

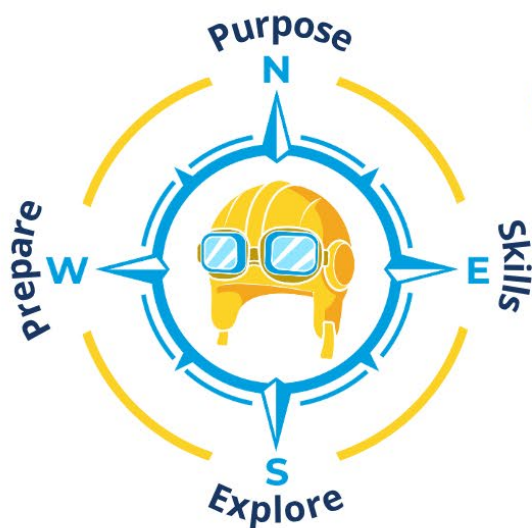


SWANMORE
COLLEGE
Together We Thrive

Your
future
starts
here

Year 11 Post-16 Guide 2026-2027

Everything you need to know
about college, sixth form,
apprenticeships and your next
steps.



College



Apprenticeships



T Levels



A Levels



Your future

Discover your path ● Shape your future ● Be your best

About this printable guide

The essential Year 11 information in a manageable format

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
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Digital and print work together. Use this booklet for the main journey. Use the full online guide and official provider websites for detailed and changing information.

- For current Year 10 pupils applying during 2026-27 for September 2027 entry.
- Course details, entry requirements, dates, travel and support can change.
- Apply to more than one realistic option and maintain Plan A, Plan B and Plan C.
- Use Unifrog and careers guidance to record evidence and actions.

Essential contacts

Support	What they help with
Tutor	Actions, deadlines and school support.
Subject teachers	Readiness for further study and subject advice.
Careers & Destinations Lead	Opportunities, Unifrog and transition planning.
Qualified careers adviser	Impartial personal guidance and backup plans.
SENCo / SEND team	Support, accessibility and EHCP transition.
Post-16 provider	Courses, entry requirements, support and enrolment.

[Unifrog](#) • [National Careers Service](#) • [Find an Apprenticeship](#)

G01

How to Use This Guide

A simple step-by-step guide to help you make the most of your post-16 choices.

1 Explore your options



- Learn about different pathways, subjects and course types.
- Discover opportunities that match your interests.

2 Compare pathways



- Compare what each pathway offers.
- Think about the benefits and what suits you best.

3 Plan and apply



- Plan your next steps and note key dates.
- Complete applications with confidence.

4 Review and decide



- Review your options and priorities.
- Make a decision that's right for you.



Use this guide to help you explore, compare and plan your next steps.



Contents

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
1	Welcome and Careers Compass	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
2	Understanding post-16 pathways	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
3	Choosing subjects and courses	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
4	Research and open events	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
5	Provider directory	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
6	Travel, costs and support	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
7	Applications and statements	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
8	Interviews and selection	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
9	Apprenticeship toolkit	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
10	Offers, results and enrolment	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
11	Timeline, SEND and final plan	Use this section when you reach this stage.	
Navigation Every section ends with links back to the start of that section and to this contents page.			

1. Welcome to your post-16 journey

A good decision balances ambition with evidence. Pupils should understand the course, how it is assessed, the grades required, where it can lead and whether the daily journey is realistic.

Family conversation prompt What have you learned about yourself and this option that makes it a good fit?

You do not need one perfect answer.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
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Year 11 is a year of important choices, but you are not expected to have your whole life planned. A strong next step is well researched, realistic and right for you now.

The Swanmore Careers Compass

Direction	Question	Use it to...
North • Purpose	Who do I want to become?	Connect choices to values, interests and motivation.
East • Skills	What can I do and develop?	Use evidence from lessons, enrichment, work experience and wider life.
South • Explore	What possibilities exist?	Research careers, pathways, providers and labour-market information.
West • Prepare	What must I do next?	Plan applications, interviews, travel, deadlines and backup options.

Careers are built, not chosen. One decision does not fix your future. Skills, experience and further choices continue to shape your route.

Your post-16 entitlement

- Impartial information about academic, technical, vocational and work-based routes.
- Encounters with providers, employers and further or higher education.
- Personal careers guidance at an appropriate point.
- Additional transition planning where SEND, an EHCP or other circumstances require it.

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THE SWANMORE CAREERS COMPASS

Your journey starts here.

N NORTH - PURPOSE

Think about who you want to become. Explore your values, ambitions, interests and the kind of future you want to create.



- values and ambitions
- interests and motivations
- the kind of future I want

W WEST - PREPARE

Take action now to prepare for what's next. Be organised, informed and ready for opportunities.



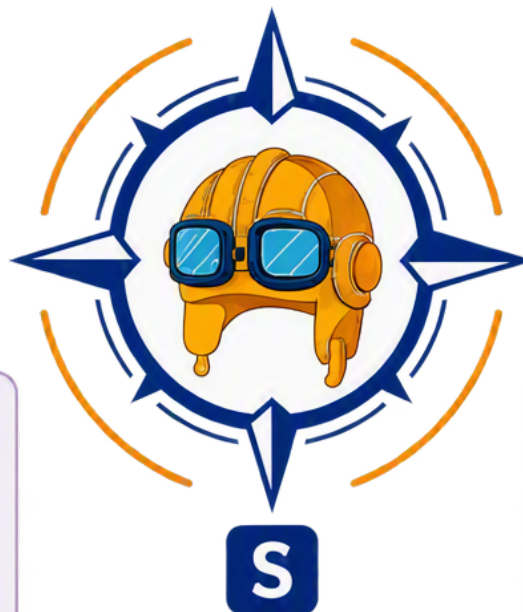
- open events and research
- applications and interviews
- plans A, B and C

E EAST - SKILLS

Identify your strengths and develop new skills. Build evidence to show what you can do.



- strengths and achievements
- skills I am building
- evidence I can use in applications



S SOUTH - EXPLORE

Discover the world of opportunities. Explore careers, pathways and labour market information to help you make informed choices.



- courses and providers
- apprenticeships and training
- labour market information and careers



Careers are built, not chosen.

Use the Careers Compass throughout the guide to help shape your next steps.



Your first action plan

Use this page at the start of Year 11, then return to it after open events, mock results and careers guidance.

Before I decide	I have...
Understand myself	identified interests, strengths, preferred learning style and support needs.
Explore	compared at least two pathways and researched several realistic providers.
Test the fit	checked entry grades, assessment, progression, travel and costs.
Prepare	recorded deadlines, applications and a genuine backup option.

Complete this at the beginning of Year 11.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Prompt		My notes	
My current post-16 ideas			
A career or sector to explore			
My strongest skills or qualities			
One route I need to understand better			
A provider or opportunity to research			
My first deadline			
My Plan B at this stage			
My next action			
Ask early. Questions about grades, travel, support or applications are easier to solve before deadlines.			

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2. Understanding your options

Post-16 programmes can be academic, vocational, technical or work-based. The correct starting level matters as much as the course title.

Level	Typical examples	Main purpose
Level 1	Foundation Level Pre GCSE Level	Build confidence, core skills and readiness for Level 2.
Level 2	GCSE-equivalent vocational courses, resits and functional skills	Strengthen knowledge and prepare for Level 3 or employment.
Level 3	A Levels, T Levels and advanced vocational qualifications	Progress to higher education, skilled work or higher apprenticeships.
Levels 4-7	Higher and degree-level study or apprenticeships	Develop specialist and professional expertise.

