



## Year 11s Next Steps

Year 11 students need to consider and prepare for what they will be doing in the future after their GCSE exams.

They will be taking their GCSE exams in May / June next year, and getting their results in August. They have to stay in some form of education or training until at least their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. To achieve what they want in their future, it is worthwhile spending time planning now and in the next few weeks.

Year 11s will need a realistic and achievable plan for next year, and it is also useful to have at least one back up plan. Students can apply for 3 or 4 courses or places if they wish to ensure they get a place depending on their exam results.

The Year 11s met with the careers adviser while they were in year 10 to help them start considering and preparing. The school's careers advice service will be visiting the school this year for some drop in sessions to answer students' queries. Additional help will be put in place for individual students if needed. Students can also talk with their tutors, pastoral leaders, and Mrs Thomson.

Information and sources of advice are included with this document about local colleges and schools, apprenticeships, and useful websites including [CareerPilot](#). Information about careers in Berkshire is available on [our website](#) and also on [Berkshire Opportunities](#)

We are planning a further and higher education event for students again this year in the autumn. We are also hoping to have workshops to help with CV writing and to run mock interview sessions so the real thing isn't so scary.

We like to keep track of our students once they leave us so that we know what they are doing, so do keep us posted of your plans

**Kate Thomson**  
Careers & Employability Skills Coordinator

# Employment Sectors in the Thames Valley

The main areas for employment in the Thames Valley summer 2023:

Business & Finance	Health, Care & Welfare
Hospitality	Engineering & Science
Digital Technology	Sales & Customer Service
Creative Careers	Transport & Distribution
Construction	Education

## College or 6<sup>th</sup> form

Many students will be considering further education.

- 6<sup>th</sup> forms normally offer mostly academic courses, and give more pastoral care
- Colleges tend to be more vocational courses, and students have more independence.

We have separate lists of Colleges and 6th Forms which are constantly being updated with dates of open days. These are available on school noticeboards and the school website and are shared electronically with students.

There is a check list at the end of this document to help students through the process of applying for college or 6<sup>th</sup> form.

# Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships combine work with training with 80% of the time working and 20% training (4 days working, 1 day training). There are a wide variety of apprenticeships from level 2 (GCSE equivalent) through to level 7 (PhD equivalent).

If you are interested in an apprenticeship here is some information to help you.

- Check out the Youtube videos about apprenticeships  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/ApprenticeshipsNAS>
- Look at the Amazing Apprenticeships website: <https://amazingapprenticeships.com/>
  - The Apprenticeships website is full of useful information:  
<https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>
  - The [.Gov Website](#) website also gives **information about apprenticeships** and advice about how to apply.
- Register and apply <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>
  - Read [Your-step-by-step-guide-to-applying-for-an-apprenticeship](#)
  - **Register** on the website and **apply** for Apprenticeship opportunities.
  - **Search the website regularly**, especially as it gets closer to your leaving date.  
The vacancy list is constantly being updated
  - **Check the vacancy details thoroughly.**  
Will you have the required qualifications? What are the terms and conditions? How much will you be paid? How many hours per week are you going to be working?
  - **Apply through the website.**  
You can apply for up to 10 vacancies at any one time through this website.
- Other Places to Look for Apprenticeships
  - Check reliable **local news sources (such as Reading Chronicle)** for apprenticeship vacancies.
  - Speak to any **family or personal contacts.**  
If a family friend runs a business of the type you are interested in and you want an apprenticeship they should be the first person you talk to!
  - Check the **websites and noticeboards of employers** you would like to work for  
Many companies have their own apprenticeship schemes and advertise their vacancies on their websites. Places such as The Oracle shopping centre display vacancies.
  - Good quality **recruitment websites**  
Indeed has a good reputation and is easy to search
  - **Training providers** can also help you  
These organizations tend to specialize in recruiting apprentices for a particular sector, for example Chiltern Training for childcare apprenticeships.

