

Careers – John Port Spencer Academy



Post-16 Options: How does it all work?



For careers advice drop in to the library and look through our careers resources or speak to Mrs Coulson, our Careers Advisor.

You can also email careers@johnport.derbyshire.sch.uk

Post-16 Education – What are my options?

Since 2013, the Raising of the Participation Age law has stated that young people must be in some form of 'education or training' until they are 18. This can include:

Full-Time Study – this could be a qualification taken at a sixth form, college or training provider, totalling 540 hours of learning time per year, or around 18 hours per week.

Apprenticeships – this involves working for an employer while studying for a qualification as part of your training. Usually, work makes up 80% of an apprenticeship and at least 20% (or one day a week) should be dedicated to studying.

Traineeships – this is an option for students who would like to do an apprenticeship but may not have the experience, skills or qualifications to do so yet. Traineeships can last up to six months and involve a work placement, Maths and English qualifications and support with finding an apprenticeship.

Part-Time Study with Employment or Volunteering – this could be working in a full-time job (classed as any work that takes place over more than two months and is over 20 hours per week) or volunteering (again, over 20 hours per week) while studying part-time at a college or training provider (totalling 280 hours of learning per year).



How do I pay for post-16 education and training?

Education and training in the UK is free for young people until they turn 19. In addition, there is a **16-19 Bursary Fund** to help students from low income families pay for things like transport, food and stationery which can be accessed at any sixth form, college or training provider you attend after Year 11 - www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

If you receive financial benefits from the government, such as **Tax Credits** or **Child Benefit**, it is important that you are aware of how these can be affected once your child leaves school. If your child is in full-time education, such as sixth form or college, your benefits will remain the same but if your child progresses into paid employment or an apprenticeship, they will no longer be considered your dependant and your benefits for them will stop. More information can be found via the **Gingerbread** website: <https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/information/benefits-tax-credits-and-universal-credit/money-when-your-child-turns-16/>

Many organisations also have their own financial support for students, so check first!

Useful Links:

<http://www.parentalguidance.org.uk/assets/downloads/Getting-Help-with-Careers-1514388108.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/know-when-you-can-leave-school>

Sixth Form Colleges

Sixth Form colleges typically focus on Level 3 (Advanced Level) qualifications – two-year courses that end in an overall examination and a grade from A*-E with a similar structure to GCSEs but looking at the subject in a lot more depth. Subjects students can study at John Port Spencer Academy are:

Traditional A-Levels – Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English Literature, English Language, Mathematics, Geography, History, Languages, Music, Art, Design Technology

Alternative A-Levels – Photography, Sociology, Psychology, Business Studies, Media Studies, Economics, Politics, Sports Science

BTEC L3 Diplomas – Some sixth form's offer BTEC qualifications that can be taken alongside A-Levels. These are usually made up of a number of separate modules and include practical assessments and coursework, as well as exams.

Subjects can include Health and Social Care, Applied Science, Travel and Tourism and Engineering.

John Port Spencer Academy options include Cambridge Technicals Diploma in Engineering, Health & Social Care and Business Studies.

Students studying A-Levels usually select three subjects, high achieving students (grade 8 & 9) can select four.

Sixth Form also offers Core Maths and the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), an independent project that can provide students with UCAS points to put towards university.

Entry Requirements

Most sixth form colleges usually ask students to have 5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above but make sure that you do your research, as some courses, such as A-Level Maths, Physics, Biology and Chemistry, require students to achieve a Grade 6 at GCSE in order to demonstrate their deeper understanding of the subject.

Please check the website for John Port Spencer Academy entry requirements:

<http://www.johnport.derbyshire.sch.uk/sixth-form/>

Some other local options:

Derby College – The Joseph Wright Campus: <https://www.derby-college.ac.uk/our-colleges/about-joseph-wright-centre>

Burton and South Derbyshire College: <https://www.bsdc.ac.uk/>

Derby City Council information:

<https://www.derby.gov.uk/education-and-learning/post-16/learning-options/>

Maths and English resits – What are the rules?

