

A Parents & Carers Guide to Post 16 Subject and Career Choices

Whatever your child wants to do in life, a good standard of education and training can increase their chances of success. Gaining skills and qualifications:

- Helps them to make the most of their potential
- Opens doors to employment and higher education
- Improves their earning power

Post 16 options and RPA (Raising of the Participation Age)

The law now says that all young people must continue to do some kind of education or training until they are 18. At 16, your child must decide what to study and where and how to do it.

The choices Post 16 are:

- Continuing to study at a Sixth Form College
- Continuing to study at a College of Further Education
- Applying for an Apprenticeship – or a similar work-based learning programme
- Applying for a position within the Forces
- Entering the labour market - although some form of continued training must be attached to the offer of employment to comply with the raising of the participation age

Full Time Education

Your child could continue to study full-time at a Sixth Form College, Further Education College or with a specialist provider. The courses they choose will prepare them for higher level learning and employment and will include opportunities for work experience and enterprise activities. They can work towards subject based qualifications like A-Levels and/or work-related vocational awards such as a BTEC or T Levels.

All students who do not gain a grade 4 or above in GCSE English and Mathematics in Summer 2019 are expected to continue studying these subjects post 16.

All students who wish to study A Level, T Level and other Level 3 subjects must achieve at least 5 GCSEs at grade 4 or above, including Maths and English Language. For some subjects, higher grades maybe required, please check college prospectuses for further information.

Local Sixth Form Colleges – Offering Level 2 & 3 courses including A Levels

- Barton Peveril
- Peter Symonds
- Itchen College
- Richard Tauntons College
- Bittern Park Sixth Form
- St Annes Sixth Form
- Brockenhurst College

Local Further Education Colleges – Offering courses from Foundation to Level 5

- South Hampshire College - Eastleigh College

- South Hampshire College - Fareham College
- South Hampshire College – CEMAST College
- South Hampshire College – Southampton City College
- Sparsholt College
- Totton College

Apprenticeships/Traineeships

If your child already knows which career area they want to work in, they could apply for an Apprenticeship that will prepare them for skilled employment and higher-level education and training. Apprenticeships combine high-quality training with paid work and are available in over 80 industry sectors – not just the traditional sectors such as engineering and hairdressing. There are now many apprenticeships on offer providing training up to degree level, so students can earn, train and avoid the debt that a university course can entail. <https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>

A traineeship is an unpaid skills development programme that includes a work placement. It can last from 6 weeks up to 1 year, though most traineeships last for less than 6 months. It provides skills and experience that can lead onto an apprenticeship. <https://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship>

Part-time Education

If your child plans to work full-time for an employer, for themselves, or as a volunteer, they must spend the equivalent of one day a week working towards approved and nationally recognised qualifications. This is a flexible option. What, where and how your child learns will depend on the nature of their full-time work and whether the learning is organised for them, or they organise it for themselves. They could, for example:

- Work towards academic or vocational qualifications that will help them to improve their future prospects, make their business a success and/or meet the needs of their employer to the organisation with which they are a volunteer.
- Study in concentrated blocks for one or two weeks at a time or spread their learning over a longer period.
- Undertake a course in their workplace, at a local college, with a specialist training provider or online.

Getting support

Making subject and career choices is an important part of growing up. It can be a challenge, so your child will receive a lot of support to help them choose well.

Careers education, information, advice and guidance

At Wyvern, students will have been allocated an interview with Mrs Gough, our in-house careers advisor. The aim of these meetings is to discuss their options and to provide advice, information and support about progression routes at the end of Year 11. Students can request further careers appointments to assist with their decision making. Information and support will also be offered in RPS lessons including writing personal statements.

Your child will receive careers advice and guidance from many different people including a range of local employers. Subject teachers may discuss the careers opportunities that studying their subject can open up. Other staff will help them to think through their ideas and weigh up the pros and cons of different options. We will have online and in person assemblies

from various colleges during tutor time and the opportunity to learn about apprenticeships and Post 16 options.

- **Post 16 Information in Tutor** Autumn Term

- **Post 16 Assemblies with the following College:**

- South Hampshire College & Peter Symonds College – 26th September 2025
- Sparsholt College – 1st October 2025
- Itchen College & Barton Peveril – 3rd October 2025
- SETA & Steve Willis – 8th October 2025
- Army & Navy- 15th October 2025
- CEMAST -22nd October 2025

- **Cut off for College Applications:**

- Peter Symonds College - Monday 8th December 2025
- Barton Peveril College – End of February 2025
- Other colleges recommend applying as soon as possible

- **Wyvern Careers Fair** Monday 29th September 2025

- **Careers Appointments** Ongoing - 1-1 interview with Mrs Gough

- **Post 16 Open Evenings** Please see the Local College Calendar

Students and parents also have access to careers information via our website in the student area. The website contains a wealth of information including links to Post 16 options, information on university and possible careers. There is also section on local Labour Market Information which is important to explore when making career decisions. We have also uploaded the college assemblies for you to watch with your child.

