

Your Pathway-

Helping you choose the best route
for your education and career

2025 to 2026

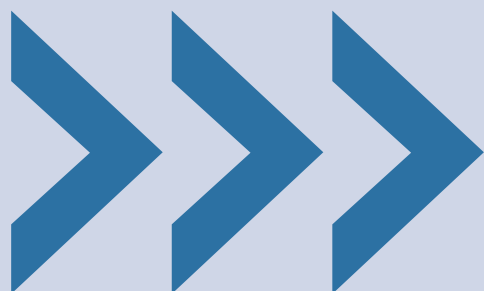
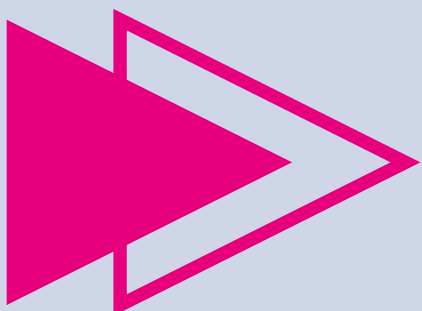


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**College,
Sixth Form
or Training
Programme**



So where are you in your education journey?

Congratulations! You have made great strides in your education and now you are moving towards thinking about what is next after school. As you progress through school you will get opportunities to experience the world of work and start to find out what type of career you might be interested in. At the end of Year 11, you will of course have your exams, but you will also during this time have to decide what you want to do next after your GCSEs.

Under Government guidelines, you must stay in education or training until the end of the academic year of your 18th birthday. This means that you have three options to choose from when you finish Year 11, as you enter a stage known as post-16 education or Key Stage 5:

1

Stay in full-time education either at a school sixth form or college.

2

Start a training programme in the form of an apprenticeship or an internship.

3

Work or volunteer for 20 hours or more a week while in part-time education or training.



Mental Health & Wellbeing

The last few years have been an unsettling time for everyone. There are always other concerns, within our own lives or on a national or global scale, that can affect our mood. You might find that you're feeling sad or worrying more than usual. These feelings are completely normal and there are things you can do to help:



Talk to someone you can trust – a parent, family member, friend, teacher, youth worker – you are not alone and just talking to someone can help.



Take care of yourself – spend time doing things you enjoy, get outside and move, try to get enough sleep (put your phone away!)



Get more help – if you feel you need more support, get in touch with your GP or contact:

Off the Record – listening support and a range of other services - www.offtherecord-banes.co.uk

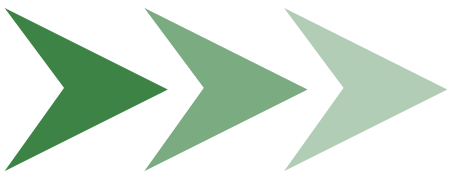
If you feel you are at a crisis point you can contact 24 hours a day for free either

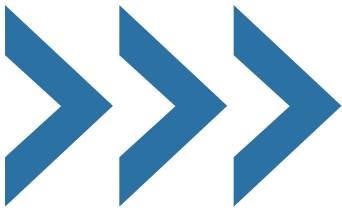
- **Childline** on 0800 1111 or
- **Samaritans** on 116 123

Making choices about the future and preparing for exams can also be a stressful time for some people; the different options can sometimes feel overwhelming.

This booklet is to help guide you to where you want to be. There is information in here about your next steps and, if you are unsure, it will help you find out who to get in touch with to figure it all out. There is a wide range of choices, opportunities and pathways to suit all so keep reading!

If you are unsure of your plans and have not made any applications, talk to your school or college careers adviser and go to some open days to see what is on offer. If you're still not sure contact us at Youth Connect South West (www.youthconnectsouthwest.org.uk) and we'll do our best to help.



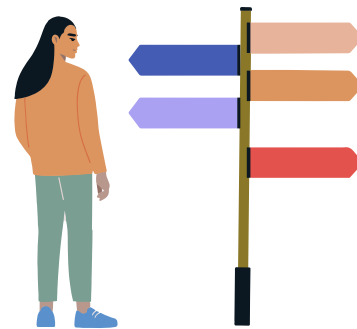


Post 16 choices - Education



GCSEs were your first opportunity to pick some of the subjects that you wanted to carry on studying as well as the chance to drop some subjects you did not want to continue with. Although all students had to study Mathematics, English and Science.

In post 16 education you get to choose again. Students no longer study a single qualification in post-16, instead, you will undertake a programme of study. A study programme is designed to meet your individual needs and provides you with the knowledge and skills required for employment or further study.

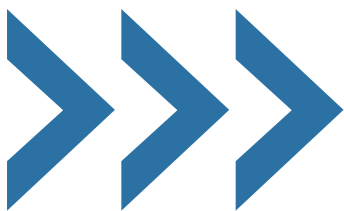


Each study programme is made up of the following:

-  Academic, vocational, or technical qualification
-  Work experience and/or employability skills
-  Personal and social development
-  English and/or maths development (if required)

“My study programme provides me with all the different things I need to make sure I achieve my career goal of being a Sport Physiotherapist. I have benefited from the work experience placement and the skills development, both of which have enabled me to write a decent personal statement for my UCAS application. I feel more confident now about progressing to the next stage of my education.”

James, Sport Science



English and Maths at post-16

Young people must have a strong understanding of both English and Maths. Employers and universities look at these as fundamental skills required to operate effectively in the 21st century.



Therefore, if you have not achieved a grade 4 in English Language and/or Maths, you will continue to study these when you enter post-16 education. If this applies to you, this will form part of your timetable, where you will either be entered to re-sit your GCSE in that subject or study Functional Skills.

At Bath College*, currently the following applies regarding English and Maths:

- If you have a grade of 3, you will work towards retaking your GCSE.
- If your grade in either subject is lower than a 3 you will study
- Functional Skills and will be able to progress to a level 2 qualification.
- You will be required to study 3 hours per week for English and 4 hours per week for Maths.

*This may be subject to change and other colleges and schools may have a different approach to English and Maths in post-16

Special Education Needs and Disabilities



Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a young person's ability to learn. They can affect their...

- ▶ Behaviour or ability to socialise, e.g. they struggle to make friends
- ▶ Reading and writing, e.g. because they may have dyslexia
- ▶ Concentration levels, e.g. because they may have ADHD
- ▶ Ability to understand things
- ▶ Physical ability

Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support

Local authorities have responsibilities by law to support children and young people with SEND, up to the age of 25. This includes helping them to prepare for adulthood and independence, and transition to further support when they are ready.



Live Well B&NES is a web-based resource providing a wide range of information, signposting and resources for children and families, young people and adults needing care or support. It is also the home of the SEND Local Offer for B&NES.

