



Guide for Parents and Carers to Post 16 Options 2017-2018



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Guide for Parents and Carers to Post 16 Options

The options that young people have after year 11 can be confusing. There are many different routes and pathways that young people can take and choices have to be carefully made. Gathering information about different options is an essential part of this process. This guide will give an overview of different post 16 routes and parents, carers and young people are strongly advised to get detailed information from different providers. Professionally trained Careers Advisers from Tower Hamlets Careers Service are available to provide Careers Guidance and support in next step choices after Year 11

Raising of the Participation Age

From September 2015 the participation age was increased until the young person's 18th birthday. However this does not mean that students have to stay on at school; they can go to college; start an apprenticeship or traineeship or go into employment with training. They can of course stay on at a school sixth form.

The government have decided to do this because it is widely recognised that if a young person stays in education or training they will have better career prospects, be less likely to experience unemployment and are likely earn more over the course of their working lives. A more highly skilled workforce will also help the country compete in the world economy.

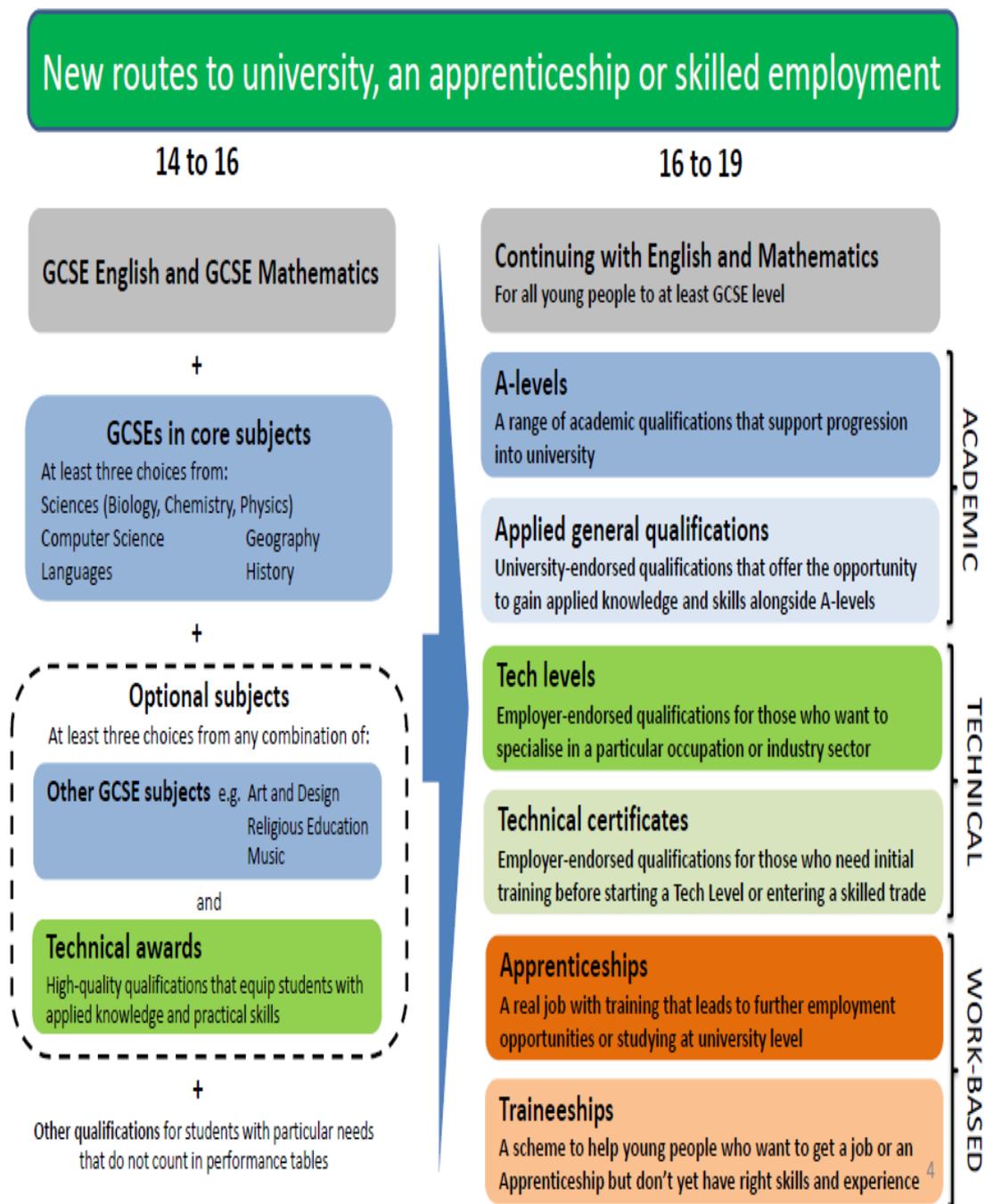
Information, advice and guidance

All young people are entitled to independent and impartial careers information, advice and guidance on the full range of post 16 options. In Tower Hamlets we have the Careers Service which provides this; careers interviews are usually arranged in schools. Some schools will have made their own arrangements and may commission a different organisation to give careers advice and guidance – but they still have to be independent and impartial and give advice on the full range of post 16 options.

Routes through post 16 education and training

Thinking about a route through post 16 education or training is very important. Young people and their parents or carers must think about progression and where their course or training might eventually lead. It is worth asking schools or colleges about the next step after young person succeeds on the level of course or training that they have applied for. Parents, carers and young people should remember that the next step could be in another institution.

The Department for Education sets out routes through 14-19 like this:



1. Staying in Full-time Education

If a student decides to stay in full-time education they can choose different routes, depending upon their GCSE results and their ideas about future careers. A young person's GCSE grades will determine the level of course that they can study at post 16. GCSEs are currently being changed and a new grading structure of 9-1 is gradually being introduced as the reformed subjects are examined. These grades are being used for the first time in 2017 for English and Maths results. Other subjects will follow in 2018 and 2019 and A*-G grades will be phased out.

Examples of courses from Foundation Level to Level 3

Foundation learning (Entry and Level 1)	Further details
<p>These courses are for students who don't have any GCSEs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation learners can expect plenty of support to make a success of their programme and plan their next steps. Foundation Learning is designed to offer the right stepping stones into work or further study • It is tailored to the needs of each learner, but includes Functional Skills (practical skills in English, Maths and ICT), vocational learning, plus personal and social learning. • The length of the programme can vary depending on the learner's needs. • Some providers offer Foundation Learning courses and call them 'Pre-apprenticeships'. • Courses include: Foundation Diploma with Personal Development; functional skills in Maths and English; BTEC Introductory Award, Certificate or Diploma
Level 2 Courses Technical Certificates at level 2	Examples
