

Post-16 Choices Booklet

This booklet is designed to help Year 10 pupils start thinking about their choices on leaving school.

Our local colleges and training organisations run various information and taster events. These tend to take place during the Autumn term of Year 11 and will really help with choices. These might be digital or physical events depending on current circumstances. More information will follow when available.

This booklet aims to help you do some research BEFORE Year 11 to help you be super-prepared to make these choices confidently in the Autumn term of Year 11.

Timeline for getting ready to move on from school.

It might seem like ages away – but careful research and planning now means that you can confidently make choices, and complete your applications earlier allowing you to concentrate on your GCSE work as you move through Year 11.

SUMMER TERM YEAR 10	AUTUMN TERM YEAR 11	SPRING TERM YEAR 11	SUMMER TERM YEAR 11
Great time to be:	Great time to be:	Great time to be:	Great time to be:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thinking about your strengths and favourite subjects - Finding out more about careers that interest you - Thinking about how your strengths might fit with career ideas. - Discussing your ideas with people whose opinions you value. - Doing some online research into the local college and training options. - Using XELLO– the online careers programme we set up for you in Year 9. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building confidence in strengths and favourite subjects - Going to information events, and learning about all the different options - Booking some taster sessions. - Making applications to any options which have an early closing date - Making contacts with employers if seeking an apprenticeship - Attending the school careers fair. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completing applications (key dates will be given out in Year 11 – but most applications are complete by the end of January) - Attending interviews - Attending additional taster events - Working hard to secure an apprenticeship placements - Making sure you have a back-up plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concentrating on exam prep. - Finalising your placement if intending an apprenticeship - Attending any summer transition days (after exams)

REMEMBER: Contact our school Careers Advisers Sharon Ruff by email at: Ruff.s@meole.co.uk if you are feeling very unsure, or simply have a question you would like to ask.

Choosing the right option for YOU

For school leavers who are already have strong career ideas, choosing particular subjects/courses can be crucial. For all school leavers, it is important not to close potential options down by the choices you make.



How to make great choices

- Get **advice** from the **people who know you best**, and whose thoughts you value. Talk to parents, teachers, family friends, older siblings and friends. Get independent advice from the school Careers Adviser, Sharon Ruff.
- Look at your most recent school reports – **what are your strengths?**
- Think about what you enjoy outside of school. **What skills are you building?**
- Look carefully at the **course offers** at different colleges.
- **Find out more information** about the different careers that interest you.
- **Consider apprenticeships**. Is this something you might consider now? Or work towards as your next step after college?

Look at **Local Labour Market information** - which job sectors are growing in the local area? What sort of salary can you achieve in different career areas? You can check this out using the programme that we subscribe to - XELLO. There is also information on the National Careers Service pages. (Weblinks included at the end of this leaflet)

Whichever options you decide to apply for, concentrate on subjects and courses that:

- you will **enjoy**
- you think that you will **do well in**
- that will be **useful** to you, and help you achieve your goals.

The main options for school leavers

There are three main pathways at 16-plus with lots of choice within each pathway:

Academic pathway (A levels)	Vocational Pathway (BTECs, and other types)	Apprenticeship pathway
This option is most similar to your GCSEs. Mainly classroom-based learning with the majority of assessment in most subjects by end of course exams.	This option combines theory and classroom learning, and focusses learning around a career area. Assessment is by a variety of methods.	This option is the most hands-on. You are based mainly in the workplace, and will work towards an apprenticeship standard.
You get to choose a combination of subjects (usually 3 or 4) to suit your strengths and goals.	These courses come at a range of levels to suit different learners. You usually take just one course.	There are over 1500 different types of apprenticeships from Retail to aerospace engineering to Law.
Can lead on to university, apprenticeships or work.	At the right level this option can lead on to university. Vocational courses also lead onto apprenticeships or work.	You can progress through different levels through to a university degree apprenticeship in some sectors.

Read on to the end of the booklet for more detail on each option.

Local Colleges and 6th forms.

