

# What Next?

How to apply for college or an  
apprenticeship.

A guide for students and parents

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# Quick Check List

**REMEMBER** it is **YOUR** responsibility to apply for college and/or an apprenticeship for September. If you need help or advice, please email: [Cheryl.Smith@bexhillhigh.org](mailto:Cheryl.Smith@bexhillhigh.org) or [Ben.Eldridge@bexhillhigh.org](mailto:Ben.Eldridge@bexhillhigh.org)

To do:



1. Attend assemblies, read prospectuses and visit colleges and training providers to find out about courses, meet tutors, talk to current students and see the facilities on offer. Ask lots of questions!
2. Complete all sections of your personal profile on UCAS Progress by 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016 (You will have a drop down day to work on your profile)
3. Search for and 'favourite' the courses/subjects that you are interested in and the colleges that you want to apply to.
4. Create and submit applications for your chosen colleges (you can apply to as many colleges as you wish) by 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016.
5. Attended interviews from January/February 2017 onwards.
6. Colleges will make a conditional offer of a place based on the exam grades you will need for the courses you have applied for. You can accept more than one provisional place.
7. If you want to apply for an apprenticeship, make sure you have registered on the apprenticeship website. You can start to apply for vacancies from Easter. (See page 15)
8. Once you collect your exam results you will need to make a final decision about which place you wish to accept (if you are holding more than one) and notify the college/s of your decision.

**If your exam grades are better or worse than you expected it is important that you talk to the colleges to make sure you are on right/best course for you.**

# What options are there?

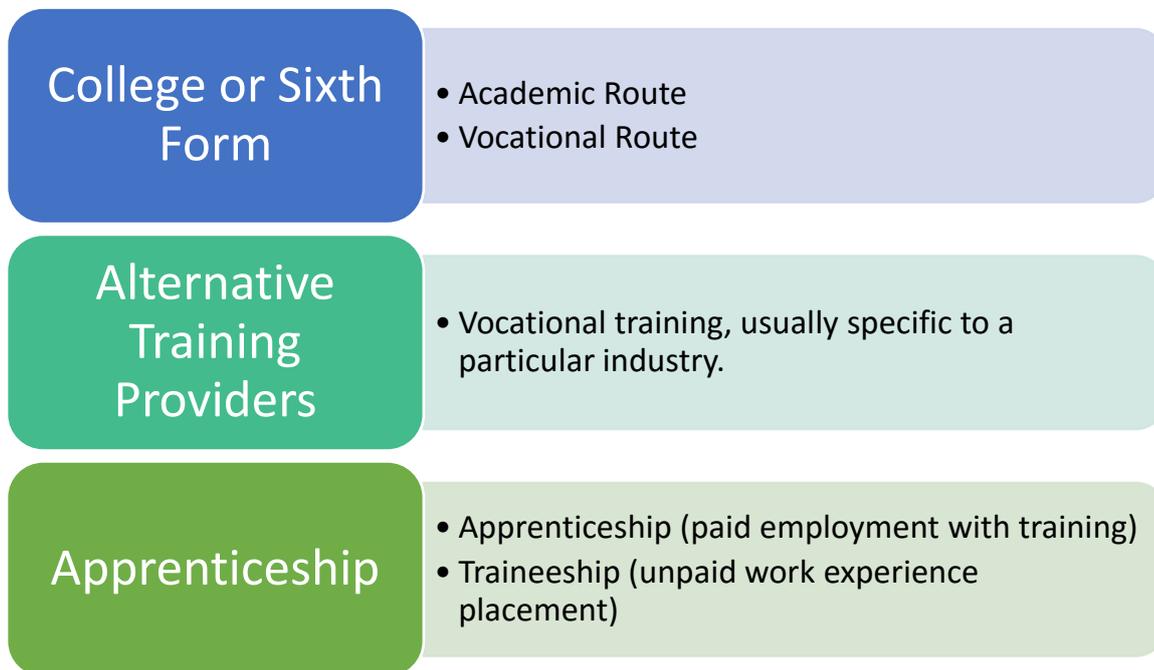
Before you can make a decision about what you want to do once you leave Bexhill Academy you need to know what your options are.