<p>Technical certificates are rigorous intermediate (level 2) technical qualifications recognised by employers. They are for students aged 16 plus who wish to specialise in a specific industry or prepare for a particular job. They cover jobs and careers where employers recruit at this level or where a level 2 qualification is needed before students can progress to level 3. Technical certificates give students an opportunity to develop specialist knowledge and skills to help them get an apprenticeship or job, or progress to a higher level qualification, such as a technical level.</p> <p>Technical level qualifications include</p>	<p>Agriculture, horticulture and animal care Arts, media and publishing Business, administration and law Child development and well-being Construction, planning and the build environment Engineering and manufacturing Health and social care Information and communication technology Sport, leisure and recreation Retail, hospitality and commercial enterprise</p>

BTEC and OCR Level 2 Certificates and Diplomas	
<u>Level 3 Courses</u>	<u>Examples</u>
AS levels (year 12) – A levels (year 12 and 13)	
AS/A students will have achieved at least a grade 4 - 5 in GCSE English and Maths. Plus 3 or more additional GCSEs at grade A* - C grades (students should always check entry requirements first).	Students have a wide range of subject choices at AS and A level. In making their choices students need to keep the next step in mind and it is worth looking at university or employers websites to see what subject combinations they require, if any. AS and A levels are being reformed over the next few years and new courses and exams were introduced from 2015 – Reformed A levels have all the exams at the end of the two year course.
Applied General Qualifications	
BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma Level 3 course worth 3 A levels. Students are required to have a grade 4 or above in GCSE English and Maths. Plus 2-3 additional GCSEs at grade A* - C grades. Students should check entry requirements as individual providers may have specific entry requirements.	Students study one subject area, for example: Applied Sciences, Art and Design, Business, Creative and Digital Media, Engineering, Health and Social Care, Hospitality, Performing Arts and Sport. BTEC qualifications are being reformed and the new awards will include a greater proportion of external assessment
BTEC Level 3 Diploma Level 3 course worth 2 A levels and sometimes studied in combination with AS and A levels. Entry requirements are usually a minimum of 4 GCSEs at A* - C (grade 4 or above in English and Maths).	As with the BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma, but students may take an additional AS and A2 subject
BTEC Subsidiary Diploma Level 3 course worth one A level and often studied in combination with AS and A levels. Entry requirements are usually a minimum of 4 GCSEs at A* - C (grade 4 or above in English and Maths).	Students would take this together with two AS/A2 subjects
BTEC Level 3 90 Credit Diploma Equivalent to 1.5 A levels	Students would take this with another qualification
BTEC Level 3 Certificate Equivalent to 0.5 of an A level	Students would take this with another qualification
Technical Levels	
Technical levels are rigorous advanced (level 3) technical qualifications on a par with A Levels and recognised by employers. They are for students aged 16 plus who want to specialise in a specific industry or prepare for a particular job. They cover jobs and careers where employers recruit people at this level or where a level 3 qualification is needed before students can progress to a related higher education course. Technical levels give students an opportunity to develop specialist knowledge and skills to help them get an apprenticeship or	Agriculture, horticulture and animal care Arts, media and publishing Business, administration and law Child development and well-being Construction, planning and the build environment Engineering and manufacturing Health and social care Information and communication technology Sport, leisure and recreation Retail, hospitality and commercial enterprise