Check the whole programme Ask whether English or mathematics resits, work experience, enrichment or additional qualifications are included.

There is no single best route.

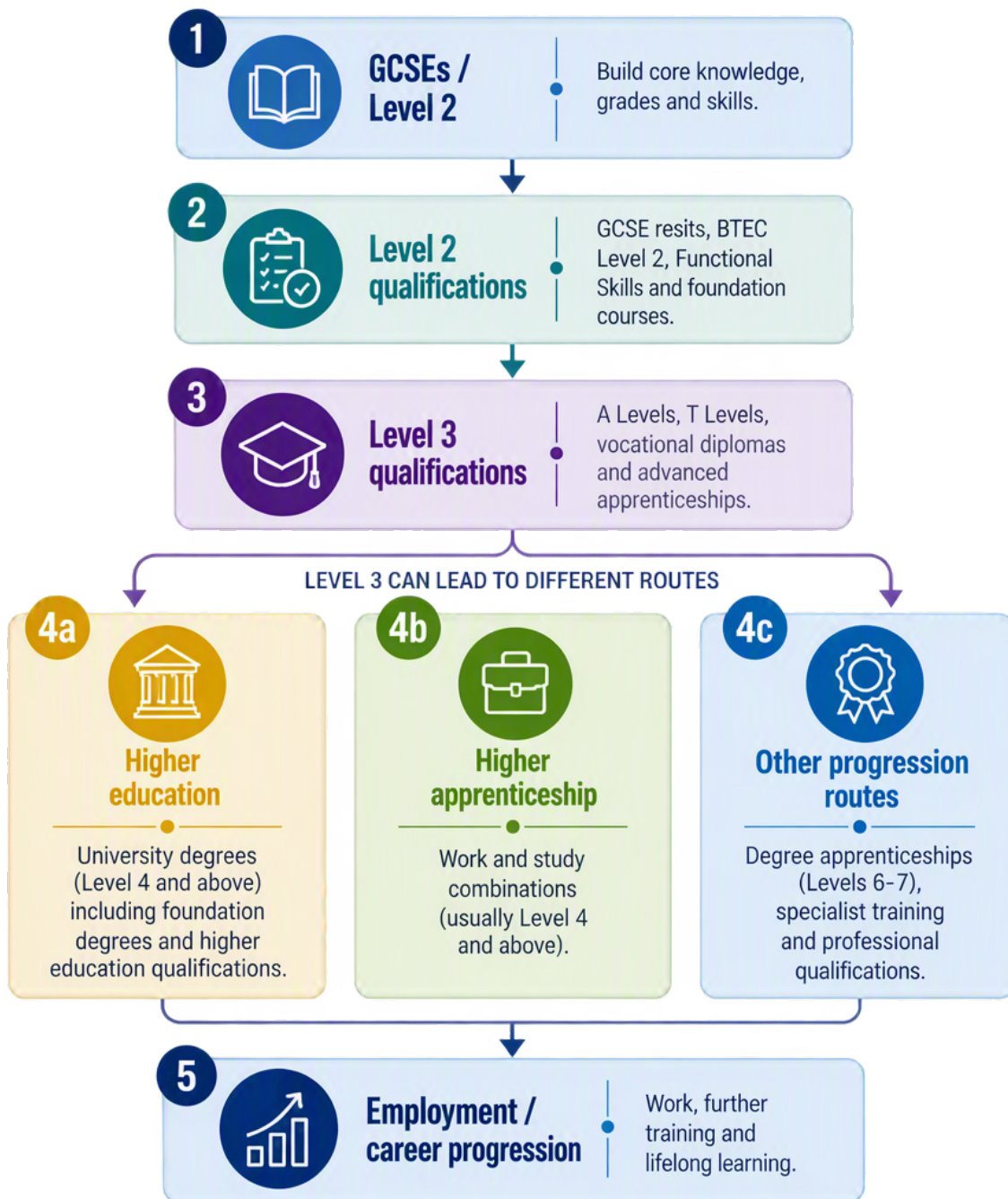
NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Pathway	Main setting	Learning and assessment	Can lead to
A Levels	Sixth form or college	Academic subject study; mainly examinations.	University, employment or apprenticeships.
Vocational	College or sixth form	Applied projects, assignments, practical work and some exams.	Employment, university or apprenticeships.
T Level	Selected college/provider	Technical study plus 45+ days industry placement.	Skilled work, higher study or apprenticeships.
Apprenticeship	Employer plus training provider	Paid work with structured training and assessment.	Employment and higher-level apprenticeships.
Supported internship	Workplace plus education provider	Highly supported work-based programme for eligible EHCP learners.	Paid work or further training.

Keep a secure alternative. Apprenticeship vacancies are competitive and appear throughout the year, so keep a suitable education offer.

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POST-16 QUALIFICATION LEVELS

Understand how qualifications build from GCSEs to higher study, training and employment.



KEY MESSAGES



There is no single best route.



Different pathways suit different learners.



Each stage can open more options for the future.



Keep exploring. Keep learning. Keep moving forward.



A Levels and vocational routes

Feature	A Levels	Vocational / applied Level 3	
Learning	Subject-based, theoretical and increasingly independent.	Career-related knowledge applied through assignments, projects and practical work.	
Assessment	Usually mainly final examinations, with some coursework or practical assessment.	Assessment varies by qualification and may include final exams, coursework, practical assessment, and externally assessed tasks.	
May suit pupils who...	enjoy academic depth, wider reading and examination preparation.	prefer applied learning and already have an interest in a broad sector.	
Check carefully	subject-specific grades and future university prerequisites.	exact qualification title, size, awarding body and progression acceptance.	
Vocational does not mean no examinations. Many modern vocational qualifications include external assessment. Always check the exact course. Remember: Some A Level subjects overlap. Check before choosing similar subjects (e.g. Business and Economics).			
NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE

A Levels may suit you when...

- you enjoy academic subjects and extended study;
- you can organise independent work and examination preparation;
- your possible future route requires particular subjects.

Vocational study may suit you when...

- you want to apply knowledge to realistic projects or practical tasks;
- you prefer a mixture of assessment methods;
- you have a developing interest in a sector.

Check the exact qualification. Course titles, size, units and assessment methods can differ between providers.

T Levels

- Two-year Level 3 technical programme.
- Includes an industry placement of at least 315 hours.
- Only selected providers offer each occupational route.
- Check whether the progression route you want accepts the exact T Level.

[UCAS Further Education](#) • [T Levels](#)

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Apprenticeships and supported internships

T Levels

A T Level is a two-year Level 3 technical programme, broadly equivalent in size to three A Levels. It combines classroom study, an occupational specialism and a substantial industry placement.

T Level check	What to investigate
Availability	Only selected providers offer each subject and specialism.
Industry placement	At least 315 hours; ask how placements are organised and supported.
Assessment	Examinations, an employer-set project and practical assessment vary by subject.
Progression	Related employment, higher study or an apprenticeship; check specific university requirements.

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a paid job with structured training. It is a competitive vacancy rather than a guaranteed college place, so pupils should search regularly (particularly from Christmas onwards), tailor every application and keep a suitable education offer as a backup.