There are a number of colleges and 6th form centres that school leavers in our area regularly consider. Some of the colleges and 6th forms that our students move on to most frequently include:

Organisation	Pathways/qualifications on offer	How/when to apply	Additional information
Shrewsbury Colleges Group www.scg.ac.uk	A levels, vocational qualifications and apprenticeships	Applications are done online, and can be done at home, but we will provide time and support in school to complete. The recommended application date (not yet confirmed) for A level courses is usually Feb half term. Applications for vocational courses can be made throughout the year. but we aim to support all students to complete applications by the end of January.	A levels are offered at English Bridge and Welsh Bridge sites. Art vocational courses offered at the English Bridge site. All other vocational courses are offered at the London Road site.
Herefordshire, Ludlow, and North Shropshire College www.nsc.ac.uk Oswestry, and Walford campuses. www.hlcollege.ac.uk Hereford, and Ludlow campuses.	Vocational qualifications and/or A levels depending on campus chosen.	Applications are done online, and can be done at home, but we will provide time and support in school to complete. Applications can be made throughout the year, but we aim to support all students to complete applications by the end of January.	There are campuses in Hereford, Ludlow, Oswestry, and Baschurch (Walford).
Thomas Telford School www.ttsonline.net/page/admissions-6th-form	A levels and vocational qualifications including specialist academies in Sports, Business and Performing Arts.	May have early closing date. Check website carefully in September.	Some students with strengths in sports and performing arts will consider this option due to their specialist academies
Telford College https://www.telfordcollege.ac.uk/	A-levels, vocational qualifications and apprenticeships	Applications are completed online. Support can be provided in school.	Offers some courses which are not found more locally e.g. aviation engineering, A level Criminology.
Thomas Adams 6 th form (Wem) https://thomasadams.net/sixth-form/	Mainly A levels with a small number of vocational qualifications.	Apply online. We recommend that you apply by mid-December to ensure a place on popular courses.	Appeals to students who like the smaller campus with a college feel. Whilst this is a school 6 th form, it is quite distinct from the main school site.

Haberdashers Adams (Grammar) www.adamsgs.uk/admissions/joining-us-in-sixth-form	A levels	Check website for more details on application. May have early closing dates.	High grades required. Check website carefully for details.
Reaseheath College https://www.reaseheath.ac.uk/	Vocational courses and apprenticeships.	See website for more information about how to apply	Reaseheath is a specialist land-based college, and has some courses that are not available any closer. Students often travel to Reaseheath for Agricultural engineering, Forestry, or Horticulture.

Students who are very talented at performing arts sometimes consider specialist settings. Get in touch with Sharon, the school careers adviser or talk to your dance/drama teacher and start researching these early if this is your interest.

Students with a keen interest in a particular sport sometimes consider specialist providers that focus on that sport. Examples: Coaching Connexions, STFC programmes, Crossbar training, LLS academy (Welshpool).

There are also a number of schools across the region that have integrated 6th forms. Depending on where you live you might want to consider a school 6th form as an alternative to a college setting. Use the main school websites to research these.

Always consider how you are going to travel to your education setting especially if you are not choosing the most local option.

There are also a number of independent (fee paying) schools in the area who you can apply to undertake your post-16 studies even though you have not studied your GCSEs at that school.

Shrewsbury Girls High School <https://shrewsburyhigh.gdst.net/>

Shrewsbury School www.shrewsbury.org.uk/page/sixth-form-year-12

Concord College <https://concordcollegeuk.com/>

Ellesmere College <https://www.ellesmere.com/>

Oswestry School <https://www.oswestryschool.org.uk/>

Moreton Hall <https://moretonhall.org>

Funding

Many independent (paid for) education providers offer a range of bursaries and scholarships (which might be based on academic, sporting or other areas of excellence) to students. The provision of these varies widely so you should research specific providers carefully if you would like to explore this option.

NOTE: This list of education providers is not exhaustive, but reflects commonly chosen destinations for Meole Brace leavers.

A Levels

What you need to know about A levels...

They are challenging!

A-levels are a step up, and require you to undertake a lot of independent study, so you want to be sure that this way of studying is right for you, and that you are choosing subjects that fit with your strengths and preferences.

