

Post-16:

What Next?



Tibshelf Community School



Introduction

At Tibshelf School, we believe that all students should be provided with the knowledge, inspiration and ability to take ownership of their own career plans and should receive high levels of care, guidance and support to enable them to achieve success in all aspects of their lives.

We have developed a high-quality careers programme that aims to raise aspirations whilst also supporting students when planning their next steps after Tibshelf School and beyond.

Post 16 Education – What are my options?

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

There are 3 main pathways to consider.

- 1) **Academic route** – A Levels (Level 3). These can be taken at a school sixth form or college.
- 2) **Vocational route** – Vocational courses are available at levels 1,2 and 3. For example, BTECs are available at all three levels, however the new T Levels are level 3, the same as A Levels.
- 3) **Apprenticeships/ Traineeships** – Both level 2 and 3 options are available after GCSEs.

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

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

There are lots of things to think about when you leave school. To help you choose what to do next you might need to think about:

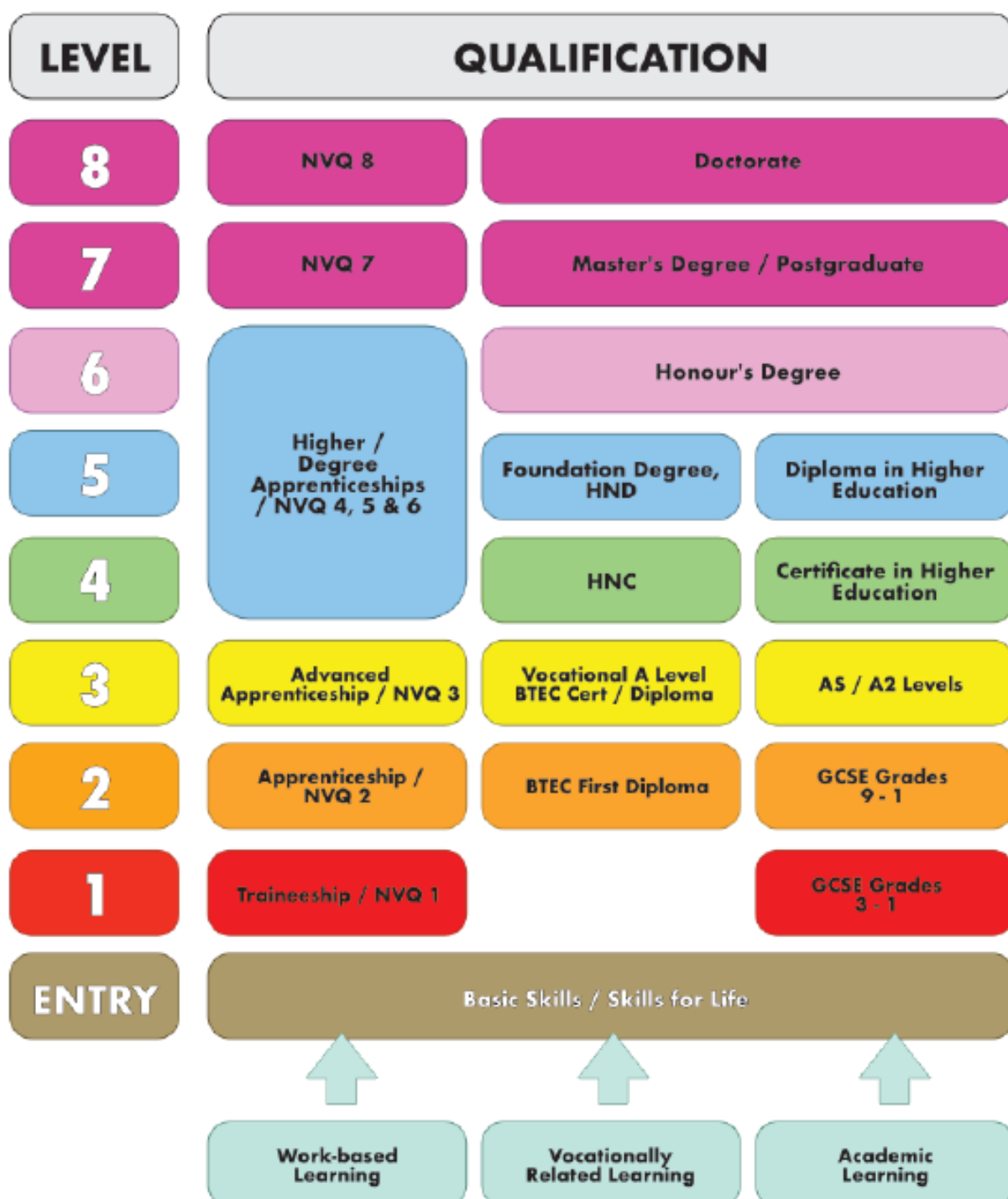
- What career you want to do in the future – some jobs need you to choose certain routes to get into them.
- Your predicted grades.
- Whether you want to carry on learning in an academic way like school, or in a more work-related way.
- How you want to learn. You might enjoy school and might like to continue; you might prefer more hands-on ways of doing things, so you might want to think about an apprenticeship.