Employers commonly look for	Evidence pupils can prepare now
Reliability and punctuality	attendance, work experience and responsibilities.
Communication and teamwork	specific examples from lessons, clubs, volunteering or employment.
Interest in the role and organisation	research showing why this vacancy and employer fit.
Problem-solving and resilience	a clear STAR example showing action and learning.

Supported internships and foundation routes

Route	Who it may support	What to check
Supported internship	Young people aged 16-24 with an EHCP who want supported workplace learning.	Eligibility, job-coach support, employer placements and progression towards paid work.
Foundation / Level 1	Pupils who need to build confidence, independence and core knowledge.	Progression to Level 2, English and mathematics, support and work-related learning.
Level 2 programme	Pupils working towards GCSE-equivalent vocational or technical learning.	Exact qualification, resit requirements and route to Level 3 or employment.

Questions for pupils and families

Ask	Why
What support will be available from the first day?	Support should be planned before transition, not after difficulties appear.
How will progress towards employment or the next level be reviewed?	A clear progression route prevents a programme becoming an endpoint.
What travel, equipment or placement arrangements apply?	Practical barriers can affect attendance and success.

G02

Understanding Post-16 Pathways

Different pathways can lead to your future.
Here are the main options to consider.

A Levels


Academic subjects studied over two years, leading to university and careers.

Vocational Courses


Practical courses focused on skills and knowledge in a chosen sector.

T Levels


Technical qualifications equivalent to three A Levels with industry placements.

Apprenticeships


Earn while you learn with I gab, training and study, leading to recognised qualifications.

Supported Internships


Work placements with training and support for young people with SEND (16–24).



There is more than one route to success. *Choose the pathway that's right for you.*

3. Choosing subjects and courses

Choose for the right reasons.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Start with...		Question	
Enjoyment		Which topics and activities hold my attention?	
Strength		Where do grades, feedback and skills show potential?	
Learning style		Do I prefer theory, discussion, projects, practical work or workplace learning?	
Progression		Could this choice support routes I may want later?	

Check every serious option

- Exact qualification and size.
- Overall and subject-specific entry requirements.
- Course content and first-term topics.
- Balance of exams, coursework, projects and practical assessment.
- Where recent pupils progressed.
- Costs, equipment, placement and travel expectations.

G05

CHOOSING SUBJECTS FOR THE RIGHT REASONS

Pick subjects that match you and your future plans.

1
Enjoyment



What do I genuinely enjoy studying?
Interest helps motivation and success.

2
Strength



Which subjects play to my strengths, grades and feedback?

3
Learning Style



Do I prefer essays, exams, practical work, discussion or coursework?

4
Progression



What subjects will keep future courses, careers or university routes open?



Best choices balance interest, ability and future opportunities.

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Subject combinations and future requirements

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Future area	Subjects often worth checking	Important caution	
Medicine, dentistry, veterinary science	Chemistry and usually Biology or another science. <i>Check specific course requirements.</i>	Requirements are highly specific.	
Engineering and some physics courses	Mathematics and often Physics.	Further Mathematics may be useful or required.	
Computer science	Mathematics for many courses.	Computer Science A Level is not always required.	
Economics	Mathematics for more mathematical courses.	Business or Economics alone may not meet the requirement.	
Creative and architecture routes	Art, design or a strong portfolio.	Portfolio expectations vary.	
Health and allied professions	Relevant sciences depending on profession.	Check each university and professional route.	

Essential, preferred and useful are different. Read the exact admissions wording and save the page and date checked.

[UCAS](#) • [Informed Choices](#)

G06

ESSENTIAL, PREFERRED AND USEFUL SUBJECTS

Understanding the language providers use.

ESSENTIAL / REQUIRED	PREFERRED / RECOMMENDED	USEFUL / HELPFUL
 You must have this subject to apply. Without it, you may not meet the entry requirements. Example: Maths for many STEM routes	 Not compulsory, but strongly valued because it helps you succeed on the course. Example: Further Maths for some advanced pathways	 Supports your application or future study, but is not required. Example: an essay subject for law or humanities



Always check the latest entry requirements on the provider website.

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Course decision planner

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Decision factor	Choice 1	Choice 2	Choice 3
Exact course title			
Provider and campus			
Qualification level and size			
Entry requirements			
Assessment methods			
Future routes supported			
Travel and costs			
Support needed			
Question still to ask			
Current confidence /5			

My current decision My preferred combination is _____ because _____. The most important point still to check is _____.



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4. Researching and comparing

Turn information into a confident plan.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Step		Evidence to collect	
Know yourself		Interests, values, strengths, learning preferences and support needs.	
Explore		Careers, subjects, providers, apprenticeships and progression routes.	
Test the fit		Open events, tasters, travel checks, course assessment and entry requirements.	
Prepare		Applications, deadlines, interviews, offers and backups.	

Careers research to-do list

- Research at least three career areas, including one new idea.
- Check tasks, working conditions, skills, qualifications and salary guidance.
- Use live LMI to see which sectors and occupations are important locally and nationally.
- Research at least three realistic providers or opportunities.
- Plan travel from home and check costs and support.

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Preparing for open events

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Before	During	After	
Book, shortlist departments, read course pages, prepare questions and plan travel.	Attend subject talks, speak to staff and students, check support and notice expectations.	Record impressions, rate the option, chase unanswered questions and compare using the same criteria.	
Open events are research, not sales events. Look beyond atmosphere and buildings. The course, level, support and journey must work for you.			

Questions that matter

- What will I study in the first term?
- How is the course assessed and how much independent study is expected?
- What are the exact entry requirements and application stages?
- Where did recent pupils progress?
- What SEND, wellbeing and learning support is available?
- What does a typical week look like?

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COLLEGE OPEN EVENINGS 2026/27

Dates correct as of July 2026, and online booking may be required.

COLLEGES	DATES & TIMES
Barton Peveril Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh, SO50 5ZA Tel: 02380 36 7200 www.barton-peveril.ac.uk	Wed 23 Sept 2026 16:30-20:15 Thur 24 Sept 2026 16:30-20:15 Booking essential via website APPLICATION DEADLINE: TBA
Chichester College Chichester Campus, Westgate Fields, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1SB https://www.chichester.ac.uk/	Tue 06 Oct 2026 16:30-19:00 Sat 07 Nov 2026 10:00-13:00
City of Portsmouth College-Highbury Campus, Tangier Campus & North Harbour Campus Tangier Rd, Portsmouth PO3 6PZ Tel: 02392 667521 https://www.city-of-portsmouth-college.ac.uk/	Wed 14 Oct 2026 16:30-19:30 Thur 15 Oct 2026 16:30-19:30 Book via website
Havant and South Downs College www.hsdac.ac.uk Havant Campus (A Levels) New Road, Havant. PO9 1QL Tel:02393 879999 South Downs Campus (Vocational & T levels) College Rd, Waterlooville, PO7 8AA Tel:02393 879999	Wed 30 Sep 2026 17.00-20:00 Sat 07 Nov 2026 10:00-13:00 Tues 06 Oct 2026 17.00-20.00 Sat 07 Nov 2026 10.00-13.00
Itchen Sixth Form College Middle Road, Bitterne, SO19 7TBT Tel:23 8043 5636 www.itchen.ac.uk	TBA Book via website
Peter Symonds College Owen's Road, Winchester, SO22 6RU Tel: 01962 857500 www.psc.ac.uk	Wed 30 Sept 2026 17.30-20.30 Thur 01 Oct 2026 17.30-20.30 Book via website APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday 07 December 2026
Richard Taunton College Hill Ln, Southampton SO15 5RL Tel: 023 80 511811 www.richardtaunton.ac.uk	Wed 30 Sept 2026 6 - 8pm Wed 13 Oct 2026 6 - 8pm Book via website
	Continued on next page....