They allow you to keep options open if you choose well.

One of the great things about taking A levels is that you get to pick 3 or sometimes 4 subjects. How you mix subjects is usually entirely up to you as long as you achieve the entry requirements.

The reasons that you pick particular A-level subjects will usually be based on a combination of 3 main factors:

- It's a subject you **enjoy** or think you will enjoy
- It's a subject you are **good at**, or think you are likely to do well in
- It's a subject that will be **useful** to you in your future career plans.

To keep your options for the future really flexible it can help to keep some **core subjects** in the mix. It will rarely be essential to offer an A level in a newer more specialist subject e.g. Law, psychology, economics even if you are applying for a degree course in one of those subjects. However, some Law courses might ask for an essay subject which could be Law or could be English, History etc. Some (not all) psychology courses will insist on a science. Some (not all) economics courses will ask for Maths. The Russell Group website can help you check requirements. <https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>

Keeping one or two core subjects in the mix **is not essential**, but can give you more flexibility particularly if your career ideas are still developing. Core subjects include:

Biology
Chemistry
Physics

Geography
History
Languages

Maths
English

It is still a great idea to consider subjects which are new to you as doing so can help you to identify new strengths and test out new interests. It can be exciting to take a new subject and inspire you to new career ideas.

A common approach is to consider a mixture of courses that are familiar to you and those that are newer. Consider your options carefully, but remember not to lose sight of your passions and interests!

You may need to have taken specific A-levels to be able to apply for some university courses

This is really important if you already have strong ideas about what degree you want to take. University entrance requirements can be quite flexible or very specific. They might say that an A-level subject is 'essential', 'preferred' or 'ideally offered'. They might be reluctant to consider certain combinations of Alevels e.g. subjects with too much overlap, too many practical subjects.

You should never discount a subject that you are really keen on based solely on 'sensible' advice, but think about how you combine different subjects and how much flexibility you might want later on.

Vocational Courses

Vocational courses means courses which are related to work.

BTECS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES.

Our local colleges offer vocational courses at levels 1, 2, and 3, as well as entry level options for students who need additional support. BTECs are one common type of vocational course. They are available in lots of different subject areas and at all levels. The level that you take will depend on your GCSE results.

BTECs are assessed very differently to A-levels. A-levels are assessed mainly by exams. BTEC assessment is more varied. There may be written/online tests, but also folder work, and depending on the subject there might be practical tests as well. Some students achieve especially well through varied BTEC assessment, and find that they progress to university with a huge boost to their confidence after taking a BTEC.

If you are considering University longer-term then BTEC is definitely an option you can consider. BTECs come in different sizes as well as being available at different levels. The **Level 3 Extended BTEC diplomas** are equivalent to 3 x A-levels, and are accepted on their own for entry to a wide range of university courses.

It is however still important to **look carefully at entry requirements** especially if you have a particular university or course in mind.

- You can be asked for an A level in addition to your BTEC for a small number of degree courses.
- BTEC is not considered to be acceptable preparation for every course at every university

You should double check before you decide which pathway is right for you.

Some 6th forms and Colleges allow you to combine A-levels and smaller 1 x A-level equivalent BTECs.

BTECs are not the only type of vocational qualification available to school leavers.

Some vocational courses you can take at college are focussed on **learning skills** for a career. These are usually the most practical college courses you can take. These are courses which train you to be a 'chef.....hairstylist...mechanic.....bricklayer etc. Students who choose very **skills-based courses** all usually start at level 1.

Here are some of the vocational subjects you can currently study at local colleges. Some of these will be BTEC courses and can be used to progress onto university. Some of these will be very similar to BTEC, and can also lead onto university. Some of these will be much more practical hands-on programmes, and will train you in the skills needed to succeed in a job. Visit local colleges online or in person to find out much more about the vocational courses that on offer to you. Course offers change each year – so double check!