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

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

Qualifications Table

Looking at qualifications can be a little confusing at first, as all qualifications are given a level, and depending on what you are applying for, there may be a different qualifying level. Below is a breakdown of the range of different levels that make up qualifications.



For a full list of qualifications at each level, please follow this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>

Sixth Form Colleges

Sixth Form Colleges typically focus on A-Level qualifications. These are usually two-year courses that end with an overall examination. A grade is then awarded from A*- E.

Students can study:

Traditional A-Levels – Subjects like **Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English Literature, English Language, Mathematics, Geography, History, Languages, Religious Education, Music and Art.**

Alternative A-Levels – Subjects such as **Photography, Law, Sociology, Psychology, Business Studies, Film Studies, Media Studies, Economics, Politics, Sports Science.**

BTEC L3 Diplomas – Some sixth form colleges offer BTEC qualifications that can be taken alongside A-Levels. These are usually made up of several separate modules and include practical assessments and coursework, as well as exams. Subjects include **Health and Social Care, Applied Science, Travel Tourism and Engineering.**

Students studying A-Levels usually select three subjects that they wish to study. Some sixth forms also offer something called the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), an independent project that can provide students with UCAS points to put towards university.

Entry Requirements – Most sixth form colleges usually ask students to have five GCSEs at Grade 4 or above. However, this is not always the case as some colleges will ask for higher grades in certain subjects. It is important to do your research by contacting the sixth form or college.

T-Levels – These are a new general vocational qualification being offered for the first time from this September at some colleges. Subject choices are limited however, it is expected that more subjects will be rolled out from providers over the next few years. T-Levels are aimed at students who have an idea of the industry they would like to go into. They are similar to apprenticeships as approximately 80% of the course will be spent at college and the remaining 20% will be at an industry placement. The idea is that the industry placement forms a significant part of the course and gives a meaningful experience.

Entry Requirements

Entry Level/ Level 1 – Can require anything from no qualifications up to 3 GCSEs (any grade).

Level 2 – Usually requires 3 GCSEs at Grade 3 or above.

Level 3 – Usually requires 5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above. Some courses may ask for higher grades.

Further Education (FE) Options – Further Education (FE) colleges are for students ages 16 and over. You could therefore study alongside students of all ages. FE colleges often offer you a much wider choice of courses at all different levels, including A-Levels and vocational qualifications.

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Apprenticeships – A real job with training so you can earn money while you learn and gain recognised qualifications. They take between 1 and 4 years to complete.

Your employer provides your on-the-job training and pays your wages, while your learning provider (a college, training organisation or university) is responsible for the rest of your training. Most apprenticeships involve working four days a week with your employer and one day a week with your learning provider.

Apprenticeships can now be undertaken in a variety of industries including **Engineering, Hair and Beauty, Graphic Design, Software Development and Catering.**

Apprenticeships Levels:

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

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

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

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

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

Traineeships involve a programme of up to six months of study, including a work placement, qualifications in English and Maths and support with finding a job or apprenticeship once the course is completed. Students are not paid for taking part but can apply for a 16-19 Bursary Fund to help with costs.