Also, find out about the Rainbow Resource card which may entitle you to access an existing concession on offer at venues across B&NES and the wider area.

<https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/special-educational-need-or-disability-send>



Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support



Sendias Bathnes offers a free service for children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) or emerging SEND, and their parents and carers, who live in Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES).

They provide free, confidential, and impartial information, advice, and support so that children and young people and their parents and carers can make informed choices and fully participate in decision-making about education, health, and care.

Children, young people, parents, and carers can contact Sendias Bathnes as soon as they have a concern. There is no need for a child or young person to have a diagnosis or an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) to access the service.

Sendias Bathnes staff are trained in SEND law and policy. They offer advice and support by phone, email, or face-to-face. They may be able to attend meetings, mediation, and tribunals with you. They can help with exclusions.

Have a look at their factsheets and videos



Sendias Bathnes has lots of factsheets and information on their website
www.sendiasbathnes.org.uk

They also have a busy Facebook account, follow them at www.facebook.com/SendiasBathnes

As well as Instagram and YouTube Sendiabathnes



How to get in Contact with Sendias Bathnes

Call the Advice line 01225 394 382 (An answer phone operates at busy times and outside of office hours).



Use the get in touch button on their website or go to the events page to book an appointment or attend an event.

<https://sendiasbathnes.org.uk/get-touch/contact-us-webform>

<https://sendiasbathnes.org.uk/events>

Pathways for those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)



B&NES is fortunate to have several programmes available for SEND students to access, whether that be in special schools, such as Three Ways or Fosse Way or at Bath College.

If you have an EHCP you will have a SEND Practitioner who will advise you on your pathway.

Youth Connect South West (YCSW) - Inclusive Learning Courses



YCSW offers dynamic alternative education programmes for young people unable to access mainstream education. We provide full-time and part-time post-16 course options, delivered in partnership with Bath College.

All students receive specialist support, including weekly 1:1 sessions with a Key Worker, Maths and English qualifications, and access to a broad range of practical group sessions. Full-time students attend one of our centres, while part-time students are usually supported at home or in community settings.

All students are enrolled as Bath College students and have access to Speech and Language Therapy, Well-being Support, and Careers Guidance.

Young people must have an active EHCP, and referrals should be made by their allocated SEND practitioner.

For further information email AltEdreferrals@ycsw.org.uk or call **01225 235659**, or visit <https://www.youthconnectsouthwest.org.uk/alternative-education>

Supported Internships



Project SEARCH is a supported internship programme overseen by Finding Futures. Interns carry out work placements in various professional roles and environments across the Royal United Hospital and the University of Bath, developing practical experience 'on the job' whilst attending academic lessons alongside. A curriculum is delivered alongside work, including Maths, English, and employability skills.

For more information email Ben Skinner, Finding Futures Manager, on info@finding-futures.co.uk

Somer Valley Skills Pathway is a free programme designed to help young people aged 16 to 24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or additional needs take the next step into work through a blend of real local work experience (in BANES, Radstock, Frome, and the Somer Valley), employment skills training, CV writing and interview preparation, rights education, and confidence-building. It's ideal for those who want to move into employment but need a bit of support and begins each October.

To learn more or to book your place, call **0300 332 7997** or email enquiries@sslcourses.co.uk

Bath College offers the following programmes within its Foundation Learning department.

Sensory Pathways for Adulthood (SPA)

The specialised sensory pathway offers a highly structured curriculum tailored to meet the needs of young people with more complex needs. It encompasses all the essential aspects of a study program, ensuring that learners receive an inclusive education. Throughout this course, learners will engage in various subjects such as Life Skills, Mathematics, and English, as well as participate in small group sessions that aim to assist them in achieving their EHCP objectives.

Pathways for Adulthood (PfA)

“Pathways for Adulthood” aims to support young people into adulthood with employment, good health, independent living skills, relationships, and community inclusion. The PfA curriculum extends beyond academic, technical, or vocational learning and provides learners with broader development, enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents.

Life and Independent Living Skills (LILS)

“The life and independent living skills course” is designed to build upon the learner’s sense of self and equip them with the skills to gain greater independence and become an active member of their community. By developing crucial life skills, participants will gain knowledge and experience to enhance personal growth and well-being across many areas including, domestic, financial, travel, participation, and work-based learning to support their progression into adulthood and further learning opportunities.

Step-Up-Course

“The Step-Up Course” is a comprehensive programme, designed to help young people develop essential knowledge, skills, and behaviour that will empower each individual to pursue a career in their chosen vocational area through emotional, social, and educational support and development to enhance their personal growth. The Step-Up Course has been designed as a ‘transition’ course, to allow young people who may have been out of education for a while or disengaged in education to re-engage and allow them to flourish to their fullest potential.

Supported Internship

The Supported Internship Programme at Bath College is designed to provide learners aged 18 to 25 with SEND needs, primarily those with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, with a structured pathway towards employment. The programme integrates work experience placements (rotations) with tailored employability sessions and dedicated support from job coaches.