It is important to remember that if you get lower than a Grade 4/C in your GCSE Maths and English exams, you will need to re-sit these qualifications as part of any course you study at college or as part of an apprenticeship.

It is nothing to worry about, as the college or training provider will help you with studying for these qualifications or if necessary, get you to complete an alternative qualification called Functional Skills Maths and English, which is available for any students who achieve lower than a Grade 3 in their GCSE Maths/English.

You can still attend John Port Spencer Academy if you don't achieve a grade 4 in English or Maths, but do satisfy the entry requirements from all of your other GCSE grades but you will be expected to complete a November Re-sit.

Post 16 – What does the future hold?



T Levels are new courses coming in September 2020, which will follow GCSEs and will be equivalent to 3 A-Levels.

These two-year courses have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for work.

T Levels will offer students a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days). They will provide the knowledge and experience needed to open the door into skilled employment, further study or a higher apprenticeship.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels/introduction-of-t-levels>

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships involve working for an employer in a specific role while being trained to do the job by experienced staff, in a combination of on-the-job and off-the-job training at a college or training provider (four days working and one day at college or similar).

Apprenticeships must be at least one year long and all apprentices must be paid a minimum of £3.90 per hour (although many companies pay more!).

Apprenticeships can now be undertaken in a variety of industries, including **Engineering, Graphic Design, Software Development, Hair and Beauty** and **Catering**. These can be started as soon as an individual turns 16 and has left full-time education, although you can apply beforehand.

Apprenticeships come in four different levels:

Intermediate/Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE) – usually requires Maths/English at GCSE

Advanced/Level 3 (equivalent to A-Level) – usually requires 5 GCSEs at Grade 4+

Higher/Level 4-5 (equivalent to Foundation Degree) – usually requires L3 or A-Levels

Degree/Level 6-7 (equivalent to University Degree) – usually requires 3 A-Levels or similar

Traineeships

Traineeships are an opportunity for students aged 16-24 who do not have the relevant qualifications, experience or skills to start an apprenticeship but are interested in progressing on to one in the future.

Traineeships involve a programme of up to six months of study, including a work placement, qualifications in Maths and English and support with finding a job or apprenticeship once the course is completed.

Students are not paid for taking part but can apply for a 16-19 Bursary Fund to help with costs.

Useful Links:

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/courses/apprenticeships>

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/>

<http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-parents-guide-to-apprenticeships>

Applying for post-16 education

How does it work?

Students will begin applying for their post-16 options in Autumn 2019 and the application process for sixth form, college and apprenticeships takes place throughout the course of the academic year.

Here is a projected timeline for 2019-20:

- **1st October 2020** – Sixth Form and college courses for 2021-22 visible on application sites.
John Port Spencer Academy Virtual Open Evening - live and available on the school website
- **17th January 2021** – Probable closing date for sixth form applications.
- **John Port Spencer Academy Sixth Form applications close Friday 11th December 2020**
- **December-February 2021** – Students are invited to sixth form/college interviews (virtual)
- **March 2021** – Students begin to receive offers from sixth forms and colleges
- **March-July 2021** – Students accept or reject offers for different courses
- **September 2021** – Applications for 2021/22 close

NOTE: Colleges do not have the same deadlines but early applications are still advised!

There are different ways for students to apply for **sixth form**, **college** and **apprenticeships**, which we will look at below:

- **Sixth Form and College Websites** – Application forms are often on their website.
- **John Port Spencer Academy Sixth Form Online Application** -
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSevdgRnNMVRSmVfhlmHzt57IPX1ofl9eGN70Rw9tduMxlumCg/viewform>
- **John Port Spencer Academy website:** <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/> - The government's apprenticeship portal, which allows students to make an account and search and apply for apprenticeships.
- **Job Sites** – Job search engines such as **Indeed**, **Reed** and **GetMyFirstJob**
<https://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk/> can also be used to find and apply for apprenticeship and traineeship vacancies.
- **Vinspired** – Volunteering website where students can search for local opportunities.