Art and Design	Computing and IT	Agriculture
Childcare and Education	Animal Management	Travel and Tourism
Music	Business	Equine
Hair and Beauty	Countryside Management	Public Uniformed Services
Sports and Outdoor Activities	Creative Media	Performing Arts
Construction Trades	Engineering	Health and Social Care
Music Technology	Hospitality and Catering	Music Technology
Motor Vehicle	Photography	Fashion and Textiles

T Levels

T levels or Technical Levels are ground-breaking new qualifications which are equivalent to 3 A Levels. T Levels offer students a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days). T Level students spend 80% of the course in the classroom, learning the essential skills that your employees need. The other 20% is a meaningful industry placement, where they put these skills into action.

T Levels have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for work, further training, or study.

T Levels are ideal if you have completed your GCSEs, and wish to continue your studies but also want to get into a skilled job. They are also great if you prefer a practical approach to your studies. They enable you to build knowledge and experience to help you get the job you want. T Levels are developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so you will have the skills that employers in your chosen industry need. They are ideal for you if you are focussed on a particular career or work skills and either want to progress to university, further training, an apprenticeship, or employment.

T-levels are offered by many schools and colleges across England and offer you an ideal first step into your future career. As of September 2022, there are 16 different T-levels to choose from, with even more being made available from September 2023.

To find out more on what T Levels are available locally, please follow this link:

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

Key points for school leavers aspiring to university.

- If you are aiming for university and already have a particular degree subject in mind, check out the entry requirements before you choose your A-levels or BTEC courses.
- By doing this research now you can be sure that your post 16 choices are the right ones to get where you want to be later on.
- There is lots of information to help you on the **UCAS website**. Follow this link:

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/what-and-where-study/choosing-course/choosing-undergraduate-course>

- And more on the **Russell Group 'Informed Choices' website** - The Russell Group is a group of research-intensive universities that are highly respected and are competitive to get into. Their interactive website can help you identify how different A level choices can open up your degree choices. Follow this link:

<https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk>

- **'The Uni Guide'** is a great source of information for students choosing post-16 courses. Check out their 'steps to choosing A levels' or the 'A level explorer tool' to see how different combinations of A level subjects affect your degree choices. Use this link:

<https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/advice/a-level-choices>

Look at their BTEC related articles. Use this link:

<https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/advice/a-level-choices/what-are-btecs>

University League Tables

There are a number of published 'league tables' which base their rankings on different types of data. If you want to compare universities and get inspired about the huge range of university courses that are out there try using these comparison tables:

<https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings>

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2022/sep/24/the-guardian-university-guide-2023-the-rankings>

Or try the 'whatuni?' app





Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships come at different levels which can be compared directly to qualifications that you can take at school, college or university. They start at level 2.

If you need a level 1 programme you are not likely to be able to go straight onto apprenticeship. Check out the information about 'Supportive Programmes' at the end of the leaflet.

Apprenticeship type	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE passes at grades A* to C
Advanced	3	2 A level passes
Higher	4, 5, 6 and 7	Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or master's degree

There is a national website you can use to look at vacancies. This is a good way to research what is available locally and further afield. It is increasingly common for young people to take an apprenticeship after a year or two at college.

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

School leavers can apply for apprenticeships at levels 2, and 3 depending on grades achieved. Levels 4 and above are aimed at applicants who have already been to college or have already taken a level 3 apprenticeship.

Different kinds of apprenticeship providers

Some local colleges run apprenticeship programmes.

Some local training organisations run apprenticeship programmes.

At the higher levels, some universities run apprenticeship programmes.

Some apprenticeship programmes are run by national or specialist training organisations.

The way that you study on your apprenticeship will vary. It will be different depending on which training provider you are studying with, and what type of work you are doing.

- Some apprentices go to college locally once a week.
- Some apprentices have to travel further and do blocks of learning at college.
- Some apprentices start their training at college and only move into the workplace after a fixed period of time.
- Some apprentices do their learning online or using facilities at the workplace.

See the next page for a list of some of our largest local apprenticeship providers with information about the different types of work they currently offer apprenticeships in.

Local Apprenticeship Providers

This is just a selection of providers. Visit the national apprenticeship service webpages for more information: www.apprenticeships.gov.uk for general information <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship> to search and apply for vacancies.