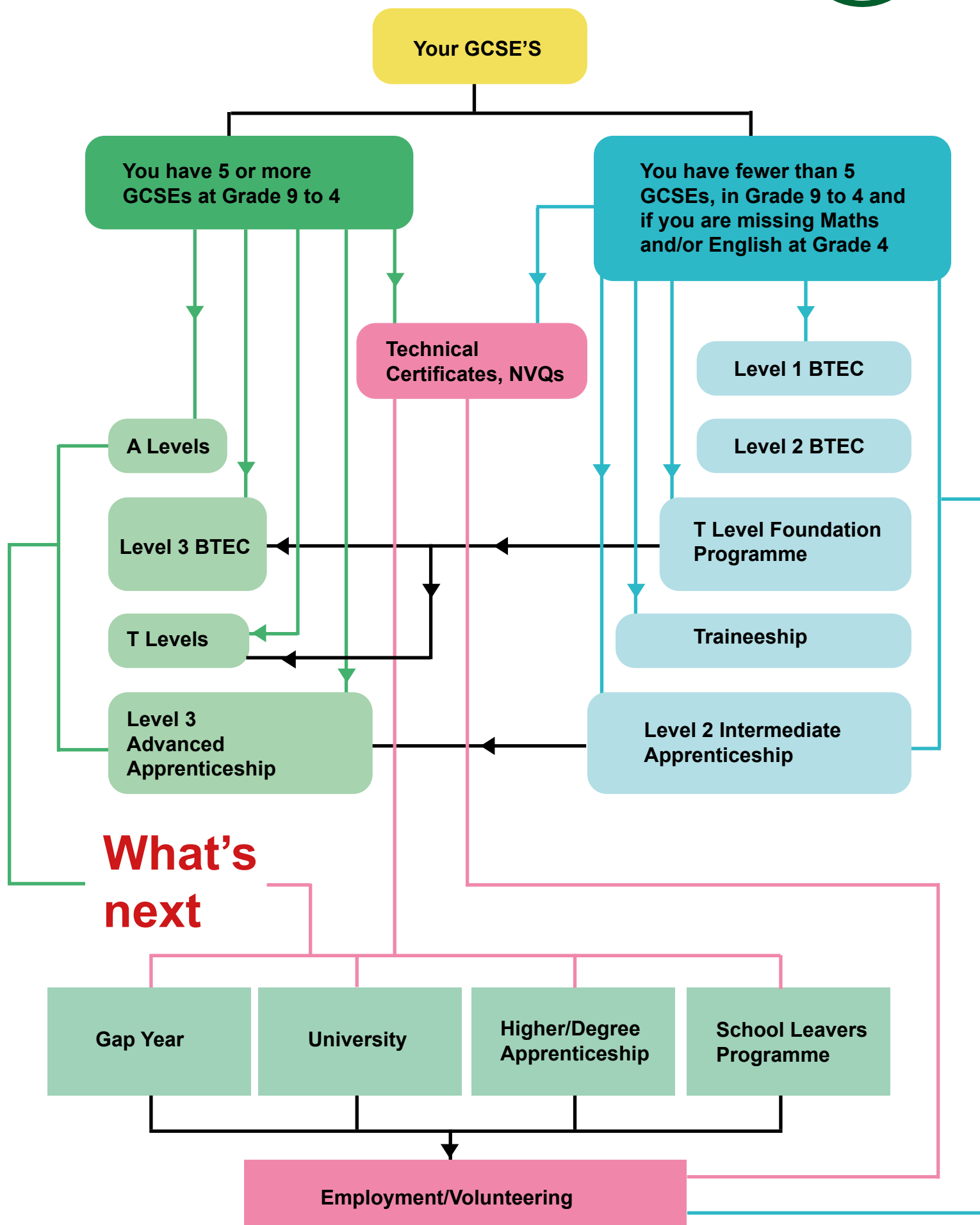
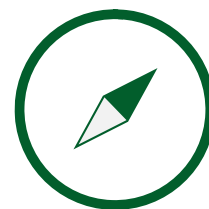
<https://www.bathcollege.ac.uk/study-with-us/foundation-learning>

01225 312 191

info@bathcollege.ac.uk

Your choices

(Text explanation on [page 42](#)).



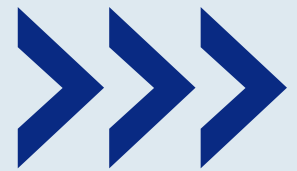
Levels explained - Understanding Qualifications

In the UK, most qualifications taken through work, school, college or university, fit into one of nine levels. The levels are based on the standards of knowledge, skill and competence needed for each qualification. Qualifications at the same level can be very different in terms of content and the length of time they take to complete.

The table below will help you understand the different qualification types and how these link to further study or employment.

Level	Examples of qualifications	More information
Entry-Level	There are three different Entry-Level Awards, Levels 1, 2 and 3, which include: - entry-level English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) - entry-level functional skills - Skills for Life.	These qualifications and awards are aimed at building skills, confidence, and knowledge. They are known as 'certificates' or 'awards' and are open to anyone interested in gaining a recognised qualification.
1	GCSE grade 3 to 1 (D-F) Level one can include awards, diplomas, and certificates - Key Skills Level 1 - Level 1 National Vocational Qualification - ASDAN Awards	Young people may study a mixture of these awards in years 10 and 11 at school the level gained will depend on the outcome of their course.
2	GCSE grades 4+ (C and above) - Level 2 NVQs, - BTEC Diploma - ASDAN Awards - Functional Skills at Level 2 - T Level Transition Programme - Intermediate Apprenticeship	A BTEC Level 2 Diploma is at the same level as a GCSE. T Level Transition Programme aims to support progression onto a T Level. An intermediate Apprenticeship is equivalent to 5 good GCSEs
3	- A Levels - T Levels - BTEC Level 3 Awards - International Baccalaureate - Extended & other Vocational - Diplomas at Level 3 - Advanced Apprenticeship	Vocational qualifications offer practical learning programmes that relate to specific job roles or employment sectors. T levels are equivalent in size to 3 A levels.
4+	- Higher apprenticeship - Higher National Certificate and - Diplomas (HNC and HNDs) - Foundation degrees - Degree apprenticeship	There are a range of qualifications at this point some specific to occupations, other qualifications degrees with a wider scope of academic research in specific subject areas.

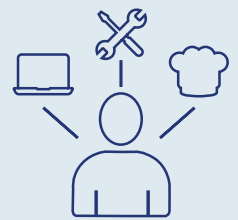
So, what exactly can I study at Post-16?



There are a range of courses at 16. It is helpful to think about your learning style and what things you might enjoy doing. Qualifications can be broken down into three broad types:

Vocational

Vocational Qualifications - hands-on study. Are you interested in a particular career area but not sure what job you want? Vocational qualifications are work-focused qualifications that look at the areas of knowledge and skills you might need for a particular sector or industry. They combine practical learning with developing knowledge and skills.



Technical

Technical qualifications - job-related study. Do you know what sort of job you would like to do? If you do or would like a course that is more practical based and includes some work experience then a technical qualification might be for you. There is a wide range of technical subjects and types of qualifications ranging from entry-level up to and beyond degree level.

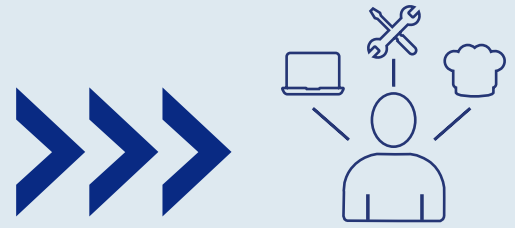


Academic

Academic qualifications - studying subjects. Do you like certain subjects and would you like to carry on studying some of your favourites in more detail? Perhaps you are looking at university. Academic study allows you to learn about a subject in more depth and detail.



Types of courses



BTEC

A BTEC is a qualification that brings together practical and academic skills at Levels 2 and 3 taking a hands-on approach to learning, without missing any of the important theories on the subject. BTECs are assessed through practical, controlled assessment, written work, and exams.

BTECs are designed for young people interested in a particular sector or industry. They are designed in partnership with industry representatives, so all employer and student needs are met. BTECs are co-designed to develop industry-related skills.