COLLEGES	DATES & TIMES
SHCG – https://shcg.ac.uk/ Eastleigh College Chestnut Avenue, Eastleigh, SO50 5FS Tel: 02380 91 1299 Fareham College Bishopsfield Rd, Fareham, PO14 1NH Tel: 01329 815000 CEMAST /CETC (Engineering and Civil Engineering Centres) Lee on Solent Campus Tel: 01329 815200 Southampton College St Mary St, Southampton, SO14 1AR Tel: 02380 484848	Tue 13 Oct 2026 17.00-19.00 Wed 11 Nov 2026 17.00-19.00 Book via website Thur 15 Oct 2026 17.00-19.00 Tues 17 Nov 2026 17.00-19.00 Book via website Tue 10 Nov 2026 17:00-19:00 Book via website Wed 21 Oct 2026 17:00-19:00 Thur 19 Nov 2026 17:00-19:00 Book via website
Sparsholt College – Westley Lane, Sparsholt, SO21 2AQ Tel: 01962 776441 www.sparsholt.ac.uk	TBA – see website for dates Book time slot for specific course via website
St. Anne’s Catholic Convent School Sixth Form Carlton Road, Southampton SO15 2WZ 023 8028200 www.st-annes.uk.com	Wed 07 Oct 2026 18:00-20:00
St Vincent College Mill Lane, Gosport, Hampshire. PO12 4QA. Tel: 02392 588311 www.stvincent.ac.uk	Mon 19 Oct 2026 10:00-14:00 Thur 22 Oct 2026 17:00-19:00 Book via website
UTC Portsmouth London Rd, Portsmouth PO2 9RN Tel: 02393 120200 www.utcportsmouth.org/utc-portsmouth/	Wed 14 Oct 2026 16.45 - 19.30 Sat 07 Nov 2026 10:30 - 12:00 Book via website

Provider visit record

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Prompt		Notes	
Provider and event date			
Course or apprenticeship area			
Entry requirements			
Teaching and assessment			
Progression routes			
Support available			
Travel time and likely cost			
What impressed me			
Concerns or unanswered questions			
Next action and deadline			

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Plan A, Plan B and Plan C

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Plan	Meaning	My option / next action	
A • Preferred	My strongest current option based on research and fit.		
B • Secure alternative	A route I would genuinely take if Plan A is unavailable.		
C • Results-day safety net	A realistic option if grades, vacancies, travel or circumstances change.		

For apprenticeship applicants Plan B should normally include a suitable college or sixth-form offer while you continue applying.

Watch out for...

- choosing because friends are going;
- assuming courses with the same title are identical;
- ignoring travel, support or costs;
- leaving applications late;
- applying for only one option



BUILDING A SECURE THREE-OPTION PLAN

Preferred route, secure alternative and results-day safety net.

1
Preferred Route



- Your first-choice course, provider or apprenticeship route
- Based on your interests, grades and future goals
- Keep checking entry requirements and deadlines

2
Secure Alternative



- A realistic second option you would still be happy to take
- Similar progression route or suitable backup course
- Apply early and keep it active

3
Results-Day Safety Net



- A plan if grades or circumstances change
- Know who to contact on results day
- Have spare providers or vacancies ready

Avoid common mistakes



- Applying to only one option
- Ignoring travel or costs
- Leaving everything until late



Strong decisions include ambition, realism and a backup plan.

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5. Local provider directory

A starting point, not a recommendation.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Use official websites. Courses, campuses, entry requirements, open events and applications change. Inclusion here does not imply recommendation.			
Provider	Location	Broad character	
Barton Peveril	Eastleigh	Large sixth-form college; broad A Level offer and selected vocational courses.	
Peter Symonds	Winchester	Large academic sixth-form college with broad subjects and enrichment.	
HSDC Havant	Havant	A Level-focused HSDC campus.	
HSDC South Downs	Waterlooville	Technical and vocational programmes including selected T Levels.	
SHCG - Eastleigh College	Eastleigh	Technical and professional courses and apprenticeships.	
SHCG - Fareham College / CEMAST / CETC	Fareham / Lee-on-the-Solent	Vocational, engineering, manufacturing and construction provision.	
SHCG - Southampton College	Southampton	Technical and professional programmes.	
Itchen Sixth Form College	Southampton	A Levels, vocational and foundation learning.	
Richard Taunton Sixth Form College	Southampton	A Levels and vocational programmes at different levels.	
Sparsholt College	Near Winchester	Specialist land-based, animal and environmental provision.	
City of Portsmouth College	Portsmouth	Multi-campus A Level, vocational and technical provision.	
St Vincent College	Gosport	A Levels and vocational courses.	
UTC Portsmouth	Portsmouth	STEM-specialist Year 12 provision.	
Chichester College	Chichester	Broad school-leaver vocational and technical courses, T Levels and apprenticeships.	

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Provider profiles: academic and mixed routes

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Provider	Useful starting point	Check carefully	
Barton Peveril	Mainly academic or mixed Level 3 programmes in a large sixth-form setting	Subject requirements, complete programme and journey.	
Peter Symonds	Academic programmes with extensive enrichment opportunities.	Published application timetable and subject grades.	
HSDC Havant	A Level-focused programme within a multi-campus group.	Exact subject offer and progression support.	
Itchen	Academic, mixed and vocational programmes in one setting.	Starting level, combinations and support.	
St Vincent	A Levels and vocational routes.	Course combinations and practical journey.	

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Before you apply, check:

Exact course title

Campus

Level

Entry requirements

Assessment

Deadline

Travel

Support

Check the provider's official website before submitting your application.

Provider profiles: technical and specialist routes

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Provider	Broad offer	Check carefully	
HSDC South Downs	Vocational, technical and selected T Levels.	Exact campus, assessment and placement.	
Eastleigh College	Career-focused technical and professional courses and apprenticeships.	Course level, practical expectations and progression.	
Fareham / CEMAST / CETC	Vocational, construction, engineering and manufacturing facilities.	Which campus, kit, placement and travel.	
Southampton College	Technical and professional programmes.	Assessment, work-related learning and journey.	
Sparsholt	Land-based, animal and environmental provision.	Specialist kit, placements, travel and any residential option.	
UTC Portsmouth	Specialist STEM curriculum with employer engagement.	Exact Year 12 curriculum and suitability of specialist environment.	



Before you apply, check:

- Exact course title**
- Campus**
- Level**
- Entry requirements**
- Assessment**
- Deadline**
- Travel**
- Support**

Check the provider's official website before submitting your application.

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Live Labour Market Information (LMI)

Labour Market Information helps pupils understand sectors, occupations, skills, routes and opportunities. It should broaden thinking rather than tell a young person that one career is the only sensible choice.