The law requires that all young people remain in some form of education, training or employment with training until the age of 18.

It also requires that if you do not achieve a grade C (or the new grade 4) in maths and/or English, you will be required to continue studying these subjects.

Understandably not all young people know what they want to do when they leave school, so making decisions about what they do next can be very difficult. The more time spent looking at and considering the different options available, the better the chance they will find the right option for them and make a successful transition from school to post 16 education, training or employment.

## The options:



Each of these options will be explored further over the following pages. It is important to remember that at this stage, students do not have to make a choice between them. They can consider them all and apply for a variety of options.

## College or Sixth Form

### Academic Route

**What is the academic route?** **A-levels** are the traditional academic qualifications that follow on from GCSEs. They are available in a wide range of subjects and are a Level 3 qualification. Most colleges encourage students to study three A-levels and they are studied over a two-year period.

**IB (International Baccalaureate)** is an alternative Level 3 qualification that requires students to study six subjects (three at standard level and three at higher level) as well as Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Extended Essay and Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS). This is also studied over a two-year period and is currently offered at Bexhill College.

**What do you need:** To study at Level 3 you will need to obtain a minimum of five GCSEs grades A\*-C (or a grade 4). Some colleges ask for six GCSEs A\*-C and they may also require a grade B in the specific subjects that you want to study. Entry requirements for individual courses are published in college prospectuses.

**Is this option right for me?** A-levels are good for keeping your options open if you do not have a firm idea about what you would like to do as a career. If you are thinking about going to university you will need Level 3 qualifications. If you have a specific career path in mind you can check entry requirements for university courses at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com). A-Levels are all moving towards examinations at the end of two years of study so you need to consider how well this type of study suits you.

## College or Sixth Form

### Vocational Route

**What is the vocational route?** Vocational qualifications such as BTECs or City & Guilds focus of an industry area such as Health & Social Care, Construction or Hospitality and Catering.

Some subjects are available at Entry Level, Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3, so if you do not obtain five A\*-C grades you will still be able to access a vocational course at the appropriate level for you.

Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 courses last one year with the expectation that you would then progress in Year 2 to the next level or look for a traineeship or an apprenticeship.

Level 3 courses are usually studied over a two-year period and are the equivalent qualification to an A-level. A BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma is the equivalent of three A-levels and is usually accepted for entry to university (you would need to check the entry requirements for specific university courses [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) ).

**What do you need?**

Level 3 vocational courses usually require five A\*-C grades including maths and English.

Level 2 vocational courses usually require a range of A\*-D grades.

Level 1 vocational courses usually require a range of E-G grades.

**These grades are a guide only.** Check prospectuses for specific entry requirements as they do vary between colleges and subjects.

### Is this option right for me?

Vocational qualifications are usually based on course work, assignments and practical work carried out as part of the course (some courses do include some exams). They are graded using Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction\*.

Vocational qualifications are good for students who do not perform well in exams, for students who are more practically minded and like to learn in a more hands on way and students who are interested in a particular industry area.

Some people believe that you cannot go to university if you take a vocational qualification but this is not true. Many universities accept vocational qualifications, particularly if you go on to study within the same area.

## Alternative Training Providers

If you have a specific interest in a particular industry area it is always worth exploring the training options that might be available to you. One way of finding out about alternative training providers is to look on [www.apprenticeships-in-sussex.com](http://www.apprenticeships-in-sussex.com) On this website you can search for training providers by industry area.

For anyone considering a career within one of the armed services or you just like the idea of a different experience to college, MPCT - the Military Preparation and Training College based in St Leonards offers a military style training programme [www.mpct.co.uk](http://www.mpct.co.uk)

If you would like to work but lack the skills or experience you need to get an apprenticeship you can consider a traineeship which includes work based training (see page 9).

If you are disengaged from education and/or need to build your confidence The Prince's Trust runs 12 week courses at Sussex Coast College <https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/help-for-young-people/get-job/boost-your-confidence/team-243340>

## Apprenticeships

**What is an apprenticeship?** An apprenticeship is essentially paid employment (a job) with training. For any student wanting to go straight into the world of work this could be the route for you.