NOTE: Apprenticeship and Traineeship applications run throughout the academic year and students must be 16 and have finished full-time education before starting.

Apprenticeships have a much more detailed application process than sixth form or college and may require students to find their own placements if taken via colleges.

Although many students achieve the grades that they want from their GCSE examinations, it is important to prepare a back-up option in case students change their minds about what subjects they want to study or are unsuccessful in getting the grades required in order to progress on to their college/apprenticeship/course of choice.

REMEMBER – Always prepare your '**Safety Net**'!

Entry Requirements – What do I need to get in?

The recent changes to the GCSE grading system have confused some people, so take a look at the information below to make sure you know what grades you might need to get at GCSE in order to move on to your chosen destination after Year 11:

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	C
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
1	G
U	U

Key Points:

- A **Grade 4** is a **Standard Pass**, while a **Grade 5** is a **Strong Pass**
- Only around 2-3% of students will achieve a **Grade 9**, making it a little higher than the old **A***
- Although the new grades don't exactly match the old grades, colleges will mostly view them as follows:
9-7 = A*- A **6 = B** **4-5 = C** **3-1 = D and below**
- Vocational qualifications like **BTEC, Cambridge Nationals** and **VCERT** match up with GCSEs as follows:
L1 = GCSE grades 1-3 (Pass - Distinction)
L2 = GCSE grades 4-9 (Pass – Distinction)
- Most colleges, sixth forms and apprenticeships accept BTEC-type qualifications, as do **95%** of universities, including the Russell Group and Oxford!

Do your research!

No matter what you read online, it is important to check all information carefully. Although the Department for Education have stated that a Grade 4 will be considered the official 'Pass Mark' for students, not all colleges or universities may agree with this. For example, Kings College London and UCL both now ask for a Grade 5 at GCSE in English and Maths as part of their entry requirements, but Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool (all Russell Group universities) still consider Grade 4 the equivalent to a C.

Use **ALL** the information available!

As stated above, different post-16 and post-18 pathways may ask for different entry requirements depending on the course and/or college. For example, some apprenticeships require only GCSE English and Maths at Grade 3 (D) and above, while some sixth form colleges ask for a Grade 5/6 (high C/B) in the subject students are wanting to take up from GCSE to A-Level.

The following website can help you to find the exact entry requirements you need: **Hot Courses** - <https://www.hotcourses.com/>

Some useful references:

Which University – How important are my GCSEs?

<https://university.which.co.uk/advice/gcse-choices-university/how-important-are-my-gcse-grades>

Ofqual - <https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2018/03/02/gcse-9-to-1-grades-a-brief-guide-for-parents/>

The Student Room - <https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/gcse/exams/new-gcse-grades-explained>

Qualification Levels Guide – GCSE to Degree Level

L6	University Degree (BA/BSc/BEng)	University Degree (BA/BSc/BEng)	Degree Apprenticeship (NVQ L5 + L6)
	Grades Needed: Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4/5 and 2-3 A-Levels/BTEC L3 Extended Diploma (check first!)	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4/5 and 2-3 A-Levels/BTEC L3 Extended Diploma (check first!)	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4/5 and 2-3 A-Levels/BTEC L3 Extended Diploma (check first!)
L5	Foundation Degree (FdA, FSc)	Foundation Degree (FdA, FSc)	Higher/Degree Apprenticeship (NVQ L4 + L5)
L4	HNC (Higher National Certificate – L4)	HNC (Higher National Certificate – L4)	
Grades Needed:	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4 and 1-2 A-Levels/ L3 Diploma/Extended Diploma	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4 and 1-2 A-Levels/ L3 Diploma/Extended Diploma	Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4 and 1-2 A-Levels/ L3 Diploma/Extended Diploma
L3	A-Levels	L3 Diploma / Extended Diploma (BTEC or other) / Access to HE courses	Advanced Apprenticeship (NVQ L3)
	Entry Grades Needed: Usually 5 GCSEs at grade 5 or higher, including Maths and English	5 GCSEs at grade 4 or higher (usually including Maths and English)	Usually at least 3-5 GCSEs (but sometimes no formal qualifications)
L2	GCSEs (grades 9-4)	L2 National / BTEC Diploma / Functional Skills	Intermediate Apprenticeship (NVQ L2)
	Entry Grades Needed: None	3-4 GCSEs at grade 3 or higher (usually including Maths and English)	Usually none, although sometimes GCSE Maths and English and a skills test
L1	GCSEs (grades 3-1)	L1 Diploma / Functional Skills	Traineeship (preparation for apprenticeship)
	Entry Grades Needed: None	None (sometimes basic Maths and English)	None
Entry Level 3	Key Stage 3	E3 Diploma (Foundation)	–
	Entry Grades Needed: None	None	-
	School / 6 th Form	College / Further Education	Apprenticeships