Useful Links:

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

<https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/>

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

Applying for Post-16 Courses

Students begin applying for their post-16 options in the Autumn term of Year 11 and the application process usually remains open throughout most of the academic year.

Projected timeline for 2020-21:

November 2020 – Application windows start to open and Open Events scheduled (these will all be online this year due to the coronavirus pandemic).

Mid-January 2021 – General closing dates for applications of some sixth forms and colleges.
Students are advised to apply for courses before Christmas.

Mid-March 2021 – Students start receiving offers from sixth forms and colleges.

Late-March 2021 – Students accept or reject offers from sixth forms and colleges.

March – September 2021 – Students apply for Post-16 options that they might not have been able to apply for until now, such as some apprenticeship opportunities or courses with training providers.

26th August 2021 – Students receive GCSE/BTEC results and confirm offers with colleges/providers.

Early September 2021 – Students start new courses at sixth form, college or training provider.

24th September 2021 – Applications close for 2020-2021 academic year.

How to Apply

Sixth Form and College websites – Most colleges have online application forms on their websites.

Find an Apprenticeship – The government’s apprenticeship portal, allows students to create an account and search/ apply for apprenticeships in their area.

PLEASE NOTE: Apprenticeship and Traineeship applications run throughout the academic year and students must be 16 and have finished full-time education before being eligible to start. Apprenticeships have a much more detailed and competitive application and recruitment process than sixth form or college and will require students to find their own placements if taken via colleges.

More information regarding apprenticeships can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

Entry Requirements – What do I need to get in?

Key points:

- A Grade 4 is a Standard Pass, while a Grade 5 is a Strong Pass.
- Only around 2-3% of students will achieve a Grade 9, making it a little higher than the old A*
- Although the new grades do not exactly match the old grades, colleges will mostly view them as follows:

New GCSE Grades	Old GCSE Grades
9-7	A*
6	B
5-4	C
3-1	D and below

- Vocational qualifications like BTECs match up with GCSEs as follows:

BTEC Grades	GCSE Grades
L1 (Pass – Distinction)	1-3
L2 (Pass – Distinction)	4-9

Most colleges, sixth forms and apprenticeships accept BTEC-type qualifications, as do 95% of universities, including the Russell Group such as Oxford.

Do your research!

It is important to check all information carefully. Although the Department for Education have stated that a Grade 4 is considered the official 'Pass Mark' for students, not all colleges or universities may agree with this and they may demand higher grades.

Don't forget about the competition!

It is worth remembering that many other students from other schools will also be applying for courses, and each college will only have a limited number of places for each course. It therefore important that you **do your best in ALL subjects**, not just the subjects that you need to get onto the course. You are in direct competition with all other students who are wanting to get onto the same course as you.

The chances of you securing a place on your chosen course significantly increase if you can achieve the following:

- **Achieving the best possible grades in all subjects** – This shows the sixth form/ college/ employer that you can apply yourself to a range of subjects and have the dedication and work ethic required.
- **Gaining work experience** – This allows you to experience the world of work where you will learn new skills that are essential for later life. Securing a good reference from a work experience placement is seen very favourably by colleges/ sixth forms/ employers. It shows that you are able to work well with others, have good time management and a mature attitude. Work experience places may be difficult to secure this year due to the pandemic. However, volunteering for charities/ local events is also considered as good experience.
- **Extra-curricular activities** – Engaging in activities outside of school such as playing sports, being part of a club/ team or having a hobby may provide many opportunities for you to demonstrate key skills that are desirable for post-16 study or in the workplace.
- **Being able to demonstrate any of the Tibshelf Characters:**
 - Respect
 - Community Spirit
 - Integrity
 - Resilience
 - Positiveness
 - Inquisitiveness



Being able to explain how you have demonstrated these characters by taking part in various activities/ events can give you the edge over others who are competing for your place. They help to highlight desirable attributes for all aspects of life.