Question to investigate		Why it matters	
Which sectors are important locally?		Reveals the variety of employers and roles within reach.	
Which skills appear across many jobs?		Shows which transferable skills are worth developing and evidencing.	
What qualifications or experience are requested?		Connects Year 11 decisions to realistic entry routes.	
Is the information local, regional or national?		Prevents a national trend being mistaken for a local guarantee.	
How does this affect Plan A, B and C?		Turns information into action without closing down ambition.	
Use live sources Detailed statistics, vacancies and events should be checked on the Swanmore LMI webpage and official sources because they change.			
NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE

Labour Market Information (LMI) helps pupils understand the changing world of work: which sectors operate locally, the skills employers need, typical routes into careers and current opportunities.

Use LMI to broaden your thinking. LMI is evidence, not a prediction. Combine it with your interests, strengths, course research and practical plans.

Local sectors to explore

Sector	Examples
Marine, maritime, defence and logistics	Engineering, ports, supply chains, the Royal Navy, marine technology and transport.
Engineering, manufacturing and construction	Design, production, maintenance, infrastructure and skilled trades.
Health, social care and life sciences	Clinical, care, laboratory, administrative and support roles.
Digital, technology and cyber	Software, data, IT support, networks, digital media and cyber security.
Education and public services	Schools, early years, councils, emergency services and public organisations.
Business and professional services	Finance, law, HR, marketing, procurement and project work.
Creative, hospitality and visitor economy	Events, food, tourism, heritage, media and design.
Green skills and sustainability	Energy, retrofit, transport, construction, land management and environmental work.

Questions to investigate

- Which sectors and occupations appear important locally?
- Which skills occur across several roles?
- What qualifications or experience do employers request?
- How could this evidence affect Plan A, Plan B or Plan C?

[National Careers Service](#) •
 [Hampshire economic intelligence](#) •
 [Nomis local labour-market information](#)

• [Find an Apprenticeship](#)

Live Swanmore LMI page The final digital guide will link to a separate Swanmore webpage that can be updated without reprinting this booklet.

Explore sectors and the skills that employers value across many roles.

LOCAL SECTORS (examples)

Health & Care



nursing, healthcare support

Engineering & Manufacturing



technician, engineering operative

Digital & Technology



software, IT support

Construction & Built Environment



electrician, site technician

Education & Public Services



teaching assistant, emergency/public service roles

Hospitality, Business & Customer Service



chef, business/admin support

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS



Communication



Teamwork



Problem Solving



Organisation



Digital Skills



Reliability



These skills transfer across courses, apprenticeships and careers.



Career sectors may differ, but strong transferable skills matter everywhere.

Provider shortlist

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Comparison point	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Provider and campus			
Course / subjects			
Qualification and level			
Entry requirements			
Assessment style			
Progression routes			
Support I may need			
Journey from home			
Open event attended			
Application action			

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6. Travel, costs and support

Test the route from your own home.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Check		Question	
Time		What is the full door-to-door journey including waits and changes?	
Cost		What are the fares, passes, fuel, parking and occasional extras?	
Reliability		What happens after a missed connection or cancelled service?	
Safety		Are walking sections, waits and late returns manageable?	
Sustainability		Could I do this most days for two years?	

How to test a route

- Plan for a realistic weekday arrival, not midday.
- Include walking sections and a safe margin for changes.
- Check normal and late return journeys.
- Verify with operator information and complete a trial journey where possible.



THE FIVE-PART JOURNEY CHECK

Plan how you will travel from home before making your final decision.

1
Time



How long will the journey take each way?

2
Cost



What will it cost each week or term?

3
Reliability



What happens if buses or trains are delayed?

4
Safety



Is the route safe and manageable in all seasons?

5
Sustainability



Is the journey realistic to repeat every day?

 **Before you commit**

- ✓ Trial the route if possible
- ✓ Check start and finish times
- ✓ Look at return journeys
- ✓ Ask about bursary or travel support



The right course must also be a journey you can manage.

[Traveline](#) • [National Rail](#)
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Travel finance, SEND and accessibility

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
------------------	----------------	------------------	-----------------

- Ask providers about student passes, college transport and the 16-19 Bursary Fund.
- Include placement travel, equipment, meals and occasional late journeys in the total cost.
- Post-16 SEND transport is not automatic; check current eligibility and deadlines.
- Raise mobility, medical, sensory or anxiety-related travel needs early.
- Consider familiarisation, independent travel training, quiet routes and safe contacts.

[16-19 Bursary Fund](#) • [Hampshire post-16 SEND transport](#)

Check the exact campus. A provider name may cover several sites, and a course may include placement days elsewhere.

Personal journey planner

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Prompt		My plan	
Provider and exact campus			
Required arrival time			
Time I need to leave home			
Main route and changes			
Door-to-door time			
Normal and later return route			
Weekly cost and pass			
Provider transport			
Financial help to investigate			
Accessibility or support needs			
Backup route			
Next action and deadline			

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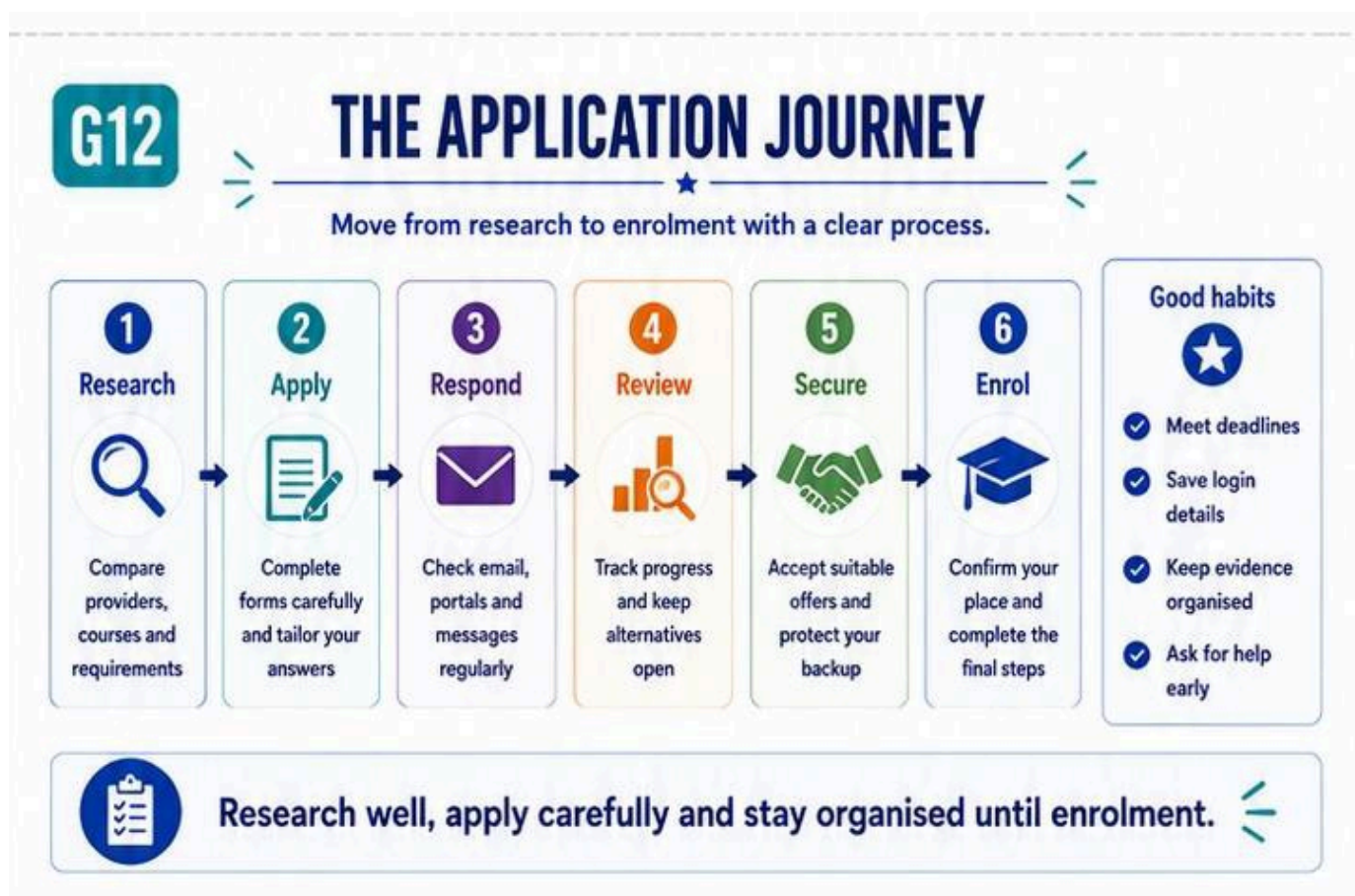
7. Applying and securing your place