How do I make my final decision about post-16?

Deciding about where to go after Year 11 can be tricky, particularly while you are busy revising for your final GCSE exams, so it is important to consider the following factors that can help with decision making:

Where can this option take me in the future?

If you are thinking about a destination after post-16, such as university or higher/degree apprenticeships, it is important to know whether the qualifications you are taking from 16-18 can help you to progress on to these pathways.

Use websites like the Russell Group's **Informed Choices** <https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/> or **Success at School** <https://successatschool.org/> to find out whether the course you choose after Y11 will allow you to progress on to what you want to do or speak with staff at the John Port Spencer Academy Sixth Form Team college or apprenticeship you are applying to in order to get further details!

For example:

- If you want to study Dentistry at university, you usually need to take A-Levels in Chemistry and Biology/Maths/Physics.
- Some universities do not accept BTEC L3 Extended Diplomas (although 95% do!)
- Apprenticeships have varying entry requirements – some ask for 5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above while others ask for 2-3 A-Levels

What will studying this option be like?

Whatever you choose to do after Year 11, you will probably be doing it for at least one year, so it is important that you know that the learning environment and style of learning will be right for you.

Why not...

- Speak to the John Port Spencer Academy Sixth Form Team or college staff and students at one of the many Open Days or Open Evenings that take place throughout the year – the websites for each sixth form or college will have these dates on but you can also use <https://www.opendays.com/> to help make your search easier!
- Research more about the provider online to find out about what you would study as part of your qualification or what support the organisation can provide you with while you are studying e.g. help finding work experience, financial support like a free bus pass or food allowance, assistance from the careers team to help you move on after finishing your course etc. Sixth Form and college websites have all the information you need!
- Make sure you look at John Port Spencer Academy sixth form on the school website for details about courses and entry requirements.

➤ <http://www.johnport.derbyshire.sch.uk/sixth-form/>

Want to get prepared?



Have a look at the prospectus and complete the online application form:

<http://www.johnport.derbyshire.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/JP-sixth-form-prospectus-web.pdf>

John Port Spencer Academy Sixth Form Virtual Open Evening - now live on the website.



Apprenticeships

Search and apply for apprenticeships online

<https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>



Learn more about the options available after finishing school, including sixth form, college, apprenticeships and university –

<https://careerpilot.org.uk/>



Free careers software to help you connect your skills, hobbies and subject interests to what you might want to do once you leave school – <https://www.startprofile.com/>

vInspired

Start volunteering to gain valuable work-related skills and experience – <https://vinspired.com>



Improve your employability skills and start recording your experiences in a CV – www.barclayslifeskills.com

The academy Careers Adviser will be working with all Year 11 students from September but you can also email careers@Johnport.derbyshire.sch.uk with any questions or ask your Head of Year to arrange an appointment.

Our monthly careers newsletter will be published online:

<http://www.johnport.derbyshire.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Careers-Newsletter-November-2020.pdf>