SEN Support

If your child has additional needs, they may require extra help with decision-making and transition planning. This will be managed by the schools SEN team, please contact them directly if you feel your son or daughter needs further support.

External support

Outside school, many organisations can offer information, help and support. Most parents start with the organisations below but there are many others:

- The 'education and learning' pages at www.gov.uk have information on young people's choices, financial support for learning and sources of help.
- The National Careers Service at <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk> has careers information, advice, practical tools, guides and a helpline. Young people and their parents can speak to a qualified adviser by contacting the helpline on 0800 100 900. It is open from 8am to 10pm seven days a week. There is a call back service for people using a mobile.
- The apprenticeship website at <https://amazingapprenticeships.com/parent-zone/> have a Parents section which answers common questions that parents have about apprenticeships and why they could be right for their children.

Money matters 16–19-year-olds whose financial situation might stop them from continuing in full-time education or training may qualify for financial support. Whether your child

qualifies depends on their personal circumstances. They can find out more from the careers office or through the website www.gov.uk

Unifrog

Unifrog is a universal careers destinations platform which is designed to support learners in making the most informed decisions about their futures. There is a range of tools suitable for all year groups. Each student at Wyvern College have their own account, where they can explore all the career and next step options available to them. They will find information on everything from managing their workload to writing a winning CV. Students will have access

Section of the platform	Examples of what students can do	Suitable age range
Quizzes	Finding their interests, personality type, preferred work environment, and skillset.	Years 7-13
Exploring pathways	Explore careers, career sectors, subjects, sign up to free webinars, explore MOOCs and courses, and find wider reading materials.	Years 7-13
Recording what you've done	Record their in-class and extracurricular activities, record examples of their skills, and see the record of CEIAG events the school has added to their accounts.	Years 7-13
Searching for opportunities	Find scholarships, activities, and bursaries to support their HE <u>journey</u> . Find and compare degrees in the UK and overseas, live apprenticeships, and FE courses.	Years 10-13
Application materials / Making applications	Write their CV, cover letter, Personal Statement, and more. Track their applications and record their Post 16 / 18 intentions.	Years 11-13

to a wide variety of video and written content, and interactive quizzes and tests, including:

As parents you can also have your own Unifrog account and you'll be able to research careers, attend webinars to learn more about their opportunities. The sign-up code you need is: **WYVCfamily** and you can sign up here: www.unifrog.org/code.

Useful Websites

- **Apprenticeship.gov** - <https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/>
- **SACU** - <https://sacu-student.com/>
- **A Level Explorer**- <https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/a-level-explorer>
- **The Guardian University Guide 2025** – <https://www.theguardian.com/education/ng-interactive/2024/sep/07/the-guardian-university-guide-2025-the-rankings>
- **Army** - <https://jobs.army.mod.uk>
- **Navy** - <https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk>
- **SETA** - <https://www.setatraining.co.uk/>
- **Haha Training** - <https://www.hahatraining.co.uk/>
- **Go Construct** - <https://www.goconstruct.org/>

Next Steps

- Please encourage your child to find out as much as they can about their options and to consider the consequences of their choices
- Research various colleges, book online for their open events.
- Gently challenge any choices that concern you
- Encourage them to have a back-up plan!

All students, including those applying for an apprenticeship must have applied to college by the end of the **Autumn term**. Students applying to Peter Symonds have a slightly earlier cut-off date of **Monday 8th December at 4pm**. We encourage all students to have a back-up plan and to apply to at least **two** colleges.

Glossary of some useful acronyms:

A LEVEL Advanced Level - two-year course (Year 12/Y13)

T LEVEL Technical Qualification- two-year course (Year 12/Y13)

BTEC Business & Technology Education Council

CEIAG Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance

DfE Department for Education

FE Further Education

GCSE General Certificate of Education

HE Higher Education

RPA Raising of the Participation Age

WRL Work Related Learning

- For further information about your child's Post 16 options please contact Mrs Gough, Careers Leader on 02380 692679 during school hours, or email careers@wyvern.hants.sch.uk