They are highly valued by a large number of companies, as they like the fact that students have mandatory work experience and there is a strong focus on employability skills and attitudes. One BTEC will usually count as a full-time programme e.g. BTEC Extended Diploma in Computing.

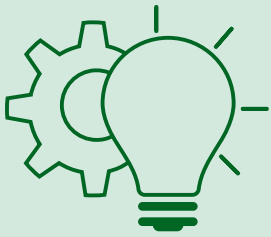
BTECs are delivered at Levels 1, 2, and 3 with level 3 carrying UCAS points, which can be equivalent to three A Levels, and therefore can be used to gain entry onto a degree programme at university.

BTECs are graded by Pass, Merit, Distinction, and Distinction*. Some Colleges will require certain grades in order to progress through the levels. E.g. At Bath College you will require a Merit grade on a level 2, including Maths and English at grade 4, to progress to a level 3 BTEC.

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are competence-based qualifications and provide you with the specific skills to do a particular job. They focus on the skills you will need in the workplace and assessment is usually by practical tasks and assignments. They are usually studied alongside a work placement and can be taken as a stand-alone qualification, or as part of an apprenticeship.

NVQ





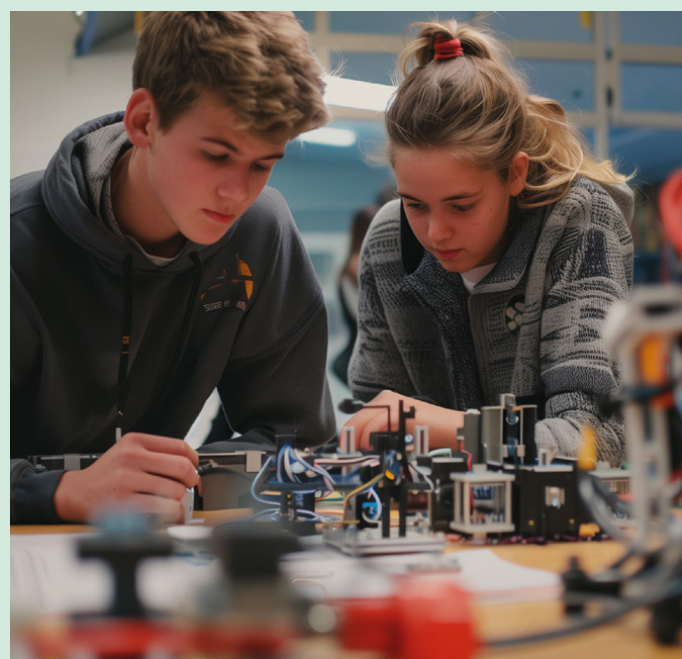
T levels

T-Levels are technical-based qualifications, that are a two-year course that offers a mix of classroom learning and an industry placement. T Levels are broken down into 80% classroom-based learning, focusing upon skills that employers need with the other 20% focused upon industry placement. Here T-Level students have the opportunity to put the skills into action. Industry placement varies from each T-Level, but all students will complete a minimum of 45 days as well as an Employer Set Project.

1 T-Level is equivalent to 3 A-Levels and is valid for UCAS points. This means that you can go into higher education, higher apprenticeship, skilled employment, or self-employment after completing your T-Level programme.

There are now over 20 T Level subjects to choose from, covering everything from Education and Childcare to Design and Engineering to Health and Science to Management and Administration.

You can study T levels both at school sixth form and at Bath College. Find out more about T levels here: <https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/>





A levels

A Levels are academic qualifications offered by colleges and school sixth forms for students aged 16 to 19. A Levels provide you with an opportunity to study more than one subject.

All students will be expected to study for a minimum of 3 A levels but you can also combine this with BTEC qualifications in some schools and colleges. They are generally studied over two years.

Did you know?

In B&NES you can study A levels at 19 school Sixth forms.

If you want to take an A Level route, then make sure you know that:

-  A-Levels are academic and there is a big step-up from GCSEs.
-  The entry requirements for A-Level programmes depend on the sixth form or college you are applying to (but will include at least 5 GCSEs at 4 and above including maths and English) so be sure to check individual provider websites.
-  If you want to pursue a very academic career, such as a Doctor, you will need to take A Levels at post-16 level.
-  Consider taking the Extended Project Qualification if your college or school's sixth form offers this. This is a project-based qualification only available to A Level students, which is particularly beneficial for students who wish to apply to university, as it carries additional UCAS points.



Apprenticeships



An apprenticeship is a real job with real pay, combining all the benefits of a regular position with worthwhile training. They often suit students who have a clear idea of their career path and who no longer want to study full-time in a classroom environment.

You'll spend 80% of your time in the workplace and 20% off-the-job study. Today, not all apprentices have to attend a college or training provider at all, as an assessor can visit them in the workplace. Apprenticeships are taught at various levels, each of which usually takes 12 to 18 months to complete but can last over 4 years. Depending on your grades, experience, and chosen career/apprenticeship, at 16 years old you could start a level 2 or level 3 Apprenticeship.

Key benefits

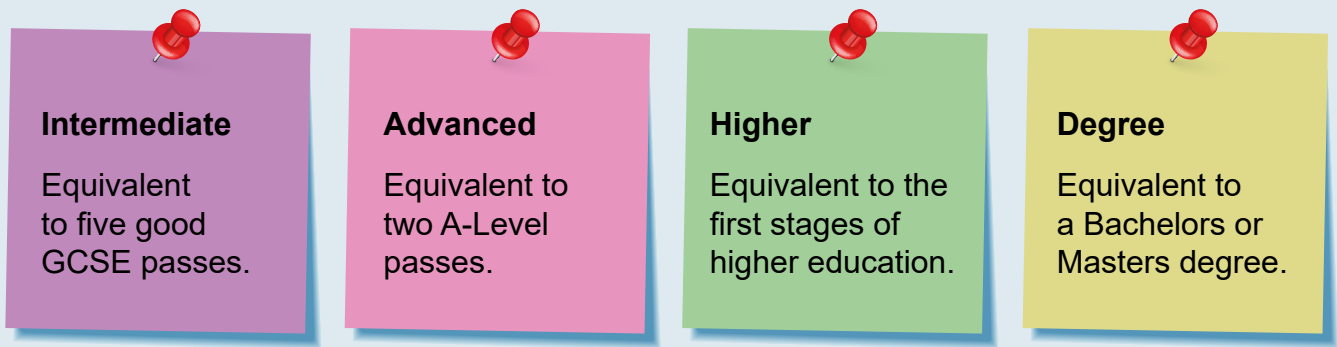
- ➡ An opportunity to learn job-specific skills
- ➡ On-the-job training
- ➡ Paid holidays
- ➡ Qualifications
- ➡ Salary

Did you Know?