## T-Levels

T-Levels are a new qualification started in 2022. They are a work focused alternative, equivalent to 3 A Levels.

T Levels offer students a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during an industry placement. Normally 80% of the course will be in training/education and 20% on a work placement (4 days in education a week, and 1 day work place)

Information on T Levels is available:

- On the government website <https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/>
- and on the Amazing Apprenticeships website <https://amazingapprenticeships.com/t-levels/>

## CVs

Students may want to start preparing their CVs (Curriculum Vitae) for the future and to help them apply for part-time or holiday work. A CV template is available on OneDrive through their school log on, and Mrs Thomson can help if wanted.

Good sources of information, advice and sample CVs are:

- Prospects:  
[cvs-and-cover-letters/how-to-write-a-cv](#)
- National Careers Service:  
[Careers advice | National Careers Service](#)  
[CV sections | National Careers Service](#)
- Websites of good quality newspapers, e.g. Guardian, Telegraph

# Application Checklist for College / 6th form:

(Tick when completed)

	<p><b>Attend college and 6th form open days</b>          Think about the courses you might want to do. Look at the websites, read prospectuses, attend open days. Do you feel comfortable at this place? Is the course right for you?  <i>Consider carefully!</i></p>
	<p><b>Complete an application</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For colleges this should be done as soon as possible to ensure you get a place on the course. Schools will have earlier deadlines, some in December.</li> <li>• You can apply for as many as you like! It is good to have backup plans</li> <li>• Most applications are online. If they are on paper, make sure you complete the application neatly – no spelling mistakes, clear handwriting, same pen.</li> <li>• Reading Girls’ will be asked for a reference. This will be completed by the head of year</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Tell school where you are applying and for what course</b>          We like to help you and keep track of what you are doing, so tell Mrs Hargrave and Mrs Thomson what your plans are</p>
	<p><b>College sends an acknowledgement and an interview date</b>          Colleges normally reply within 2-3 weeks. They might just send an acknowledgement first, then an invitation to an interview</p>
	<p><b>Tell school about your interview</b>          If the interview is in school time, you need to get permission from Mrs Hargrave to attend so that you can be signed out of school. She may ask for proof!</p>
	<p><b>Send a reply confirming interview OR rearrange date/time</b>          Let the college or 6<sup>th</sup> form know you will attend the interview. If you cannot attend the interview on the date/time they suggest, contact them to rearrange. If you do not let them know you cannot attend, they may assume you have withdrawn your application and no longer want a place.</p>
	<p><b>Do you know how you are getting to your interview?</b>          Make sure you know where you have to go for the interview. Talk to Mrs Hargrave or Mrs Thomson if you need help</p>
	<p><b>Prepare for the interview</b>          Interviews for college/6<sup>th</sup> form are normally informal and not intended to scary. They want to meet you and get to know you, and check the course is suitable for you and for your plans for the future. Think about the things you want to ask them about the course and the college/6<sup>th</sup> form</p>
	<p><b>Offer of a place</b>          After interview they are likely to send you a “conditional offer”. This means that they are</p>

	giving you a place on the course, as long as you get the grades you need.
	<p><b>Reply to the offer</b></p> <p>You must accept the offer. If you do not complete the response they ask for, they will assume you do not want the place.</p>
	<p><b>Joining instructions</b></p> <p>In July/August you should receive joining instructions telling you when and where to go to enrol on the course.</p>
	<p><b>Applications for financial aid (if required)</b></p> <p>You will also receive information about applying for financial help with travel and equipment. You must read this carefully and get the forms back by the deadlines. All the colleges have different paperwork and have different arrangements for financial help. If you have any problems completing the forms, give the college a call or see Mrs Hargrave or Mrs Thomson for help/advice.</p>
	<p><b>Enrol</b></p> <p>Colleges usually ask you to enrol at the end of August/beginning of September after your GCSE results. Make sure you know the date and make sure you attend enrolment. If you do not enrol they may give your place to someone else.</p>