Applications create opportunities.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Stage		Action	
Research		Choose realistic courses, levels and campuses.	
Apply		Complete accurate applications before deadlines.	
Respond		Attend interviews, auditions or assessments.	
Review		Compare offers, conditions, support and travel.	
Secure		Keep a suitable place and prepare for enrolment.	

Before starting

- Gather personal and education details, grades and course choices.
- List work experience, volunteering, activities, responsibilities and skill examples.
- Use an email address you check and monitor spam folders.
- Apply to more than one suitable option.



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Completing a strong application

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
------------------	----------------	------------------	-----------------

- Read the course page and exact entry requirements first.
- Choose the correct course, level and campus.
- Use accurate information and professional language.
- Answer every required question and ask when something is unclear.
- Review before submitting and keep confirmation evidence.

Your application is a first impression. It should show care, accuracy, genuine interest and readiness to take responsibility.

Avoid

- copying another person's statement;
- inflating grades or experience;
- using a parent's email as the only contact;
- sending several rushed applications at once.

Example personal statement 1

Sport and leisure



Model example only — use your own experiences, skills and future plans. Do not copy this statement.

I am currently a Year 11 student at Swanmore College and I am applying for a Level 3 Sport course because I would like to develop my knowledge of fitness, coaching and the leisure industry.

My interest in this area grew during my work experience at Fareham Leisure Centre. I completed a range of tasks, including helping at reception, setting up equipment, supporting staff with rotas and assisting with sporting activities for younger children. This experience helped me understand how many different roles are involved in running a leisure centre successfully.

I particularly enjoyed working with children and supporting practical activities. I learned that I communicate clearly, work well as part of a team and can be trusted to complete tasks responsibly. I also became more confident when speaking to members of the public and responding to instructions from different members of staff.

Sport is an important part of my life. I enjoy running and was proud to take part in the Great North Run. Preparing for the event required commitment, organisation and resilience. I also received a county athletics certificate, which encouraged me to continue developing my sporting ability.

At school, I have worked hard to improve my grades and become more focused on my future. I understand that a Level 3 course will require consistent effort, independent study and a positive attitude. I am ready to build on the skills I have developed through school, sport and work experience.

In the future, I would like to work in the sport or leisure industry, possibly in coaching, fitness instruction or leisure-centre management. I am also open to progressing to university or a higher apprenticeship after completing the course.



Use this as a guide to structure and style — not as text to copy.

Personal statement framework

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Element		What to include	
Why this course		Specific interests and what you want to learn.	
Evidence		Lessons, projects, work experience, volunteering, hobbies or responsibilities.	
Skills		Name the skill, give a clear example and explain the result.	
Progression		A realistic possible next step.	
Readiness		Reliability, effort, curiosity and willingness to improve.	
Specific beats generic. Connect your evidence to the chosen course or employer rather than writing something that could fit any application.			

Example personal statement 2

A Levels and law



Model example only — use your own experiences, skills and future plans. Do not copy this statement.

I am currently a Year 11 student at Swanmore College and I am applying to study A Levels because I would like to continue developing my academic skills and work towards a future career in law.

My favourite subjects are English, History and Religious Education. I enjoy analysing different viewpoints, constructing arguments and explaining my ideas clearly. These subjects have helped me develop skills in reading, writing, research and critical thinking, which I believe will be valuable when studying A Levels and, later, a law degree.

To learn more about the legal profession, I spent a day shadowing a local solicitor. I observed how legal professionals communicate with clients, organise information and deal carefully with complex situations. This experience confirmed my interest in law and helped me understand the importance of accuracy, professionalism and confidentiality.

My work experience at John Lewis also helped me develop useful skills. I worked with different members of staff, supported customers and learned about stock control. I sometimes had to remain calm when dealing with difficult situations, which improved my confidence and communication. At the end of the placement, I was offered a part-time position, which I believe reflects my reliability and positive attitude.

I also work at a local children's indoor activity centre, where I help run parties, supervise play and support catering tasks. Balancing work with school has helped me become more organised, independent and responsible.

Outside lessons, I sing in the Senior Choir and with a band. Performing in front of audiences has developed my confidence and taught me the importance of preparation and teamwork. I am also a prefect and help support a Year 7 tutor group, which has strengthened my leadership and communication skills.

My long-term ambition is to study law at university and become a solicitor. I am particularly interested in working in a busy firm where I could experience a wide range of cases. I would also like to travel and possibly gain experience of living or working abroad in the future.



Use this as a guide to structure and style — not as text to copy.

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My strongest evidence

Skill or quality	Example	What it shows

Application tracker

NORTH PURPOSE		EAST SKILLS		SOUTH EXPLORE		WEST PREPARE	
Provider / employer	Course / role	Submitted		Next stage		Deadline / action	

Keep options open. A conditional offer is not the same as enrolment. Continue meeting conditions and keep a backup until the place is secure.

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TURNING EXPERIENCE INTO EVIDENCE

Use examples from school, work, hobbies or volunteering to prove your strengths.



Quick formula



I did..., which shows..., because..., and this links to...

Example



Example: Sports leader → organised a warm-up → leadership and communication → session ran smoothly → relevant for sport or childcare.



Specific examples make applications and interviews much stronger.

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8. Interviews, auditions and selection

Prepare, practise and learn from the experience.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
--------------------------	------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------

Before the day

- Re-read the application and course or vacancy details.
- Research the provider or employer.
- Prepare examples using STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result.
- Plan the journey or test the technology.
- Prepare two thoughtful questions.
- Request reasonable adjustments early.

Likely question	What to show
Why this course or apprenticeship?	Genuine interest linked to evidence.
What are your strengths?	Two or three strengths with examples.
Describe teamwork or a challenge.	A clear STAR example and what you learned.
Why this provider or employer?	Accurate research and specific reasons.
What do you need to improve?	Honesty and action already being taken.

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INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Before, during and after the interview, show readiness, confidence and curiosity.