Apprenticeships are available in over 170 industries, including aerospace, fashion, broadcast media, and finance.



Levels of Apprenticeships



Current apprenticeship vacancies for the whole country are listed on

www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

You can sign-up for apprenticeship alerts and have a look at the opportunities available.

Remember apprenticeships start throughout the year so you need to keep looking and researching for opportunities.

Also bear in mind that certain companies run their own apprenticeship programmes, so make sure you visit their websites for more information.

Supported internships

Supported internships are personalised, structured, work-based study programmes for 16 to 24-year-olds with SEND, who generally need to have an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) in place in order to access the course. They are intended to enable young people with learning difficulties or disabilities to achieve sustainable, paid employment by supporting them to develop the work skills they need through learning in the workplace.

Supported internships offer a mix of time spent learning and experience in a work environment; typically around 70% of programme time is spent in the workplace, with support provided by an expert job coach. Supported Internships are unpaid but as they are classed as full-time education, they do not affect benefits.

Supported internships aim to get young people ready for the expectations and structure of a workplace as well as building confidence and developing life skills.

Post 16 choices – Work or Volunteering

Combining work or volunteering with study

Although young people must remain in either education or training until they turn 18, this does not mean that they cannot earn a wage or gain work experience at the same time.

Young people can go to work or undertake voluntary work, become an intern, or even set up their own businesses if they leave school at 16. However, they will still need to be doing part-time training or study at the same time. The training should lead to a regulated qualification, for example, a Vocational Technical Qualification (VTQ). This means that as well as gaining valuable experience, they will also gain a recognised accreditation that supports their future career.

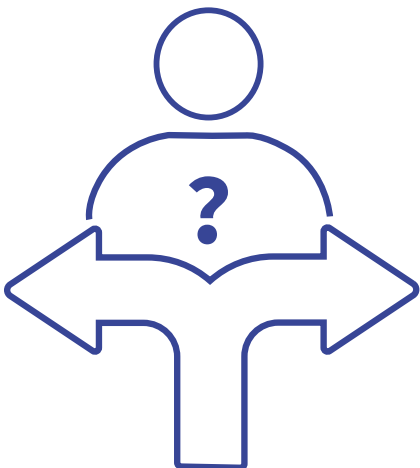
Part-time education or training alongside full-time work must be of at least 280 guided learning hours (GLH) per year. This means the equivalent of about one day a week spent being taught by a lecturer, supervisor, or tutor. These hours can be taken flexibly around working hours, as distance learning, or in blocks.

Rethinking your options – Reengagement

For some young people, they may find themselves in a situation where they need to re-think their options. There are several programmes in B&NES and the surrounding areas that help young people get back into education or training. These programmes offer a very supportive environment and can be tailored to suit the needs of the people who participate in the programmes.

These programmes are all different but will usually offer those who enrol the possibility of working towards a qualification, developing employability skills, as well as providing personal development opportunities, and the chance to experience a variety of vocational areas.

These include:



The King's Trust

The King's Trust works with young people across Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Bath and North East Somerset to help support 16 to 30-year-olds live, learn, and earn through multiple programmes that start and run throughout the year. Via their Bristol Office, they deliver Explore, Get Started, Get Into, and Enterprise Programmes.



Through Bath College the King's Trust runs the Team Course which is a 12-week-long personal development course focusing on getting the young person ready for their next steps.

For more details <https://www.kingstrust.org.uk> and <https://www.bathcollege.ac.uk>

Bath City Farm



Bath City Farm's Roots to Work is a gentle employability programme for anyone over 18 wanting work experience in either catering, horticulture, grounds maintenance, or wildlife conservation. Work placements are once a week 10 am to 3 pm for up to six months.

Trainees get the opportunity to do a Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene certificate, get AQA Awards to prove their abilities, and will receive one-to-one employability support.

For those aged 16 to 25 who are local in the Twerton, Whiteway, and Southdown areas who are currently not in education, employment, or training there is the 6-week AQA programme. This runs for six weeks on a Thursday 12:30 to 2 pm providing a great opportunity to gain a recognised credited award in Animal care or a similar area. Find out more by visiting <https://www.bathcityfarm.org.uk/>

Little Lost Robot



Little Lost Robot is a collective of artists and makers who create immersive, digital, 3D art with recycled materials. They offer a range of arts courses, artist residency opportunities, workshops, events, and drop-in activities in an inclusive, supportive environment. Art forms available include ceramics, textiles, welding and metalwork, DJing, music and sound production. Little Lost Robot's programmes for young people are based at their community studios at Old Printwork Arts in Radstock. To find out more about Little Lost Robot's current programme visit <https://lostrobot.org/whats-on/>

Bath Rugby Foundation



Bath Rugby Foundation run programmes all year round to provide social, emotional and practical support for young people through sport and education.

For those aged 16 to 25 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), the Foundation offers Advantage – a friendly and supportive programme helping build confidence, develop employability skills, and create pathways to independence. Through weekly sessions and work experience opportunities, Advantage gives young people the tools and encouragement to move forward at their own pace. For more details visit <https://www.bathrugbyfoundation.com/>

Still not sure what to do?

Deciding on your future at the age of 15/16 is daunting, so you mustn't make it alone, go and seek as much information, advice, and guidance as possible. There are several people and organisations who can help you with this.

What you can do:

- Talk to a range of people; your parents, teachers, school careers adviser. This will help you get a variety of advice.
- Think about your preferred learning style; do you prefer theory over practical? Classroom over work-based?
- Research all of your options, some helpful websites to visit are Careerpilot and National Careers Service.
- Colleges and school sixth forms will visit your school to speak about the options at post-16 at their institutions.
- Attend open evenings/days to get a feel for sixth forms, colleges, and universities. Check websites for information.

Want a bit of extra help?

Bath College's Careers and Employability Team

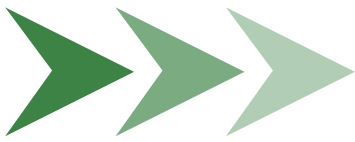


Bath College Careers and Employability team are here to help you. Bath College have a range of courses, subjects and levels on offer with something to suit everyone.

Whether you are at school and thinking about coming to college, a current college student unsure of next steps, or someone just looking for careers advice and guidance, our team is here to help.