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

Deciding where to go after Year 11 can be difficult, particularly as you are still studying for your GCSEs. It is therefore important to start thinking about your next steps sooner, rather than later. The following factors may help with your decision process:

- Think about your strengths – what skills do you already have? Which attributes might you want to improve?
- Do you know what career you would like? If so, what are the pathways you can go down to achieve this?
- If you are unsure which career would like, think about the ‘type’ of job/ career would you like? E.g. Do you prefer working outside or indoors? Do you mind shift work or working away from home?
- What subjects do you enjoy? Doing something you enjoy is always worthwhile.
- Talk to your family and friends. What are their experiences of work and education?
- **Research!** Make sure you visit post-16 websites and research courses properly. Feel free to contact them directly if you have any questions.
- Get help and support from School – All staff here at Tibshelf are more than happy to support and help guide you in the right direction.

Tibshelf Support

Form Time

Students are provided with a wide range of support and guidance to help navigate their path towards the most suitable post-16 provision. Students are asked to think carefully about their post-16 options, and it is recommended that they begin to apply for courses as soon as possible.

My Careers: This is a weekly form time session whereby information regarding possible pathways such as A-Levels, college courses and apprenticeships are shared and discussed. Students are encouraged to research potential careers and educational pathways.

My Skills: In this weekly form time session, students explore how to improve the skills required to achieve their potential both academically, and for life in general. This includes advice on how to manage time effectively, creating revision timetables, tips on how best to revise as well as advice on how to stay safe, healthy and happy.

My Characters: The Tibshelf Characters are the cornerstone of our school ethos. Students learn about each character and discuss how they can demonstrate them in everyday life.

Unifrog

All Year 11 students are being encouraged to use Unifrog; an award-winning, online careers platform. Unifrog brings into one place every undergraduate university course, apprenticeship, and college course in the UK, as well as other opportunities, such as School Leaver Programmes and all colleges at Oxford and Cambridge. Unifrog includes a careers library tool which profiles a huge range of careers highlighting the qualifications, skills and the pathways of study required to secure different job roles.

All students currently have access to Unifrog which can be accessed from any computer, tablet or smartphone. The **parent login** enables parents to use Unifrog and log in as if they were a student to further support their child. Parents can sign up at www.unifrog.org/code using the **form code** 'TIBSparents'.

Independent Careers Advice

All Year 11 students have access to independent careers advisors who come into school every Wednesday. The advisors aim to provide additional guidance and support when searching for post-16 courses and apprenticeships, writing CVs and preparing for interviews. An appointment system is used to ensure that all students have access to the advisors and additional appointments can be made if required. Students are notified of their appointment by email.

Next Steps...

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this year, all open evenings will virtual and can be accessed by visiting the websites of post-16 providers.

Students are advised to visit post-16 websites and start to research courses that are of interest to them. Some of the most common local Post-16 providers are:

- Chesterfield College www.chesterfield.ac.uk
- Vision West Nottinghamshire College www.wnc.ac.uk
- Tupton Hall www.tuptonhall.derbyshire.sch.uk
- Ashfield School www.ashfield.notts.sch.uk
- Bilborough College www.bilborough.ac.uk

Questions to ask at open evenings and interviews

College:

- What support is there if have problems or am struggling to keep up?
- When should I apply?
- If I am offered a place, but do not get the required grades, do you offer alternative courses I could drop down into?
- When do you hold your interviews?
- How can I get more information about the course I am interested in?
- Does the course include any relevant work experience?
- How is the course taught?
- On average, how many students are in a class?
- How many teachers will I be taught by?
- What access is there to ICT facilities?
- What skills/qualifications do I need to get on the course?
- How will I be assessed?
- Do I need any special equipment or clothing?
- What do people who complete the course go on to do?
- How is Covid-19 affecting current students' experience of college and learning?

Apprenticeships

- When you start/stop recruiting?
- Do I have to take any tests/ exams?
- How is the training organised? – block/day release, at college or specialist centre?
- How many apprentices do you take on and how many people apply?
- What percentage of apprentices get jobs at the end of their apprenticeship?
- What grades do I need to get in my GCSEs?

“There is no passion to be found in playing small — in settling for a life that is less than you are capable of living.”

Nelson Mandela

