

Welcome...

This factsheet provides a range of information to help support your son/daughter in deciding where to go after their sixth form or college course. Many young people choose to continue their education, some after a gap year, whilst others would prefer to get a job or start an Apprenticeship.

Let's talk about Year 12

Higher Education - courses can be taken at Universities, Colleges of Higher Education and some Colleges of Further Education.

There are different types of courses to take in lots of different subjects:

- **Honours Degree** (e.g. BA or BSc) - Most honours degrees last 3 or 4 years and are available in a huge range of subjects. They can be full-time or part-time
- **Foundation Degree** - This is a work related Higher Education qualification. It can be studied full-time or part-time. Full-time courses take two years and can lead to an honours degree. See www.foundationdegree.org.uk
- **BTEC Higher National Diploma/Certificate** - This covers a variety of work related subjects - part-time or full-time. Courses are 2 to 3 years in length and can also lead to an honours degree
- **Foundation Courses** - These are one year courses for students wishing to take an Honours Degree, but who don't have the required GCSEs or A levels or equivalent. They can lead onto a degree course on successful completion.

Getting a job

If your son/daughter is planning on going into employment, they need to start researching companies, and may even apply in the January/February of the year they wish to start. Personal Advisers (PAs) linked to their school/college or based at your local Connexions centre can help with job applications, CVs and interview techniques. Young people can also register for work at the Connexions centre, if they complete their course and do not have any job offers.

Apprenticeships

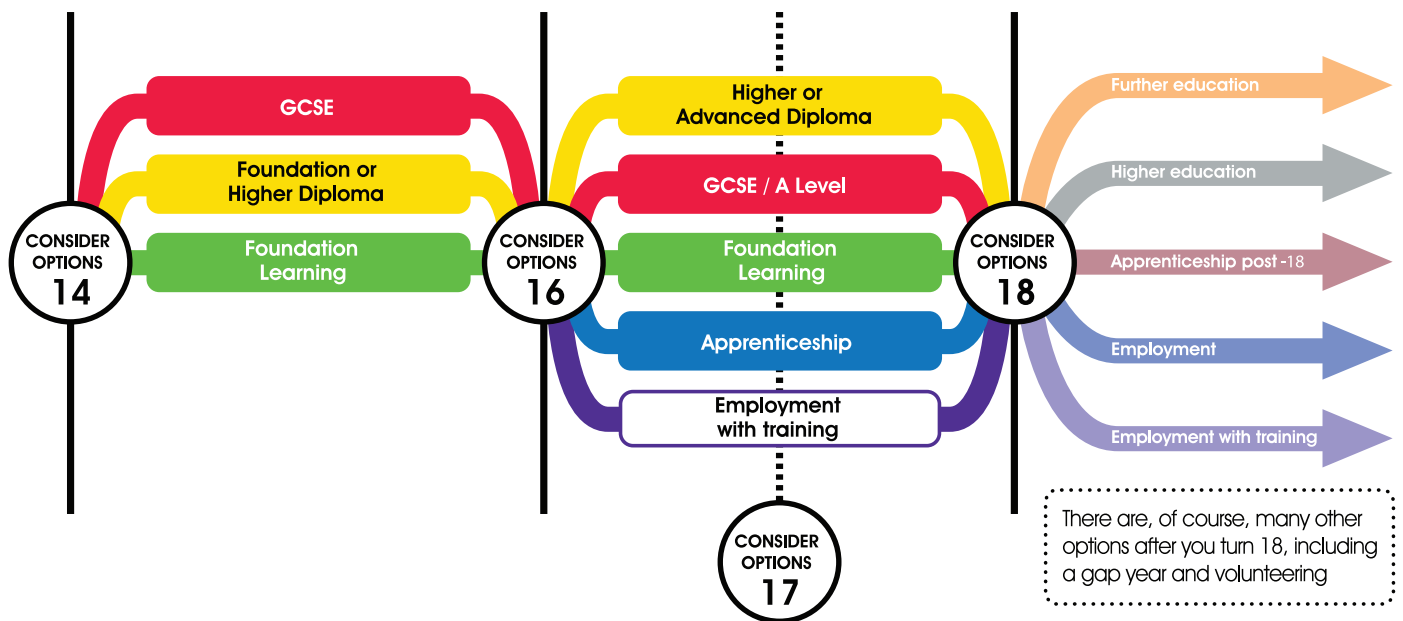
An **Apprenticeship** is a planned, training programme leading to a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) which combines work-based training with education. **Advanced Apprenticeships** are suitable for students completing advanced courses, and train young people for supervisory and junior management positions.

An Apprentice works for an employer and receives a wage. For more information visit: www.apprenticeships.org.uk or phone **0800 015 0600**.