Contact the team on careers@bathcollege.ac.uk

Or pop into one of the College's Open Events, dates can be found at <https://www.bathcollege.ac.uk/news-and-events/upcoming-events>



Inspiring Young People

Service delivered
on behalf of

Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

Youth Connect South West

Youth Connect South West is a local charity that supports young people in B&NES. They provide a range of services for young people which include targeted support, positive activities, youth work, alternative education, and support to engage in education, employment, or training. Youth Connect workers can meet you where you feel comfortable, in school, at home, or in a community building.

Youth Connect South West work on behalf of B&NES Council to support young people post-16 with their next steps, particularly in regard to Employment, Education, or Training. YCSW can offer career support to those aged 16 to 19 (up to 25 with an EHCP) to help them identify any barriers and signpost them to opportunities.

B&NES Council holds the statutory duty to track and report to the Department of Education on the status of all young people in their area aged 16 to 18 (up to 25 with an EHCP). If YCSW have not received enrolment details from a school, college or training provider, then they will be in contact with the young person or their parent/ carer to get an update on their destinations and to offer support if they require it.



You can also drop-in and see YCSW at Bath City Centre,
28 Southgate Street (opposite the bus station).

They are there Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday between 1 to 4 pm where you will find friendly Youth Connect staff waiting to offer help, support, and advice.

For more information

Website: www.youthconnectsouthwest.org.uk

Call: 01225 235659

Email: Contact@ycsw.org.uk

Instagram: [@youthconnectsouthwest](https://www.instagram.com/youthconnectsouthwest)

Facebook: [YouthConnectSouthWest](https://www.facebook.com/YouthConnectSouthWest)



What is Next?



Today there are several options available to you when you finish post-16 education. Gone are the days when it was either go to university or go into a job.

Over the next few pages, we will explore what you can look forward to.

Higher Apprenticeships

When you leave post-16 education you will be able to progress on to an apprenticeship from level 2, but if you completed a level 3 qualification whilst at college or school you can access higher and degree apprenticeships. Higher Apprenticeships are available in a wide range of subjects and range from Level 4 to 7. If you study a higher apprenticeship standard you could complete one of these qualifications, although not all higher apprenticeship standards have embedded qualifications:

- Higher National Diploma (HND)/Higher Technical Qualification (HTQ) equivalent to the second year of a three-year university degree
- Foundation degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree

Degree apprenticeships bring together the very best of higher and vocational education. They allow apprentices to achieve a full bachelor's or master's degree, whilst training on the job to fill higher-level skill gaps within an organisation. When you complete your degree apprenticeship you will have obtained a degree, several years of practical experience, workplace skills, and often practical, work-based qualifications like NVQs as well.

Something to consider

At a time when the job market is very competitive, having the right experience as well as good qualifications is an important way of setting yourself apart from other candidates.

School Leaver Programmes

School leaver programmes are an option if you don't want to do more full-time study and if you are a highly driven school or college leaver who knows exactly the career you want. They will allow you to get stuck in and start training and earning straight away.

What's more, the majority of companies that offer school leaver programmes pay their school leavers a very decent salary, on average ranging from £17,000 to £20,000 at the beginning of the programme.

By the end of your school leaver programme, you will most likely have the same level of education as the graduate trainees who join the firm, but you will have an advantage over them in terms of experience and you will have professional qualifications related to your job role. For instance, accountancy firms like Price Waterhouse Cooper (PwC) help their school leavers complete the ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) qualification. This allows faster career progression and enhances the earning potential of school leavers.

For more information on these, visit

www.allaboutschoollleavers.co.uk/



University

University is described by those who go as ‘the best period of their lives’, but it is also where a majority of post-18 leavers progress to. At university, you will get to study one subject over at least three years. University is beneficial because:

It demonstrates a high level of study and some companies look for candidates to have degrees for certain jobs.

You get to meet lots of new people and grow as a person.

You get to live away from home, improving your independence.

Improves your career prospects, by developing transferable skills such as communication, presentation, and problem-solving skills, and enhancing your ability to work as part of a team.

Graduates overtake those who chose not to go to university within just a few years, earning at least 20% more once they are in their mid-20s. By age 31, graduates typically earn 37% more, (Graduate employment outcomes: Analysis by Universities UK).

If you want to apply to university, you have to submit an in-depth application via UCAS at <https://www.ucas.com>. You will have to write a personal statement and you can select up to 5 degrees to apply to – there are over 50,000 to choose from.

Did you know?

In Bath, you can study for degrees at three different places; the two universities (University of Bath and Bath Spa University) and Bath College, which run degree-level study across a wide range of subject areas.

Taking a Gap Year

Some people choose to defer starting university to take a gap year. Having a year between school/college and university could give you the opportunity to:

- Develop as an individual
- Volunteer and get some work experience
- Work to fund future studies
- Study additional qualifications
- Gain experience in your chosen career
- Travel, work or, volunteer overseas

If you are planning international adventures a good place to start your research is www.yearoutgroup.org

You may also find www.independentgapadvice.org useful.

Staying closer to home the Engineering Development Trust has opportunities for paid work placements within the STEM sector. www.etrust.org.uk



Preparing for the World of Work



Whether you're an apprentice, school leaver, or graduate, when you wish to enter the world of work, there are a few basics you must be aware of to help you succeed.

Employability Skills

A group of abilities that involve the development of a knowledge base and mindset that are increasingly necessary for success in the modern workplace. These are valued so highly by employers, that nearly 90% of employers will look at a candidate's employability skills and attitude to work over their qualifications (CBI, 2016).



Work experience

Getting work experience of any type (part-time, internship, volunteering, etc.) will prove beneficial. It will allow you to talk about how this has developed your skills and demonstrates to employers you are 'work ready'. This is also valuable if and when putting together your UCAS personal statement.



Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A CV is the staple part of any job hunt or application process. Make sure it is specific to the job/company you are applying for. Be creative, it doesn't always have to be a printable two-page document.



Social Media

Businesses engage with candidates in a variety of ways today. A lot of businesses use Twitter, Facebook, and other social media platforms. Have you got yourself a professional e-CV, for example, a LinkedIn profile? It is worth thinking about your overall online profile e.g. what does your Facebook profile say to an employer about you, some employers will check your online profile so do think before you post!



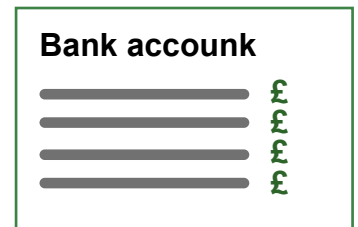
Are you eligible to work in the UK?

It is important to have identification that shows you can work in the UK. This could be a passport or a full birth/adoption certificate along with your national insurance number on an official letter. This is sent to you shortly before your 16th birthday, if you do not receive it you will have to contact HMRC.