job, for example in engineering, IT, accounting or professional cookery, or progress to a higher level qualification.	
International Baccalaureate	
Level 3 course worth at least 3 A levels and usually more, depending upon levels achieved. Students need at least 5 GCSEs at A* - C (grade 4 or above in English and Maths).	Students choose 6 optional subjects in addition to 3 core subjects to achieve the full qualification
IBCC (IB Career related Certificate)	A similar course to the IB but with more of a local flavour where schools can create their own distinct version of the IBCC

This is an overall picture. Sixth forms – schools and colleges – have different combinations of courses and you should check with each institution.

UCAS Points:

Students can progress to university from different Level 3 courses: A levels, BTECs and the International Baccalaureate. Entry to university is usually based on points – a university will offer a place based on the number of points a student has and from 2017 there is a new tariff system:

A levels	A* - 56 A - 48 B - 40 C - 32 D - 24 E - 16
AS levels	A – 20 B - 16 C - 12 D - 10 E - 6
BTECs Extended Diploma (equivalent to 3 A levels) Grades Awarded – Distinction*, Distinction, Merit, Pass	D*D*D* - 168 D*D*D – 160 D*DD – 152 DDD – 144 DDM – 128 DMM – 112 MMM – 96 MMP – 80 MPP – 64 PPP - 48
BTEC Diploma (equivalent to 2 A levels)	D*D* - 112 D*D – 104 DD – 96 DM – 80 MM – 64 MP – 48 PP - 32
BTEC Subsidiary Diploma (equivalent to one A level)	D* - 56 D – 48 M – 32 P - 16
International Baccalaureate	H7 – 56 H6 – 48 H5 – 32 H4 – 24

	H3 – 12 H2 – 0 H1 - 0
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Moving from year 11 to post 16

Whichever route a young person chooses at the end of year 11 there will be significant changes to the way they work. If the young person goes on to further education, whether this is at school or a college, they will be expected to do far more independent study. Their school or college will help them with this but in general the young person will be studying for at least the same amount of time outside the classroom as inside.

If the young person starts an apprenticeship, traineeship or employment with training they will be expected to manage their own time effectively and to show an increasing level of initiative as they get established with their placement or employer.

School or college?

Staying at school offers a young person familiarity. They know the school and the school knows them – so there is less of a settling in period. All Tower Hamlets schools have sixth forms – check with each school to see exactly what courses and subjects they offer. A new University Technical College opened in September 2017 and this specialises in health, creative and digital media and technical theatre – see Mulberry School for details.

On the other hand going to college offers a young person a fresh start and an adult environment - there are no lower year students around - and the chance to meet new people from different backgrounds. Colleges also tend to have a wider range of courses, especially vocational ones. While some schools are single sex, all colleges are mixed and general further education colleges have students of all ages from 16+.

The choice of whether to go to school or college is one for the young person to make but it might be that the course they want to study only exists at particular institutions. This will be especially the case if the young person wants to study a Technical level or other specialised vocational area. Timetable blocks might also be a factor as the student looks for the right combination of choices.

GCSE Maths and English Language

It is now compulsory for students to achieve at least grade 4 GCSE grades 9 – 4 (A-C) or equivalent in Maths and English Language. If this is not achieved at the end of year 11 students must study these subjects again in sixth form or a college. Some students will be able to do 'stepping stone' courses that help them progress to the required grades or equivalent in these subjects.