There are a few of things that you should be aware of:

As an apprentice a young person is employed and as so, parents are no longer entitled to any child benefit or child tax credits associated to that child.

If you do not obtain a grade 4 or above for maths or English at GCSE, you will be required to study these subjects as part of your training.

The current minimum wage for an apprentice is £3.30 an hour (September 2016). Apprenticeships can pay more so make sure you are aware what the average wage is for the type of apprenticeship you are looking for.

An apprenticeship is not guaranteed as it is a competitive process the same as getting a job. For this reason, we would always recommend that you apply for a college place as an alternative in case you are unable to secure an apprenticeship to start in September. Apprenticeships are advertised all year round so you could carry on applying for apprenticeships even once you have started at college.

**What do you need?** The entry requirements for an apprenticeship vary depending on the type and level of apprenticeship. All vacancies will be advertised with the entry requirements clearly listed.

Apprenticeships are available at Intermediate, Advanced, Higher or Degree level.

**Is this the right option for me?** Are you keen to work, earn money and learn on the job? If you are an apprenticeship might be the route for you. What you need to consider is whether you are mature enough to enter the world of work. As an employee you will be expected to behave in an appropriate manner and demonstrate you have the rights skills and attitudes to succeed in the work place.

You will be earning money but you will not get the long school holidays. You will be gaining valuable work experience but you will have to get to work on time, work hard and impress your boss.

There are many fantastic apprenticeship opportunities so even if you don't think it is quite right for you now, it might be something that you could consider in the future.

See page 15 for how to apply for an apprenticeship.

## Traineeships

### **What is a traineeship?**

A traineeship is an unpaid work based placement that helps students who are not quite ready for an apprenticeship to gain the necessary skills and experience to make them work ready. Functional skills in maths and English would be included as part of any traineeship and some schemes include work on employability skills, help with CVs, interview skills etc... A traineeship is offered over a fixed period of time.

### **What do you need?**

Traineeships are generally offered to young people who do not yet meet the entry requirements for an

apprenticeship. As so it would probably be expected that most GCSE grades would be below a C/4 but you would need to check the entry requirements for different providers. Acceptance onto a traineeship scheme is often by interview when a young person would be expected to demonstrate their interest and motivation for the programme.

**Is this the right option for me?** If you would like an apprenticeship but don't think you will get the grades or feel you would benefit from gaining a bit of experience before applying for an apprenticeship, this might be the route for you. If you are not sure whether you are quite ready for the world of work this would give you the opportunity to try it and see. As with all options it is important that you talk to the people who run these programmes so you have a really good idea about what they involve, what would be expected of you and what level of support the programme offers you.

# Which option is right for me?

The only way to work out which option is right for you is to explore what each has to offer and think about which meets your needs. You can explore your options in all of the following ways:

## **Assemblies**

During the autumn term most of the local colleges will come to take an assembly to tell you about what they have to offer you. Make sure you attend these assemblies so you can begin to make decisions about which ones you would like to find out more about.

## **Prospectuses**

All of the colleges will have prospectus detailing the courses that they are offering together with information about the facilities that they offer, extracurricular activities and entry requirements etc... Make sure that you get hold of a copy (most will be given out during their assembly) and read it! Make a note of any courses or subjects that you might be interested in.

## **Careers Fair**

As part of our Year 11 careers drop down day this autumn we will be holding our third annual careers fair. Most local education and training providers together with local employers will be present for you to ask questions, pick up information and consider the range of careers on offer. It is really important that you make the most of this opportunity to talk to the stand holders, ask questions and make plans for your future.

## **Open Evenings / Events**

All of the colleges will be offering a number of open evenings or open days. It is really important that you visit any that you are interested in so that you are able to make an informed decision about which is the right college for you.

To make the most of open events, make sure you have looked at the prospectus beforehand, identify any courses that you might be interested in and make sure that you go and visit all the subjects on your list so you can meet the tutors, ask questions about the course and talk to students already taking those subjects.