Open a bank account

You will also need a bank account so that you can be paid. It is worth opening one before you turn 16 as the ID requirements are less strict.

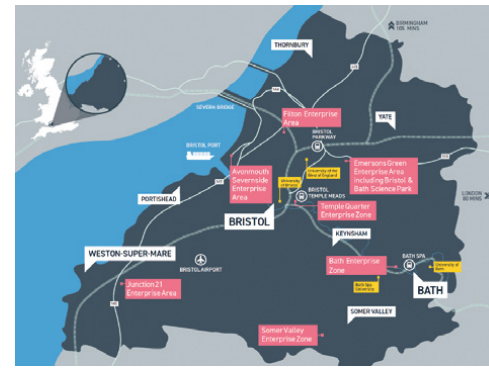


Labour market information

Labour market information (LMI) is a collection of data about the job market that can help inform your career decisions. It can tell for example which jobs are in demand and how this might change over time. It also makes you think about different jobs and what they involve, and gives you information that you may not have considered.



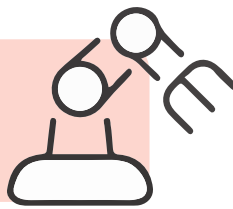
Working in the West of England – Labour Market Intelligence



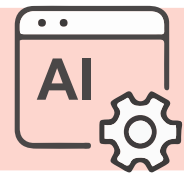
The region has identified the following as priority sectors, meaning they will try and attract businesses and create jobs within these areas:



Advanced Engineering & Aerospace



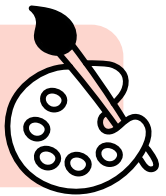
High Tech



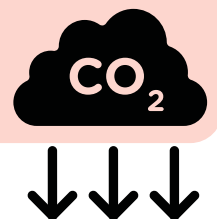
Professional & Financial Services



Creative & Digital



Low Carbon



As part of the regional Strategic Framework the five priorities are

Creating the jobs and training the region needs now and in the future



A better-connected region, working towards a worldclass transport system



Putting the West of England on the map for national and global success



Delivering net zero and nature recovery



Supporting sustainable communities that people are proud to call home



Current Booming Industries



West of England Labour Market Intelligence

Things to consider:

- There are over 45,000 businesses in the West of England, employing around 661,000 people across a range of sectors.
- Bath and Bristol have been identified as two of the hot spots for Creative and Digital outside of London. There are over 48,000 jobs in this sector.
- With pull factors like Cabot Circus in Bristol and Southgate in Bath, it is no surprise that over 79,000 people work in Retail in the West of England.

Recruitment figures for 2025:

Top advertised occupations – cleaner, administrative assistant, software developer, teacher assistant, registered nurse, lawyer.

Entry level – construction, catering, cleaner

Graduate level – biological scientists, business and financial, electrical engineers

High growth industries:

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---|----------------------|
| + | Transportation | + | Legal and accounting |
| + | Scientific research | + | Education |

Top skills requested by employers:

- | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|-----------------|
| + | Communication | + | Sales |
| + | Customer Service | + | Detail Oriented |
| + | Management | | |

- There are over 107,000 self employed residents within the region.
- Nationally apprenticeship starts were up by 2.0% to 284,190 in 2024/25 compared to 278,590 reported for the previous year.
- Check out local LMI at <https://www.skillsconnect.org.uk/career-insights/>

Key Dates



	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11 GCSES	Year 11 Apprenticeship
Sep	September to the end of December.	September to the end of December.	September to the end of November.	September to the middle of April.
Oct	Think about GCSE options or talk to your school about alternatives to GCSEs.	Ask questions about your options so you know what grades you should aim for.	Open Days for college, schools and sixth forms. Check individual organisations.	Find out more about apprenticeships and search for vacancies at
Nov				
Dec			December. Apply for school sixth form.	www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship
Jan	January to the end of March.	January to the middle of April.		
Feb	Pick your GCSE options. Your school will tell you the exact deadline.	Careers guidance in school.		
Mar				
Apr				
May		Mid April to mid July.	Mid April to mid July.	Mid April to mid July.
Jun		Some schools do GCSE Exams and a week of Work experience	GCSE EXAMS	From the 4th Friday in June you can start an apprenticeship.
Jul				
Aug		Mid July to the end of August.	Mid July to the end of August.	Mid July to the end of August.
		The 4th Thursday in August is GCSE results day. You may need to talk to your college or sixth form about your grades.	The 4th Thursday in August is GCSE results day. You may need to talk to your college or sixth form about your grades.	The 4th Thursday in August is GCSE results day. You may need to talk to your college or sixth form about your grades.
	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮
	KS3	KS4 and GCSES	KS4 and GCSES	KS4 and GCSES

Planning Your Future



	Year 12	Year 13		All
Sep	September to the end of December.	September until the end of March.	September until the end of December.	September to mid January.
Oct	Find out what grades you need for your next steps.	At any time in the year you can apply for apprenticeships.	Go to university Open Days. Write your personal statement and apply for university via www.ucas.com	Ask your teachers, parents, carers and friends questions about your options. Find out what grades you should aim for.
Nov			Oxbridge applications close mid October.	
Dec		University offers come in. You might be required to go to interviews.		
Jan	January to the end of March.		January to the end of March.	
Feb	University open days.		In mid January most university course applications close.	Mid January to the end of March.
Mar				National Apprenticeship Week in February.
Apr	April until the end of August.	April to mid May.		Mid March to mid May.
May	Careers guidance in school.	A Level EXAMS		National Careers Week in March.
Jun		Mid May to mid July.		Mid May to the end of August.
Jul		If you are taking other Level 3 qualifications check with your learning provider for important dates and deadlines.		If you're in Year 11+, consider trying to get work experience at any time in the year.
Aug		Mid July to the end of August.		
		The 3rd Thursday in August is A level Results Day. University clearing process is open until late September.		