AS and A levels

AS and A levels are the best known of the post 16 qualifications and have a long history. They are the traditional route to a university education. Some students may focus on a particular area – for example sciences – and do all their subjects in this area. Other students do a mixture of subjects and keep their options open for post 18 routes. Most students who successfully study A levels go on to higher education.

All A levels have now been reformed. There have been changes to the content as specifications are updated and all subjects have one set of exams at the end of the two year course. AS levels will still be available but will no longer count as part of the overall A level.

International Baccalaureate

The IB Diploma Programme is made up of a compulsory 'core', plus six separate subjects where there is some choice over what is studied.

The compulsory core contains three elements:

- Theory of knowledge: the basis of knowledge, and how to analyse evidence and express a rational argument
- Creativity, action and service: this part of the programme encourages involvement in theatre or music activities, sports and/or community service
- 4000 word extended essay: investigation into a particular topic of interest

Optional subjects

As well as the three core elements, students also select one subject from each of the following six areas:

- First language (normally your mother tongue)
- Second language (this could be a language you already study, or a new one)
- Sciences (Biology, Environmental Systems and Societies, Physics, Design Technology)
- Mathematics and Mathematical Studies
- The arts and electives (Psychology, Economics, Visual Arts, Music and Film)
- Individuals and society (Geography, History, Business and Management, Social and Cultural Anthropology, Information Technology in a Global Society)

Assessment

Most of the assessment is done through exams and is marked externally. However, in nearly all subjects some of the assessment is carried out by teachers, who mark individual pieces of coursework.

The Diploma normally takes two years to complete, with exams taking place in May and November.

Points are awarded for each part of the programme, up to a maximum of 45:

- up to seven points for each of the six optional subjects taken
- up to three points from performance in the core elements

To achieve a full diploma, a student must score 24 points or more – the equivalent of BCC at A level.

Vocational qualifications

Vocational qualifications are courses that are related to an area of work and are divided into either Applied General or Technical Level qualifications. These help students get the skills and training that they need for vocational areas. They can lead to either apprenticeships or higher education.

In schools and colleges vocational courses go from Entry Level to Level 3. Some schools offer a range of vocational subjects while colleges often have a more extensive programme.

16 – 19 Finance

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund targets support towards the most financially disadvantaged 16 to 19-year-olds. The Bursary Fund has 2 elements:

i. Vulnerable student bursary

Certain groups of students on full time courses are eligible to receive an annual bursary of £1,200 if at least one of the following applies:

- young people who are in or recently left local authority care
- those who are disabled and receive Income Support in their own name
- young people who are disabled and in receipt of Employment Support Allowance (ESA), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independent Payment (PIP) in their own name.

ii. Discretionary bursary

The rest of the fund is awarded on a discretionary basis by institutions. Schools and colleges decide how to use this funding and can award discretionary bursaries to any student who is facing genuine financial barriers to participating. Institutions are free to determine the eligibility criteria for discretionary bursaries, and the frequency of and conditions for payments of all awards.

There are also other funds some learners can apply for; e.g. Dance and Drama Awards - further info available here: www.gov.uk/further-education-courses/financial-help

16 and 17 year-olds in full-time learning can get a 16+ Oyster card, which allows them free bus travel and reduced cost to travel on the Tube: <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares-and-payments/travel-for-under-18s>

2.Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a mixture of on-the-job training and classroom learning. This provides the skills needed for a particular career path and helps towards nationally recognised qualifications. Apprenticeships last for anything from 1 to 4 years.

Apprentices are paid and there are different levels – intermediate, advanced, higher and degree apprenticeships. The young person is placed on a level determined by the employer and the student’s prior qualifications and experience.

An intermediate level apprenticeship is equivalent to GCSEs, advanced is equivalent to 2 A levels, higher is equivalent to a foundation degree and a degree apprenticeship is equivalent to a full degree level qualification.

A student starting an apprenticeship is very likely to move sideways – for example from studying A levels or a Level 3 BTEC to an Advanced Apprenticeship. This is because the skills that they will be learning on their apprenticeship will be new

There are different ways of finding an apprenticeship. You can go directly to employers’ websites to see what they are offering. You can also find apprenticeships via FE colleges or other providers. Colleges often have vacancies for apprenticeships where the college and employer work together.

Those who are not ready for a full apprenticeship can do a Traineeship – these can last up to 6 months.

Young people need to choose their apprenticeship carefully and make sure that it is a high quality placement and that it is appropriate for their long term plans. Young people can get support for this from **Tower Hamlets Careers Service**.

