree.
- Lots of young people have degrees, so it's not necessarily as advantageous as it once was.
- The cost of tuition is high, and some young people might be worried about the burden of a student loan once they have graduated.

To find out more, your child's school or college should provide information on the types of course available, selecting a subject or areas to study, and the application process in time to meet the relevant deadlines. There are lots of resources and websites available to help your child decide whether higher education is right for them; however, the UCAS website is a useful place to start: www.ucas.com



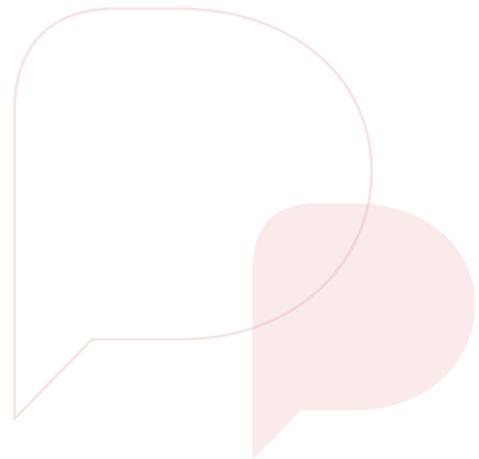
School leaver programmes

School leaver programmes are increasingly popular with employers who want to get talented young people through their doors at an early age. School leaver programmes are offered by larger organisations and provide another way for young people to begin building their careers in a particular field or area.

Similar to apprenticeships, they offer young people a way of earning and learning at the same time; in fact, in some cases starting salaries are extremely competitive. However, school leaver programmes also offer the opportunity of a full-time training programme, lasting anywhere between four and six years, which

not only gives a young person a pathway into employment, but a professional qualification, valuable experience, coaching and mentoring, and access to networks and further opportunities. Competition for places in school leaver programmes can be fierce, and there is usually a set eligibility criteria for acceptance onto these programmes, including certain A level subjects and grades.

In most cases, places on school leaver programmes are advertised on employers' recruitment pages or websites, so this can be a good place to look.



Internships

An internship is a method of on-the-job training usually used for office jobs and professional careers. Interns are often university students or recent graduates, but internships can be open to people who haven't been to university.

Internships are designed for people who are just starting out in their career, are usually full-time and can last anywhere between six weeks and 12 months. Internships are an increasingly competitive business. Applying for one is similar to applying for a normal job. In many cases employers advertise internship vacancies on their website or use an online jobs board.

In addition to preparing young people for a particular field or profession, internships are a good way of building up contacts and networks which they may not benefit from. In some cases, if

an internship goes well, your son or daughter might be offered a permanent position once their internship is complete – but there is no guarantee.

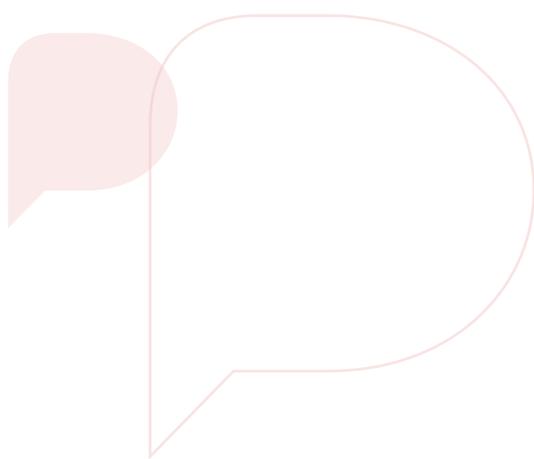
The good news about internships is that most employers understand that paying interns is the right thing to do – not only for their business but for the young person taking part. However, this doesn't mean that there aren't unpaid internships available out there. While organisations like the CIPD are working to stamp out this practice it's important that your child understands the different options to avoid being caught out.

'The purpose of internships is to provide interns with a meaningful experience that enhances their employability and skills. The quality of the experience is the most important factor for the intern, as the short-term costs of an internship can often be offset by the long-term advantages to the intern's career.'

Summary

It's important to support your young person to find the right environment for them, so they end up somewhere they will thrive post-16 and beyond.

There are a multitude of opportunities – don't be afraid to seek advice, do some research and talk to teachers, career leads and businesses to help you make a more informed choice together. Below are some helpful websites.



Useful resources/links

National Careers Service – nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk – the careers advice section of this website features hundreds of job profiles across a wide range of different sectors. They also have a helpline (0800 100 900) – free from landlines and mobiles.

Start – startprofile.com – is a free, online careers platform, designed to connect 11–18 year olds with their future career potential. It's simple and free to register and you are able to search different jobs and sectors.

Prospects – prospects.ac.uk – helping to guide students and graduates with unrivalled information, advice and opportunity, the UK's biggest graduate careers website.

My Kinda Future – mykindafuture.com – exists to give every young person equal power and opportunity to kickstart their career and shape their future. They work with thousands of schools, colleges and universities to connect students to employers who are looking for their next generation of talent.

Direct Gov – gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean – clear explanations of all qualification levels and availability in each country of the UK.

Direct Gov – gov.uk/national-curriculum/overview – description of the curriculum used in both primary and secondary schools.

National Apprenticeship Service – getingofar.gov.uk – website to help you search for the right apprenticeship for you by sector, skill and industry. Dedicated parents' area.

Find an apprenticeship gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship comprehensive list of available apprenticeships. Set up an account to view opportunities.

Apprenticeships – notgoingtouni.co.uk/ – website for those who have decided that university is not for them and with information on apprenticeships, college courses or work experience.

Traineeships – gov.uk/government/collections/traineeships-programme – website providing an overview of what a traineeship is.

Find a Traineeship – gov.uk/find-traineeship – website to help you find out if you are eligible and apply for a traineeship.

The Complete University Guide – thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk – a guide to university open days, university offers, league tables and all other useful information in one place.

UCAS – ucas.com – information relating to university, alternatives, finance, job opportunities and resources to help you make a decision if undecided.

Vinspired – vinspired.com – the UK's leading volunteering charity for 14–25 year olds. It helps young people to make their mark on causes that they care about, whilst learning new skills and talents.

Do-it – do-it.org.uk – the UK's national volunteering database, making it easy for anyone to volunteer in the community.

NCVO – ncvo.org.uk – champions the voluntary sector and volunteering, as essential for a better society. A useful resource with more information on volunteering.

Step Up to Serve – iwill.org.uk – the #iwill campaign promotes social action among 10–20 year olds, including activities such as campaigning, fundraising and volunteering.

NCS – ncsyes.co.uk – NCS is a 3–4 week experience for 15–17 year olds that helps build confidence and self belief.

VIY – volunteerityourself.org – combines volunteering and DIY by challenging young people aged 14–24 to learn trade and building skills, on the job, by helping to renovate and repair youth centres and other community buildings.

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