# How to apply for college using UCAS Progress

**What is UCAS Progress?** UCAS Progress is an online system for students to apply for college places (it is a development of UCAS which is the online system for applying for university places).

It allows both the schools and colleges to track the progress of applications and student destinations.

We used it for the first time in 2015 with 95% of students successfully applying through UCAS Progress.

**Is it easy to use?**

It is really easy to use but if there are any problems either Mr Eldridge or Cheryl Smith will be able to help you.

**How do I log in?**

Each student should already have received a unique login username and password (by email to their school account) which they will need to access their account on UCAS Progress.

**Can I use UCAS Progress without my login?**

It is possible to use the search facility to look at the different courses on offer without logging in, but in order to 'favourite' the courses you are interested in and create and submit applications you will need your login details.

**What if I forget my login details or password?**

If you forget your login details your form tutor should be able to give you your username and reset your password. If they are unable to help you, please contact Mr Eldridge, Mrs Gallestegui or Cheryl Smith

Most local colleges accept applications through UCAS Progress. If you are unable to apply to your chosen college or sixth form using this system, please email [Cheryl.smith@bexhillhigh.org](mailto:Cheryl.smith@bexhillhigh.org) with the details so we can add your application to your account. If you have any questions or problems with using UCAS Progress please contact Mr Eldridge, Mrs Gallestegui or Cheryl Smith.

Step 1

• **Completing the Personal Profile**

- Once the profile has been completed the same information can then be used for multiple applications. There are five sections to complete:
- Personal Information including Contact Details
- Qualifications
- Work Experience
- Personal Statement
- The reference will be completed by their form tutor

Step 2

• **Search for courses**

- Using the search facility students will need to search for the courses/subjects that they are interested in. You can search by subject or by college. Once they know which subjects they are interested in they will need to 'favourite' the courses at the colleges where they would like to apply.
- When you create an application you will only be able to select courses that you have selected as your favourites so it is important that you select all the courses that you are interested in.

Step 3

• **Creating and submitting an application**

- To create an application you simply click on the applications tab. You then select the college to which you wish to apply and click on the courses you wish to apply for. You will need to put these in order of preference and confirm your choice.
- Some colleges have a number of additional questions that you will need to answer.
- Your application is then ready to submit.

Step 4

• **What happens next?**

- Once you have submitted an application it will say 'Processing'
- When the college have received your application it will change to 'Acknowledged'
- You will then receive an invitation to interview either by letter or email.
- Once you have attended an interview, offers of places will appear on your profile which you can then accept or reject. It is okay to accept more than one place if you have not made your mind up where you want to go or what you want to study.

**Please note:** You can only submit one application to each college so if you change your mind about the subjects you have applied for, you will need to **withdraw** your application and submit a new one with the correct subjects entered.

# Where can I apply?

The following is a list of our local colleges and education providers. You can apply to any college or sixth form so make sure you consider a range of options even if you think you know where you want to go. The main thing you will need to consider is how you will get there. There may be help available with college and transport costs (see page 17 and check with the college direct).

Bexhill College	<a href="http://www.bexhillcollege.ac.uk">www.bexhillcollege.ac.uk</a>
Sussex Coast College, Hastings	<a href="http://www.sussexcoast.ac.uk">www.sussexcoast.ac.uk</a>
Sussex Downs College, Eastbourne & Lewes	<a href="http://www.sussexdowns.ac.uk">www.sussexdowns.ac.uk</a>
Rye Studio School	<a href="http://www.ryestudioschool.co.uk">www.ryestudioschool.co.uk</a>
Plumpton College, Plumpton, Netherfield & Flimwell	<a href="http://www.plumpton.ac.uk">www.plumpton.ac.uk</a>
UTC Harbourside, Newhaven	<a href="http://www.utc-harbourside.org">www.utc-harbourside.org</a>
Ark Sixth Form East Sussex, Hastings	<a href="http://www.ark6thformeastsussex.org">www.ark6thformeastsussex.org</a>
Gildredge House, Eastbourne	<a href="http://www.gildredgehouse.org.uk">www.gildredgehouse.org.uk</a>
MPCT, St Leonards	<a href="http://www.mpct.co.uk">www.mpct.co.uk</a>
DV8, Bexhill & Brighton	<a href="http://www.dv8sussex.com">www.dv8sussex.com</a>
Moira House, Eastbourne (Fee paying school) Check website for details of scholarships on offer.	<a href="http://www.moirahouse.co.uk">www.moirahouse.co.uk</a>
Bedes Senior School, Upper Dicker (Fee paying school) Check website for details of scholarships on offer.	<a href="http://www.bedes.org">www.bedes.org</a>