3.Employment with training

Young people leaving school at the end of year 11 can opt for employment. However they should also be attending training as part of their employment.

Full time work means a job lasting for at least 8 weeks and for 20 hours or more per week. The rest of the time should be taken up by training which, over a year, should amount to 280 hours.

For both apprenticeships and employment with training young people often study further qualifications. These can be in a wide range of areas, for example: tending animals, plants and land, extracting and providing natural resources, construction, engineering, manufacturing, transportation, providing goods and services, providing health, social and protective services, providing business services. These qualifications are also offered in further education colleges.

National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage

Young people who become apprentices or who go into work with training will get paid the National Minimum Wage. This is:

2017	21 - 24	18 - 20	Under 18	Apprentice
Hourly rate	£7.05	£5.60	£4.05	£3.50

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)

National Vocational Qualifications are practical work based qualifications offered at different levels depending upon previous achievement

NVQs are usually, but not always, offered in the workplace, often during an apprenticeship placement. Colleges also offer NVQs. There are five levels of NVQ ranging from Level 1, which focuses on basic work activities, to Level 5 for senior management.

Level 1

Competence that involves the application of knowledge in the performance of a range of varied work activities, most of which are routine and predictable. At comprehensive schools, Level 1 is equivalent to one GCSE at grade D-G.

Level 2

Competence that involves the application of knowledge in a significant range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts. Collaboration with others, perhaps through membership of a work group or team, is often a requirement. At comprehensive schools, Level 2 is equivalent to one GCSE at A*-C

Level 3

Competence that involves the application of knowledge in a broad range of varied work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts, most of which are complex and non-routine. There is considerable responsibility, autonomy and control. Guidance of others is often required. At Sixth Form Colleges, Level 3 can be worth 2 or more A levels at A*-C.

Level 4

Competence that involves the application of knowledge in a broad range of complex, technical or professional work activities performed in a variety of contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and the allocation of resources is often present.

Level 5

Competence that involves the application of a range of fundamental principles across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. Very substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources features strongly, as do personal account abilities for analysis, diagnosis, design, planning, execution and evaluation

City and Guilds

City and Guilds is an examination board offering a large number of vocational qualifications

Entry-level qualifications are the real basics, for absolute beginners.

Level 1 qualifications are introductory awards, covering basic tasks and knowledge.

Level 2 is slightly more advanced, needing some knowledge of the subject area.

Level 3 qualifications cover more complex tasks and also start the development of supervisory skills. In many professions, level 3 is the benchmark to be considered competent.

The range of vocational qualifications cover the 'traditional' areas such as engineering technician, arts and craft, tradesman, health and social care, hairdressing, automotive maintenance, construction, and catering, but also the more obscure such as sheep shearing, DJing, flower arranging and even door supervision

Next Steps

How do you find out about the different options?

As mentioned above, during year 11 all students should be offered impartial and independent advice and guidance on their post 16 options. Students can also get information from individual schools and colleges by requesting a prospectus. All schools and colleges have websites and these should include post 16 options. Students can also get information, advice and guidance on courses and apprenticeships from their Careers Adviser.

For employment options students can look online or at adverts in newspapers; they can also check out the opportunities from Tower Hamlets Careers Service. A vacancy bulletin is circulated to schools and, for those who have left school – the Careers Service can help them to find a place in employment, education or training.

When should things be done?

As early as possible.

If they have not already done so students should start assessing their options at the beginning of year 11. Most schools and colleges have open evening events throughout the year and students should aim to attend several so that they can make an informed choice about their post 16 options. Many post 16 institutions open their application process during autumn term and students should make sure that they know the closing dates.

Careers interviews are usually held during autumn and spring terms of year 11 and students should make sure that they are well prepared for these. Schools and colleges have taster sessions after the GCSE exams have finished in the summer term and it is essential that students attend these as it gives a good idea of what their 6th form or college course is going to be like.

Students who want to follow the apprenticeship or employment options will find that openings in these areas become available slightly later than school and college courses – from January until the end of year 11. During this time they should keep looking at the appropriate websites and newspapers. It is also a good idea to have a back-up option (college or sixth form) just in case vacancies don't materialise.

Students should also be around on GCSE results day – 24th August 2018, just in case they need to alter their courses. School and college courses start in early September and students should make sure that they attend any course induction programmes.

Useful Websites

There are lots of useful websites including:

http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/jobs_and_careers/careers_service.aspx

www.getingofar.gov.uk (Apprenticeship vacancies)

www.ucasprogress.com

www.applytouni.com

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

<http://university.which.co.uk/>