Gap year

Before going to university or into employment, students may take a 'year out' or gap year. This needs to be carefully planned. Most universities and employers look favourably on students taking a gap year, providing they have used it wisely by gaining work experience, travelling or developing new skills.

Learning routes for your son/daughter



What do the learning routes mean?

Higher or Advanced Diploma

The Diploma combines theoretical study with practical experience based around a work-related curriculum. It is available at Foundation, Higher and Advanced level (Level 1 - Level 3).

GCSE / A Level

GCSE and A level qualifications are regularly updated to ensure that they remain high quality, relevant and interesting. They can be combined with Diplomas.

Foundation Learning

This is for learners not ready for a full level 2 qualification and include a mix of learning to suit the individual.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeships allow students to learn at work and gain qualifications. The number and range of Apprenticeships is increasing hugely so 1 in 5 will take this route by 2020.

CONSIDER OPTIONS

Consider Options

Well before the decision points, information and advice will be critical to guide young people to make the best choice for them in relation to their prior learning. Some students may change paths at 17 because there are more one year courses available after 16.

Some key dates to remember!

Year one – by Easter in Year 12

Depending on what your son/daughter wants to do next they should:

- Arrange work experience or work shadowing
- Research Higher Education courses and attend any relevant events
- Look at possible job opportunities.

Year two

Prepare for next step:

- Personal statement for University application
- Contact companies regarding jobs
- Planning a gap year.

By November

- UCAS applications start in the first week of September 2010. Apply as early as possible. Visit www.ucas.ac.uk for more information
- The deadline for medicine, dentistry, veterinary, Science, Oxford and Cambridge is 15th October 2010
- If your son/daughter is looking for work, it's time for them to prepare their CV.

Jan – April

- Deadline for UCAS application is 22nd January 2011.

May – August

- If looking for work, your son/daughter can register with Connexions
- Exam results are published in August
- Higher education vacancies are published in national newspapers and on the internet
- Help with Clearing is available at school, college and at Connexions centres.

Finance and support

Tuition Fees

Higher Education institutions are able to charge new students in the Year 2010/11 up to a maximum of £3,290 a year.

Higher Education Maintenance Grants

These are available through Student Finance England to lower income households (family income of up to £50,020) and can be worth up to £2,906 a year if family income is below £25,000. Contact your local authority to find out more about how the calculation is made. Grants are paid directly to students in three instalments – one at the start of each term.

Bursaries

If a university is charging £3,290 per year in fees it must award a minimum of £329 to those in receipt of a full maintenance grant of £2,906. Check with the student advice service at the university of choice to find out what is available as some are more generous than others.

Scholarships

Some universities award scholarships for particular courses, check with each individual university.

Student loans

There are two types of student loan:

Loan for Tuition Fees – Loans must be set up through your Local Education Authority before going to university and are paid direct to the institution up to the amount of fee being charged. They are not means tested.

Loan for Living Costs (Maintenance) – The maximum value varies depending on where a student studies and lives: from £3,838 per year if living with parents, to £4,950 if living and studying outside of London and up to £6,928 if studying in London and living away from parents. The last 25% of the loan is means tested. The maximum loan entitlement is reduced by receipt of maintenance grant.

Repayment of these loans begins when the course finishes and only when the individual is earning over £15,000 per year and a repayment holiday of up to 5 years can be taken.

For further information visit www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance or call 0845 300 50 90.

Advice and guidance through the Connexions service

Connexions can help your son/daughter by providing:

- Impartial advice on the range of post-18 options
- Help to identify suitable university and college courses
- Access to a post-exam results service – expert advice and information on course vacancies
- Information on local, national and international training and employment opportunities
- Advice on the preparation of CVs, application forms and interview questions
- An explanation of sources of finance.

Useful links

- www.direct.gov.uk
- www.mychoicelondon.co.uk
- www.parentlineplus.org.uk
- www.parentscentre.gov.uk
- www.gotateenager.org.uk
- www.parentpartnership.org.uk
- <http://moneytolearn.direct.gov.uk>
- www.parentchannel.tv

Where you can access the service

Personal Advisers are based in schools, colleges, youth clubs and Connexions One Stop Shops. To find your local Connexions centre visit www.centrallondonconnexions.org.uk or call 020 7938 8080.

Help is also available from Connexions Direct, 8am – 2am, 7 days a week.

Young people, parents and carers can contact the service by calling 080 800 13 2 19*, text 07766 4 13 2 19 or web chat at www.connexions-direct.com.

(*Calls from landlines are free but the mobile networks may charge. Ask the adviser to call you back).

This information is available in alternative formats, call 020 7938 8080.

If you have any comments on this publication, email: info@centrallondonconnexions.org.uk