## **Further Afield:**

Some of our students have gone on to specialist colleges further afield, these include:

The Brit School, Croydon

Welbeck Defence Sixth Form College, Leicestershire

Sparsholt College, Hampshire

# Open Evenings / Events

The following are the open evenings and open events we are currently aware of. We try to keep these updated on the school website and send out call parent messages to remind you where possible.

<b>Bexhill College</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> October	6pm-8.30pm	
	1 <sup>st</sup> November	6pm-8.30pm	
<b>Sussex Coast College</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> November	5pm-8pm	Station Plaza Campus
	10 <sup>th</sup> November	5pm-8pm	Automotive Vehicle Centre
	24 <sup>th</sup> November	5pm-8pm	Ore Valley Campus
	8 <sup>th</sup> December	5pm-7pm	Station Plaza Campus
<b>Sussex Downs College</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> October	4.30pm-8pm	Lewes Campus
	8 <sup>th</sup> October	10am-1pm	Lewes Campus
	25 <sup>th</sup> January	4.30pm-8pm	Lewes Campus
	14 <sup>th</sup> October	4.30pm-8pm	Eastbourne Campus
	15 <sup>th</sup> October	10am-1pm	Eastbourne Campus
	1 <sup>st</sup> February	4.30pm-8pm	Eastbourne Campus
<b>Rye Studio School</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> October	5pm-8pm	
<b>Plumpton College</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> October	9am-12.30pm	Plumpton
	5 <sup>th</sup> November	9am-12.30pm	Plumpton
	7 <sup>th</sup> January	9am-12.30pm	Plumpton
	11 <sup>th</sup> February	9.30-1pm	Netherfield Centre

# Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are becoming increasingly popular and there are some really good apprenticeships available. If you are keen to go out to work, earn your own money and train for a recognised qualification an apprenticeship may be for you.

At 16 there are two levels of apprenticeship available:

Intermediate – level 2

Advanced – level 3

Higher and Degree Apprenticeships are available from the age of 18 once you have completed level 3 qualifications.

Applying for an apprenticeship is like applying for a job, it is competitive and you will need to be able to convince an employer that you are the right person for the apprenticeship on offer. You will need to be able to complete a strong application, present yourself well at an interview and evidence the skills and experience that the vacancy requires.

The current minimum wage for an apprenticeship is £3.30 an hour (September 2016). Some apprenticeships pay more than this, particularly if it is an advanced level apprenticeship.

## **Searching for vacancies**

If you are interested in finding an apprenticeship there are two websites that will help you in your search:

[www.apprenticeships-in-sussex.com](http://www.apprenticeships-in-sussex.com)

This website allows you to access information about local training providers and has a live feed of apprenticeship vacancies in the county. It is a good way to keep a check on current vacancies which are searchable by job type.

[www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)

Clicking on any of the vacancies will take you through to the national apprenticeships website. This is the site where all vacancies are posted. You can register on this site and select the type of apprenticeships you are interested in and you will be sent notifications of any new vacancies. Each vacancy will give a clear description of the job on offer, the entry requirements, start date etc... It is recommended that you can

start to apply for apprenticeships from Easter (but check the start date specified on the job description).

### **Finding your own apprenticeship**

Another way of finding an apprenticeship is to find someone who is willing to take you on and then put them in touch with one of the training providers. It could be someone that you know, a friend of your parents etc... but employers like young people who are proactive so don't be scared to approach employers directly. Explain that you are keen to find an apprenticeship within their industry and ask whether they would consider taking you on.

