

Year 11s Next Steps

Planning for the Future after GCSEs



Year 11 students need to consider and prepare for their future after GCSEs. Young people should be in education till they are 18.

- **Consider and Plan**
 - Think back to your meeting with the careers adviser and refer to your notes
 - Research open events and plan visits and the questions to ask
- **Apply early** to get your first choices
- **Apply for a variety** of places and courses so that you have options depending on exam results
 - You need a realistic and achievable plan
 - Have at least one back up plan!
- **Parents** can help young people by giving them guidance and support with applications and decisions
- **Support in School**
 - The **careers adviser** will be available at some events and further meetings will be available
 - **Further education fair** will be held in school in the autumn
 - **PSHE lessons** will include careers including CV writing and interview skills
 - **Talk to staff** - tutors and teachers, head of year, or Mrs Thomson the Careers Coordinator
- **Information**
 - **Noticeboards** in tutor groups
 - **Shared** electronically with year 11s (look for emails from kthomson)
 - [school website](#) has a variety of information and links, including a list of useful websites:
[Reading Girls' School - Careers and Life Beyond RGS](#)

Kate Thomson
Careers & Employability Skills Coordinator

Employment Sectors in the Thames Valley

The main areas for employment in the Thames Valley summer 2024:

Business & Finance	Health, Social Care & Welfare
Hospitality	Engineering & Science
Digital Technology	Wholesale and Retail Trade and Customer Service
Creative Careers	Transport & Distribution, Logistics
Construction	Education

College or 6th form?

- **6th forms**
 - offer mostly academic courses
 - give more pastoral care
- **Colleges**
 - tend to be more vocational courses
 - students have more independence

Lists of local Colleges and 6th Forms are available on the school website, noticeboards, and shared electronically with students. These are constantly being updated with dates of open days.

See the check list at the end of this document – it can help students through the process of applying

T-Levels

T-Levels are a newer qualification. They are a work focused alternative, equivalent to 3 A Levels.

T Levels offer students a mixture of classroom learning in training/education for 80% of the course and ‘on-the-job’ experience during an work placement for 20% of the course. (4 days a week in education, 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. This can help them apply for part-time or holiday work. A CV template is available on OneDrive through their school log on

CV writing will be included in PSHE lessons. 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](#)
- BBC Bitesize and websites of good quality newspapers, e.g. Guardian, Telegraph

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 at different levels** from level 2 (GCSE equivalent) through to level 7 (PhD equivalent) so you can start an apprenticeship at any age

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

- Check out the **Apprenticeships Youtube** videos: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ApprenticeshipsNAS>
- Look at the **Amazing Apprenticeships website**: <https://amazingapprenticeships.com/>
Read [Your-step-by-step-guide-to-applying-for-an-apprenticeship](#)
- The **Apprenticeships website** is full of useful information: <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>
- The [.Gov Website](#) website also gives **information and advice** about **how to apply**.
 - Register and apply <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>
 - **Register** on the .gov 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.

Application Process for College / 6th form:

Attend college and 6th form open days: 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? *Consider carefully!*

Complete an application

- 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.
- You can apply for as many as you like! It is good to have backup plans
- Most applications are online. If they are on paper, make sure you complete the application neatly – no spelling mistakes, clear handwriting, same pen.
- Reading Girls' will be asked for a reference. This will be completed by the head of year

School / College sends an acknowledgement and an interview date. Colleges normally reply within 2-3 weeks. They might just send an acknowledgement first, then an invitation to an interview

Tell school about your interview. If the interview is in school time, you need to get permission from Ms Johnson to attend so that you can be signed out of school. She may ask for proof!

Send a reply confirming interview OR rearrange date/time: Let the college or 6th form know you will attend the interview. If you cannot attend on the date/time they suggest, contact them to rearrange. Make sure you reply – if you don't let them know if you can't attend, they may assume you have withdrawn your application and no longer want a place

Do you know how you are getting to your interview? Make sure you know where and when you have to go for the interview. Talk to Ms Johnson or Mrs Thomson if you need help

Prepare for the interview. Interviews for college/6th form are normally informal. 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/6th form

Offer of a place: After interview they are likely to send you a "conditional offer". This means that they are giving you a place on the course, as long as you get the grades you need

Reply to the offer: You must accept the offer. If you do not complete the response they ask for, they will assume you do not want the place

Applications for financial aid (if required) You should also receive information about applying for financial help with travel and equipment. Read this carefully and complete the application by the deadline.

Familiarisation Days: Often you will be offered a day to visit. This is great to meet staff and other students and prepare for the new course

Enrolment/Joining instructions: In July/August you should receive joining instructions telling you when and where to go to enrol on the course

Enrol: 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.