Employers who have had apprentices before are likely to have a training provider that they work with.

Employers who are new to taking on an apprentice can get much more information here:

<https://www.gov.uk/employing-an-apprentice>

Shrewsbury College Apprenticeships www.shrewsbury.ac.uk	Accounting □ Beauty Therapy □ Brickwork □ Business Administration □ Carpentry & Joinery □ Childcare □ Electrical Installation □ Engineering □ Hairdressing □ Hospitality & Catering □ Motor Vehicle □ Painting & Decorating □ Plumbing □ Property Maintenance □ Supporting Teaching & Learning (Teaching Assistants)
Telford College Apprenticeship Team https://www.telfordcollege.ac.uk/apprenticeships	Business, Administration, Customer Services, and Human resources • Accountancy • Health and Care • IT • Groundwork and Highway maintenance • Education and Training • Warehouse and Logistics • Engineering • Electrical Installation • Motor Vehicle
County Training www.ctapprenticeships.co.uk Has training centres across Shropshire and Telford Some centres are co-located at Herefordshire and Ludlow, and North Shropshire College sites.	Agriculture • Horticulture • Motor Vehicle • Business and Administration • Hospitality & Catering • Childcare • Information Technology • Warehousing and Storage • Customer Service • Health and Social Care • Supporting Teaching & Learning in Schools • Hairdressing or Barbering
Juniper Training – Shrewsbury www.junipertraining.co.uk/centres/shrewsbury	Check website for more detail.
Cadcoe – Telford www.cadcoe.com	Digital design for Engineering and Construction. As part of the programme, you will complete a fast-track course in 2D and 3D computer aided design, before you have access to full-time employment.
MCMT (Marches Centre of Manufacturing & Technology) Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury www.mcmt.co.uk	Specialist Engineering training provider – see website for more details. Work with some big local names in Engineering e.g. Caterpillar, Grainger and Worrall, Bridgnorth Aluminium.
SBC Training www.sbc-training.co.uk	Accountancy, Business Admin, Digital Marketing, Engineering. Electrical, Management & Team Leading, Health & Social Care (including Advice & Guidance), ICT, Storage and Warehousing, Construction.
ProVQ Apprentice – Shrewsbury www.apprenticeshipfinder@provq.com	Specialist motor vehicle and land-based engineering provider.

Supportive programmes

There are a number of supportive options out there for school leavers who need a bit more time and support to move on from school. You might need to work on your literacy and numeracy, build your confidence, develop essential work or study skills.

Most local colleges run entry and foundation level courses. For example:

Shrewsbury College has the **College Ready** course

North Shropshire College has a number of different **Foundation Learning** courses

Pre-apprenticeship programmes are also on offer at several training organisations. For example:

County Training runs the **Advance** course Juniper training runs the **Mint** course.

SBC are opening a **training 'hub'** with pre-apprenticeship courses planned from Summer 2022

You might be able to try out different types of work through vocational or college tasters. You might be able to do some work experience. You might be able to retake English and Maths qualifications.

There are different programmes available. What is suitable for you will depend on your circumstances, and the courses on offer are reviewed each year. Some programmes are especially suitable for young people who have additional needs.

Talk to Sharon Ruff– the school careers advisors to find out more.

Useful Careers Websites

There are so many useful careers websites – it can get overwhelming. Try to find 2 or 3 good quality sites that you enjoy using to start with, and ask for help if you feel confused by too much information. For Year 10's we especially recommend:

<https://xello.world/en-gb/>

The site that Meole Brace subscribes to. Comprehensive resource. Use your personal log in via your Meole email outlook. Great for finding out which jobs are growing and shrinking, and how much you might get paid!

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

A free site with lots of useful job profiles and careers advice. Has information about jobs which are in demand, and might increase in the future.

<https://icould.com/>

Check out thousands of career videos to help you on your career journey

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/>

Great for students who are considering university in the future. Links degree courses to career ideas.

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/>

As the largest single employer in the uk – the nhs 'healthcareers' website is a great resource for finding out about the vast range of roles in the nhs