### **Apprenticeship Vacancy Board**

From April we have an apprenticeship vacancies board advertising any vacancies that we find out about. We also post them on the school website so keep a look out and check each week for anything new.

### **Support with apprenticeship applications**

The Medway Youth Trust's Youth & Employability Service (YES) has funding to support young people with apprenticeship applications. If you would like help in completing applications or support with any part of the process, please get in touch with them. You can follow them on Facebook where they post apprenticeship vacancies.

YES, Hastings Centre, 11 Cambridge Road, Hastings TN34 1DJ

01323 410803

Email: [enquiries@themytrust.org](mailto:enquiries@themytrust.org)

<http://www.facebook.com/YESeastsussex>

### **A Parent's Guide to Apprenticeships**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/490339/2016 Parents guide to apprenticeships NAS-P-100139.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/490339/2016_Parents_guide_to_apprenticeships_NAS-P-100139.pdf)

### **Apprenticeships pack for 16-19 year olds**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/473703/Apprenticeship Pack for 16-19 year olds.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/473703/Apprenticeship_Pack_for_16-19_year_olds.pdf)

This is a 60-page workbook produced by the government which helps young people take a detailed look at apprenticeships.

# Where can I get help?

## **1. Form Tutors**

Form tutors should be able to help you if you need your UCAS Progress login details or to reset your password. They should also be able to help you if you have any questions about completing your personal profile.

## **2. Sixth Form and College Student Services**

If you have a specific question about the courses that are on offer, open events, travel bursaries etc... you are probably best advised to contact the college in question directly. There is a messaging service on UCAS Progress once you have submitted an application, or ring and ask to speak to student services.

## **3. Mr Eldridge and Mrs Gallastegui**

If you have a problem with UCAS Progress that your form tutor is unable to resolve, please contact Mr Eldridge or Mrs Gallastegui.

## **4. Cheryl Smith, Careers Adviser**

If you are unsure about your options or subject choices, you can email or make an appointment to see our careers adviser Cheryl Smith.

[Cheryl.Smith@bexhillhigh.org](mailto:Cheryl.Smith@bexhillhigh.org)

## **5. Information about Travel Bursaries**

<https://www.c360.org.uk/workandmoney/fesupport> If you are worried about the cost of college or transport to get to college this link contains information about the 16-19 Bursary Fund. Do not discount any college on the cost of transport until you have discussed your situation with the college in question who may have discretionary grants available.

## **6. Scholarships**

If you are particularly academic or have a talent in art, drama or sport there may be an opportunity to apply for a scholarship at a private school such as Bedes School. If you are interested in discussing the possibility of applying for a scholarship please email [Andrea.Gallastegui@bexhillhigh.org](mailto:Andrea.Gallastegui@bexhillhigh.org)

# Useful Websites

[www.ucasprogress.com](http://www.ucasprogress.com)

This is the website for searching for courses and applying to colleges.

<http://russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college/>

Russell Group Universities publish a really useful document called **'Informed Choices'** which provides a guide to the A-level subjects that top universities look for when applying to study specific subjects.

[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

UCAS is the website where you submit applications for university but it also contains information about the courses on offer and what the entry requirements are. If you are considering a specific career or a number of different options, it is important that you check you are choosing the right A-level subjects for the courses you might want to apply for.

[www.allaboutschooleavers.co.uk](http://www.allaboutschooleavers.co.uk)

All About School Leavers contains lots of information for school leavers including apprenticeships and school leaver programmes.

[www.barclayslifeskills.com](http://www.barclayslifeskills.com)

Barclays LifeSkills contains lots of information and activities for young people to work through. It is aimed at helping them to understand and develop the skills they need for the work place.

[www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk](http://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk)

Contains reviews of apprenticeships offered by some of the top companies.

[www.wheretheworkis.org](http://www.wheretheworkis.org)

This website allows you to explore the number of job vacancies for different industries that are available within different UK regions and links the information to earnings and level of qualification.