



## Parents/Carers Guide to Post 16 Choices and Applications

### The Law:

Children must stay in some form of education or training until they are 18 years old. This does not mean that they must stay on at Sixth Form, or attend College. There are many different options available, which will be outlined later in this document.

If a student does not attain a pass grade (4 or above) in GCSE English (either Literature or Language) or Maths, they must continue to study the subject until they are 18. This is likely to mean attending GCSE English Language retake and/or Maths lessons at Sixth Form or College (including when doing an apprenticeship) or, in rarer circumstances, studying some other form literacy or numeracy course. The aim is for students to attain grade 4 or above in these two essential subjects by the age of 18.

### Sixth Form:

Sixth Forms are set in secondary schools and generally focus on Level 3 courses (A Levels, BTEC courses and/or the International Baccalaureate). Sixth Forms tend to follow the same systems of a secondary school. This includes for the students in terms of expectations in line with code of conduct and in terms of regular communication with parents/carers on such things as attainment and attendance. Many students prefer to continue their education in the school that they study, but students can apply to other Sixth Forms too.

Arden Sixth Form offers a choice of either A Levels in a wide selection of subjects or BTEC Level 3 extended diplomas (in Sports, Health and Social Care and Business). For more information please see our online Prospectus alongside answers to frequently asked questions which can be found by clicking on the following web address:

[www.scwa.org.uk/arden-virtual-open-event](http://www.scwa.org.uk/arden-virtual-open-event)

### Colleges:

Colleges are generally bigger than Sixth Form centres and host a wide range of vocational courses (courses that are linked to specific career pathways). They offer courses for students who have achieved a really good set of GCSE results (Level 3 courses) and also offer courses for students who have achieved lower grades at GCSE (Level 2 courses).

### Apprenticeships:

The apprenticeship route is the 'earn while you learn' route. Students apply for specific job roles (for example, electrical engineer, plumber, child care). They will be involved in learning the field through work and will also either attend college one day a week or complete in-house training, depending on the company. The length of the apprenticeship is dependent on many factors including the level of the apprenticeships. Post 16 students will generally apply for a Level 1, 2 or 3 apprenticeship, depending on their GCSE grades (you will find more information about this in the entry criteria further in the document). Students who have completed Sixth Form will tend to apply for a higher level degree apprenticeship. The higher the level, the longer the apprenticeship. Please note, most apprenticeships require students to secure a grade 4 or above in GCSE English and Maths.

### Training Providers:

Some students opt to attend a course with a training provider, such as local providers Middleton Murray or Skills for Growth. These organisations offer students the opportunity to take part in courses to prepare them for apprenticeship opportunities. These tend to be really helpful for students who have slighter lower GCSE grades. These offer a really practical and well supported training programme which is vastly different for GCSE study to enable students to progress into either an apprenticeship or the world of work.

### Employment with

#### Training opportunities:

Many employers offer training programmes in order to ensure staff are progressing effectively with the business sector, which in turn promotes productivity and profit. Companies such as Marks & Spencers and McDonalds are known to have outstanding training programmes; enabling staff to develop key skills in the industry which is certified by a training qualification. This makes the individual more marketable for future opportunities at other related companies.

## The Application Process:

### Sixth Forms and Colleges:

Due to the pandemic, all open events are now on-line. For students who live or are applying to Sixth Forms or Colleges in South East London, you will be required to search for the websites of the Sixth Form or Colleges that you are interested in to access their marketing materials. As you are unable to currently visit prospective Sixth Forms and Colleges, most have virtual tours uploaded to their websites. You will find application forms online too alongside information about the application process and deadlines. The Careers team at SCWA advises students to complete all applications before Christmas. Generally the deadline for Sixth Forms and Colleges is either the end of the Autumn Term (December) or at the start of the Spring Term (January). Sixth Forms and Colleges will require references from your current school (this will include requests for predicted grade information) and some will invite you to interview (this will be a virtual interview in the current circumstances).

Please go to:

[www.scwa.org.uk/arden-virtual-open-event](http://www.scwa.org.uk/arden-virtual-open-event) to view the Arden Sixth Form Virtual Open Event, to access the online Prospectus alongside answers to frequently asked questions and finally, information on the application process and form.

## Entry Requirements:

When applying for Sixth Form, Colleges and/or Apprenticeships (and sometimes Employment), students need to be aware of the stipulated entry requirements for the specific courses or apprenticeship level. Entry requirements are in place to ensure that students are placed on courses that they are able to access and achieve well on. When applying for Sixth Form, College, an Apprenticeship or an employment with training opportunity, please ensure that you complete research on the entry requirements. A summary of general entry requirements can be found below:

**You must know your predicted grades for all subjects** - ask your teachers

**Level 3**  
Equivalent to A levels

**Level 2**  
Equivalent to GCSEs  
(Grades 4 - 9)

**Level 1**  
Equivalent to GCSEs  
(Grades 1-3)

Check each course for actual course entry requirements. At college course entry requirements can depend on the type of course you are applying for.

### This is a guide line only

|                              |                                    |                   |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| If predicted GCSE Grades 1/2 | Apply for Level 1 course (1 year)  | Training Provider |
| If predicted GCSE Grades 3/4 | Apply for Level 2 course (1 year)  | College           |
| If predicted GCSE Grades 4/9 | Apply for Level 3 course (2 years) | Sixth Form        |

In order to ensure that students are applying for the correct courses, it is vital that students know their predicted grades in the GCSE subjects. Students will need to use these to navigate through the specific entry requirements for each option they are exploring in order to make informed choices on the applications they make. The careers team at SCWA encourages students to make multiple applications to a range of choices, with clear focus on entry requirements.