Before



-  Research the provider or employer
-  Practise answers using examples
-  Plan travel or login details
-  Choose suitable clothes
-  Prepare questions to ask

During



-  Arrive on time
-  Listen carefully
-  Use specific examples
-  Make eye contact and sit well
-  Ask a thoughtful question

After



-  Record what went well
-  Note questions you found hard
-  Check next steps
-  Act on feedback
-  Keep your backup open

Good questions to ask



- What is the course or role really like?
- What support or enrichment is available?
- Check are the next steps and timescales?



Preparation today improves confidence tomorrow.



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Auditions, portfolios and practical tasks

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
------------------	----------------	------------------	-----------------

- Follow format, deadline and submission instructions exactly.
- Select work that shows quality, range and development.
- Be ready to explain decisions and respond to feedback.
- Follow health and safety instructions during practical tasks.
- Afterwards, record feedback and any follow-up action.

Selection works both ways. Use the experience to decide whether the course, provider or employer still feels right for you.

My preparation notes

Prompt	Notes
Three reasons this route fits me	
My strongest STAR example	
A second evidence example	
Two questions to ask	
Journey / technology plan	
Adjustment or support needed	

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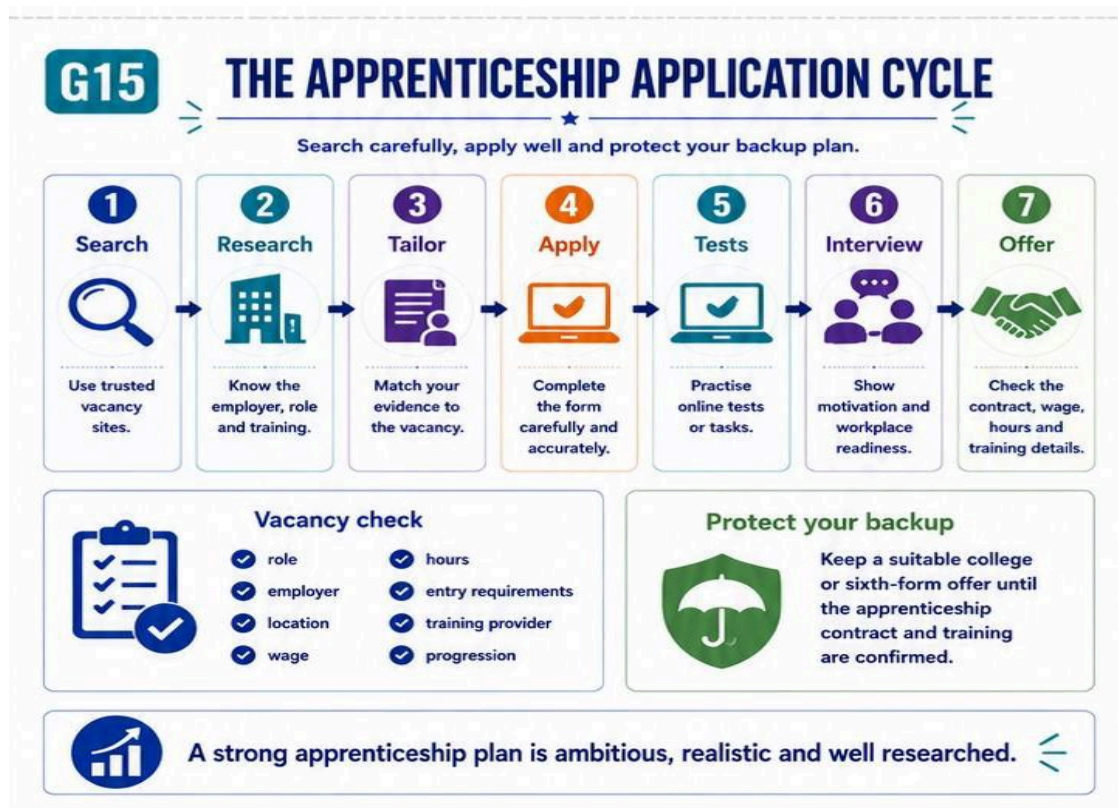
9. Apprenticeship application toolkit

A paid job with training.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Stage		Action	
Search		Use several keywords, create alerts and check employer career pages.	
Read		Check duties, level, grades, location, hours, pay and training provider.	
Research		Understand the employer, customers, values and current work.	
Apply		Tailor every CV, cover letter and response.	
Test		Practise online tests and request adjustments early.	
Interview		Use evidence and show workplace readiness.	
Offer		Confirm employer, standard, level, wage, hours, training and start date in writing.	

Protect your backup. Keep a suitable college or sixth-form offer until the employment contract and training are confirmed.

[Find an Apprenticeship](#) • [Amazing Apprenticeships](#)



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Apprenticeship vacancy check

Before applying, a pupil should be able to explain the job duties, employer, training standard, location, hours, wage, entry requirements and likely progression.

Application stage	Strong evidence
Opening answer	Why this role and employer, not a generic apprenticeship.
Skills question	A specific example with action and result.
Employer research	Products, services, customers, values or recent work.
Online tests	Practice under realistic time conditions and request adjustments early.
Interview	Professional communication, thoughtful questions and workplace readiness.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
--------------------------	------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------

Question	My evidence
Do I understand the daily duties?	
Can I reliably travel to the workplace and training?	
Do I meet the qualifications and age requirements?	
Why this employer rather than any employer?	
Which skills examples match the vacancy?	
What are the wage, hours and start date?	
What qualification and apprenticeship standard will I complete?	
What is my college or sixth-form backup?	

Stay safe. Never pay a fee to apply for a genuine apprenticeship. Be cautious about unexpected requests for bank details or identity documents.

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10. Offers, GCSE results and enrolment

Know what each offer means.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Offer type		Meaning	
Conditional		Depends on grades or other stated requirements.	
Unconditional		No further academic conditions, but enrolment actions remain.	
Alternative		A different level or course is suggested.	
Waiting list		A place may become available later.	
No offer		Use backup choices and ask about alternatives.	

Before results day

- Read every offer condition and keep contact details.
- Know Plan A, Plan B and Plan C.
- Prepare identification and requested documents.
- Check email and provider portals during the summer.

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UNDERSTANDING OFFER TYPES

Know what each outcome means and what to do next.

1
Conditional offer

Place offered if you meet the stated grades or conditions.

→ Keep working, check conditions and prepare documents.

2
Unconditional offer

A place is available without further academic conditions.

→ Confirm details and decide whether to accept.

3
Alternative offer

A different course, level or route is offered.

→ Compare it carefully and ask questions.

4
Waiting list

A decision depends on space or later confirmation.

→ Check email often and protect your backup.

5
No offer

This route is not available at the moment.

→ Use your backup and look for alternatives.

Read every message carefully and note all deadlines.

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Results day and enrolment

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Step		Action	
Collect		Check every grade and keep the official statement safe.	
Compare		Match grades against preferred and backup conditions.	
Contact		Follow provider instructions and ask before assuming.	
Decide		Consider course fit, level, support, progression and travel.	
Confirm		Complete enrolment and retain written confirmation.	
One missed grade does not create one automatic outcome. Only the provider can confirm the original place, an alternative level or another course.			

Enrolment checklist

- Identification and GCSE results.
- Offer or application details.
- Photograph or online account requirements.
- Bursary, support and transport evidence.
- Course kit, uniform and first-day instructions.