Further Education



Further Education



Further Education

Bath and North East Somerset Contacts

FE colleges

Bath College

01225 312 191

www.bathcollege.ac.uk

Email: info@bathcollege.ac.uk

List of schools with sixth forms

Bath Academy

01225 334 577

www.bathacademy.co.uk

Beechen Cliff School

01225 480 466

www.beechencliff.org.uk

Chew Valley School

01275 332 272

www.chewvalleyschool.co.uk

Hayesfield Girls School and Mixed Sixth Form

01225 426 151

www.hayesfield.com

King Edward's School

01225 464 313

www.kesbath.com

Kingswood School

01225 734 200

www.kingswood.bath.sch.uk

Midsomer Norton Sixth Form

01761 402 280

www.msnsixth.com

Monkton Combe School

01225 721 100

www.monktoncombeschool.com

The New Sixth (St. Gregory's)

01225 838 232

www.newsixthbath.org.uk

Oldfield School

01225 423 582

www.oldfieldschool.com

Prior Park College

01225 835 353

www.priorparkcollege.com

Ralph Allen School

01225 832 936

www.ralphallenschool.com

The Royal High School Bath

01225 313 877

www.royalhighbath.gdst.net

Wellsway School

01179 864751

www.wellswayschool.com

Writhlington School

01761 433 581

www.writhlington.org.uk

Special Schools

Fosse Way School

01761 412 198

www.fossewayschool.co.uk

Three Ways School

01225 838 070

www.threeways.co.uk

Studio Schools

IKB Academy

01179 161 025

www.ikbacademy.org.uk

Somerset Studio School

01761 438 557

www.somersetstudioschool.com

Career Information and Inspiration



National Careers Service

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk>

For everyone over the age of 13

Careerpilot

www.careerpilot.org.uk

Careers advice website including job sector analysis and in-depth information about options at both post-16 and post-18.

Youth Employment UK

<https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/>

Online help, includes free courses and virtual work experience.

Lots of information and help to get into work and education.

National Apprenticeship Service

www.apprenticeships.gov.uk

For detailed information on apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship vacancies

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

Search engine for all apprenticeship vacancies across England.

South West Apprenticeship Company

www.theswac.org.uk

For a local flavour of apprenticeships, including vacancy searching.

UCAS

www.ucas.com

The starting point for all research about higher education and also where you apply.

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

Bath & North East Somerset Council offer support for all residents seeking employment, training, and career development opportunities.

Achieve in B&NES

Through our Social Media, Newsletters and Website, Achieve in B&NES provides local residents with the latest updates, events and opportunities around employment, skills and learning in their local communities. Working with providers, employers and community groups, we support and run a variety of projects that help people access the guidance and support they need to move into Good Work.

ACHIEVE IN
B&NES

For the latest info, follow us on X, LinkedIn, Instagram, and find out more on our website www.achieveinbathnes.co.uk

Skills Connect

Skills Connect is a free career support service designed to help you explore your career, training, and employment options. If you are aged 18 or over and a resident of Bath & North East Somerset, we can provide personalised support tailored to your needs. We offer a wide range of services, including one-on-one coaching sessions, CV writing and interview preparation, career goal setting, and referrals for wellbeing or financial advice.

skills
CONNECT

To get started, please complete the registration form or visit one of our weekly drop-in sessions across B&NES. Learn more about Skills Connect: www.skillsconnect.org.uk/bath-north-east-somerset

Future Bright

Future Bright is a free career coaching programme designed to help you move forward in your working life. If you are aged 18 or over, in paid work (including self-employment or zero-hours contracts), and live in Bath & North East Somerset, you may be eligible for support. We offer up to six months of personalised coaching to help you set career goals, explore new opportunities, improve your CV and interview skills, and boost your confidence. We also link you up to training and advice on money, benefits, and self-employment.

To get started, please sign up online and a local coach will be in touch.

Learn more about Future Bright: <https://www.skillsconnect.org.uk/future-bright/>

Youth Guarantee Trailblazer

Youth Guarantee Trailblazer is a free service designed to support young people aged 18 to 21 who are not currently in work, education, or training. If you live in Bath & North East Somerset, we can help you take your next step toward employment, training, or further education. We offer personalised careers coaching, confidence-building activities, and practical support such as free bus passes, short-term e-bike hire, and work placements with local employers. You'll also have access to interview opportunities and tailored advice to help you move forward.

To get started, please email: Youth_Trailblazer@bathnes.gov.uk Learn more about Youth Guarantee: <https://www.skillsconnect.org.uk/youth-guarantee/>

16- & 17-year-olds can also access the support if they are at risk of not being in employment, education, or training without access to transport.

WE Work for Everyone



Transitioning from education to work can be challenging, especially if you have a learning disability, learning difficulty, or are autistic. WE WORK for Everyone provides one-on-one guidance to help you find fulfilling paid employment. WE WORK aims to empower you by fostering independence and building connections to combat social isolation. Find out more by visiting <https://weworkforeveryone.org/>

Bath and NE Somerset Vocational Hub

The Vocational Hub supports adults (18+) with additional needs such as learning disabilities and/or Autism to access and maintain: Voluntary work, Vocational day services, and Paid employment. Find out more by visiting <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/learn-about-vocational-hub>

West of England Combined Authority



Discover skills, training and career support in the West of England to help you get to where you want to be.

Check out the West of England Combined Authority's Skills Connect page.

<https://www.skillsconnect.org.uk/>



Inspiring Young People

Youth Connect South West (YCSW)

At any point during your post 16 journey you or your parents/ carers can contact us for advice and support to help with getting into training, education, or employment. We have dedicated career coaches who can offer support and guidance. www.youthconnectsouthwest.org.uk

<https://www.youthconnectsouthwest.org.uk/next-steps>



Creating opportunities with young people to



Be Safe



Belong



Be Heard



Grow

Please note: All information correct as of going to print October 2025.

Your Pathway - what do you think?

2025 to 2026



- » What did you think?
- » Was this booklet helpful or unhelpful?
- » Could we make it better?

Let us know, by emailing us at:
contact@ycsw.org.uk



Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives



References

After your GCSEs

(This is a text explanation of the diagram on [page 13](#)).

The pathway you can take after post 16 education will depend on the results of your GCSEs exams.

If you achieve 5 or more GCSEs at grade 9 to 4 then you can access Level 3 programmes of study, and you can choose from the following options,

- A levels
- Level 3 BTEC
- T Level
- Level 3 Advance Apprenticeship
- Technical certificate programmes

After this you can then progress onto any of the following options

- Take a Gap year
- University
- Higher or degree apprenticeship
- Join a school Leavers programme
- Volunteering or Employment

If you gain fewer than 5 GCSEs at grade 9 to 4 and if you are missing either Maths and/ or English at grade 4 your options are either Level 1 or 2 programmes of study. This can include the following options

- Level 1 BTEC
- Level 2 BTEC
- T level Foundation Programme
- A traineeship
- Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship
- Technical certificate programmes

If after a year if you successfully pass your course and achieve an equivalent of a Level 2 pass in English and Maths you may be able to move onto the following courses

- A levels
- Level 3 BTEC
- T Level
- Level 3 Advance Apprenticeship
- Technical certificate programmes

Alternatively, you may progress onto

- Volunteering or Employment