### Choosing The Right Course/Subjects:

When considering courses and subject choices there are many different things that should be considered. When it comes to choosing the right course students need to explore key aspects of the course such as means of assessment to determine what the best route will be. For example, if you study A Levels, you will specialise in three subjects and (for most A Levels) the assessment will be examinations at the end of the two years of study whereas for BTEC you focus on one specialists area (e.g. Business or Health and Social Care) and most of the assessment is coursework based, with a few module exams that can be taken at different times during the course. When deciding on subjects it is important to consider what subjects you have previously enjoyed and excelled in as these are ideal subjects to continue with, it is also vital that you complete research on possible future Post 18 choices and career routes and the subjects that link to this (you do not want to study A Levels for two years only to find you cannot get into the degree course of your choice as you have not studied compulsory subjects) and finally, you should explore as many materials as possible to enable you to make informed decisions about whether the subjects you are considering are right for you. To complete the final point, most Sixth Forms have transition sites that work as an introduction to Sixth Form subjects. You will find the **Arden Year 11 - 12 Transition Site here**. On this site you will find more information about choosing A Level, BTEC or IB courses alongside information on where subjects can take you.

## Apprenticeships:

Apprenticeships are advertised on websites such as the government apprenticeship website: [www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](http://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship) or sites such as find an apprenticeship [www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch). There are many websites such as this, students should research and sign up to as many as possible. Once signed up, students complete an online form regarding what they are looking for and the site will then (usually) will send through opportunities of interest. Leigh Academy Trust have launched a new apprenticeship opportunities page that you will find within our updated SWCA careers page **click here**. On this site you will find a wide variety of local apprenticeship opportunities that are currently available. SCWA is also in the process of promoting Pathway CTM to Year 11 students. Pathway CTM offers a wide range of support and guidance for students who are seeking apprenticeships. They have excellent connections with a wide range of organisations and companies and offer students opportunities to make links in order to educate them on what opportunities are on offer. Students can register with Pathway CTM by clicking on this link. Students will need to be aware that the application process for apprenticeship can be more robust, with higher level apprenticeships often having multiple interview stages. Organisations such as Pathway CTM can therefore be invaluable in preparing students for making successful applications.

## Traineeship Providers:

In a similar way to Sixth Forms and Colleges, information regarding traineeship programmes alongside application details can be sourced via the providers webpage. Local traineeship providers include:

Middleton Murray - [www.middletonmurray.com](http://www.middletonmurray.com)

Reynolds Training Academy - [www.reynoldsgroup.co.uk](http://www.reynoldsgroup.co.uk)

JTL Training People - <https://www.jtltraining.com/contact-us/>

Inspire Hair Academy: For students interested in Hair and Beauty training skills for growth - [www.skillsforgrowth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforgrowth.org.uk)

London Groundwork - [www.london.groundwork.org.uk](http://www.london.groundwork.org.uk)

All dimensions - [www.alldimension.co.uk](http://www.alldimension.co.uk)

Charlton Athletic Community Trust - [www.cact.org.uk](http://www.cact.org.uk)

Ixion - [www.ixionholdings.com/traineeships-for-individuals](http://www.ixionholdings.com/traineeships-for-individuals)

London South East Colleges - [www.lsec.ac.uk](http://www.lsec.ac.uk)

National Careers Service - [nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/career-choices-at-16#traineeships](http://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/career-choices-at-16#traineeships)

Traineeship information for trainees - [www.gov.uk/guidance/traineeship-information-for-trainees](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/traineeship-information-for-trainees)

The careers team at SCWA advises students to complete all applications before Christmas. Generally the deadline for Traineeships is either the end of the Autumn Term (December) or at the start of the Spring Term (January). Most providers will require references from your current school (this will include requests for predicted grade information) and some will invite you to interview (this will be a virtual interview in the current circumstances).

## School Support:

We have now finalised the Year 11 career interview schedule. Allocated interview slots will be communicated with parents/carers shortly. This year we have invited parents/carers to be involved in these meetings, which we hope will provide an extra level of support than in previous years. Career interviews will be hosted by Jas Mato, our independent Careers Advisor and Career Learning Development Advisor at Leigh Academies Trust. In addition to this, Ms Marshall has been offering students in Year 11 the opportunity to attend a career drop in session in the Library on Friday's (1.30pm - 2pm). The careers team will be providing tutors with materials to further support students with their Post 16 choices and we have set up a new google classroom to promote a wide range of careers related opportunities which we believe will be helpful.

We hope that you have found the above information helpful and that it will support you and your child through the many Post 16 choices available alongside the practicalities of application. If you have any questions regarding Post 16 options, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Joanne Marshall, SCWA Careers Lead, via email: [joanne.marshall@scwa.org.uk](mailto:joanne.marshall@scwa.org.uk)

*Disclaimer - Through this platform, students are able to link to other websites which are not under the control of Leigh Academies Trust. We have no control over the nature, content and availability of those sites. The inclusion of any links does not necessarily imply endorsement of the views expressed within them or a recommendation to sign up with them.*



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