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11. Year 11 timeline

Use live provider dates alongside this overview.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Period		Priority actions	
September		Research pathways, update Unifrog, shortlist providers and book open events.	
October		Attend events, compare courses and test journeys.	
November		Narrow choices, begin applications and set apprenticeship alerts.	
December-January		Submit priority applications and prepare for interviews.	
February-March		Review offers, continue applying for suitable apprenticeships, close gaps and begin transition planning.	
April-June		Check travel, finance, backup choices and enrolment instructions while prioritising GCSEs.	
July-August		Prepare documents, receive results, contact providers and enrol.	
September		Attend induction, establish routines and ask for help early.	

Three habits that keep you on track

Simple routines that help you stay organised and ready for next steps.



Check your email

Look daily so you do not miss updates, interviews or deadlines.



Use a planner

Write down key dates, open evenings, application deadlines and tasks.



Ask for help early

Speak to staff, parents or carers if you are unsure or stuck.

Small habits make a big difference.

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Support, SEND and finance

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
------------------	----------------	------------------	-----------------

- Tell providers about learning, medical, accessibility or wellbeing needs early.
- For an EHCP, clarify consultation, placement, transition and support arrangements.
- Ask about learning support, exam arrangements, assistive technology and named contacts.
- Check bursary, equipment, meals, transport and hardship support.
- Do not assume school support or transport transfers automatically.

Impartial support may challenge an idea. Good guidance helps you investigate, compare and strengthen a decision; it does not make the decision for you.

[National Careers Service](#) • [16-19 Bursary Fund](#)



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Final action plan

Ready means informed, not certain A strong pupil can explain the preferred route, the evidence behind it, the next deadline and a genuine backup.

Your journey starts here.

NORTH PURPOSE	EAST SKILLS	SOUTH EXPLORE	WEST PREPARE
Area		My final information	
Plan A			
Plan B			
Plan C			
Grades or conditions required			
Application / offer status			
Results-day contact			
Enrolment date and documents			
Normal and backup travel route			
Costs and support applications			
Named person who can help			
My next action and deadline			

Together We Thrive. You are responsible for engaging with your decision, but you are not expected to manage the transition alone.

[Unifrog](#) • [Swanmore College](#) • [Find an Apprenticeship](#)

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FINAL CAREERS COMPASS CHECK

A final check before you submit your choices.

1 NORTH – PURPOSE



- ✓ Do my choices fit my interests, values and future goals?
- ✓ Can I explain why these options suit me?
- ✓ Am I choosing for the right reasons?

2 EAST – SKILLS



- ✓ Do my predicted grades and strengths match the course requirements?
- ✓ What skills will I build on this pathway?
- ✓ Have I included a balance of challenge and realism?

4 WEST – PREPARE



- ✓ Have I completed applications carefully?
- ✓ Have I recorded key dates, interviews or enrolment tasks?
- ✓ Do I have a backup plan?
- ✓ Do I know what to do next?

3 SOUTH – EXPLORE



- ✓ Have I compared more than one provider or pathway?
- ✓ Have I checked entry requirements, course details and progression routes?
- ✓ Have I looked at travel, support and student life?



FINAL CHECKLIST

✓
Application submitted or ready to submit

✓
Backup option kept open

✓
Key dates written down

✓
Questions answered

✓
Support asked for if needed



Good choices are informed, realistic and ready for action.

Think carefully. Choose confidently. Keep your future open.

Open-event question bank

Use the same questions at different providers so comparisons are fair.

Area	Questions to ask
Course content	What will I study in the first term? Which units are compulsory? How much choice is there?
Assessment	How many examinations, assignments, projects or practical assessments are involved?
Entry and applications	What are the overall and subject-specific grades? Are there interviews, auditions or portfolios?
Progression	Where did recent students progress? Which universities, apprenticeships or careers does the course support?
Support	What learning, SEND, wellbeing and transition support is available, and how is it accessed?
Daily life	What does a typical week look like? How much independent study is expected?
Costs and travel	What equipment, trips or placement costs apply? What travel or bursary support is available?
Results day	What happens if my grades are higher or lower than expected? Can I change course or level?

Use the full digital guide and official provider information for current details.

Results-day action plan

Prepare before August so that a change of plan does not become a crisis.

Situation	Action
I meet all conditions	Follow the provider enrolment instructions and keep written confirmation.
I narrowly miss a grade	Contact the provider promptly. Ask whether the original place, another level or an alternative course is available.
My grades are higher than expected	Review whether the original route still fits before making a rushed change.
My preferred course is unavailable	Use Plan B, contact other providers and ask Swanmore careers staff for support.
I am still seeking an apprenticeship	Keep a suitable education place until the employer and training are confirmed in writing.
I need SEND or financial support	Contact the provider support team and complete outstanding evidence or applications.
I am unsure what to do	Speak to a trusted adult, careers adviser or provider before declining a secure option.

Many colleges allow course changes during the first weeks, subject to availability. Speak to the provider promptly if your course is not right for you.

Use the full digital guide and official provider information for current details.

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Parent and carer support checklist

Support ownership without taking over the decision.

Helpful action	What this looks like
Listen first	Ask the young person to explain what attracts them to the route and what evidence supports it.
Check the course	Look together at the exact qualification, level, assessment and progression - not only the title.
Support applications	Help organise information and deadlines, while ensuring the pupil writes and understands the application.
Plan practicalities	Discuss travel from home, costs, equipment, meals, placements and the daily routine.
Encourage alternatives	Help maintain a preferred option, a secure alternative and a results-day safety net.
Prepare for interviews	Practise questions, discuss examples and plan the journey or technology.
Raise support early	Contact the provider about SEND, wellbeing, medical, access or financial support before transition.
Keep communication calm	A well-researched change of mind is progress, not failure.
Before results day	Keep provider contacts, offer conditions, enrolment instructions and Plan A/B/C together.
After enrolment	Encourage good routines, email checking, punctuality, independence and asking for help early.

The decision belongs to the pupil, but they should not have to manage the transition alone.

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My post-16 weekly action planner

Turn a large decision into manageable actions.

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Week 5

Week 6

Week 7

Week 8

Useful action examples

- Book or attend an open event.
- Compare two course specifications.
- Ask a subject teacher about readiness for post-16 study.
- Update Unifrog activities and skills evidence.
- Submit an application.
- Practise an interview answer using STAR.
- Test the journey from home.
- Check bursary, SEND or transition support.

Small actions completed early create more choices later.

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USEFUL WEBSITES

Trusted websites to explore post-16 courses, careers, apprenticeships, travel and financial support.

Unifrog Your personalised careers platform for researching careers, subjects, providers and apprenticeships. https://www.unifrog.org/	Swanmore Careers The school hub for careers information, events, news and key resources. https://www.swanmore-school.co.uk/pupils/careers-and-pshe-development-and-destinations
Amazing Apprenticeships Pupil-friendly apprenticeship advice, employer information and application resources. https://www.amazingapprenticeships.com/	Find an Apprenticeship Search and apply for live apprenticeship vacancies across England. https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

Check websites regularly: course details, entry requirements, dates, travel and support can change.

UCAS Further Education Explore post-16 courses, qualifications and providers, including sixth forms and colleges. https://www.ucas.com/further-education	Skills for Careers Official guidance on A Levels, T Levels, vocational qualifications, apprenticeships and training. https://www.skillsforcareers.education.gov.uk/
T Levels Official information about T Levels, subjects, providers, entry requirements and applications. https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/	Travel and financial support Plan journeys with Traveline and check the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund. https://www.traveline.info/ https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

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