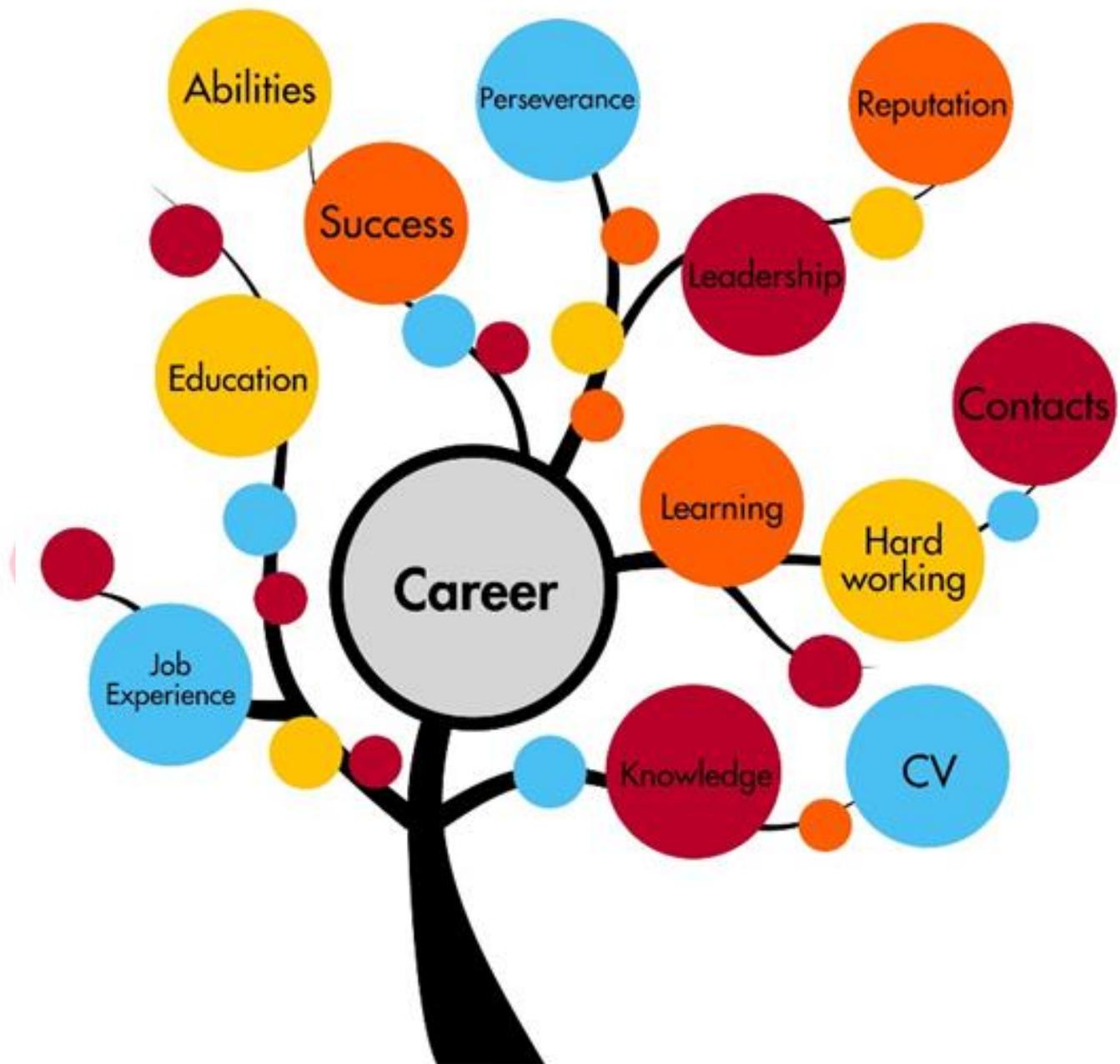


# WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS WHEN I LEAVE BUCKLER'S MEAD ACADEMY?



**A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

# 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. This can include:

**Full-Time Study** – this could be a qualification taken at a sixth form, college or training provider, totalling 540 hours of learning time per year, or around 18 hours per week. You can choose to study A-Levels or a vocational course in a huge variety of subjects.

**Apprenticeships** – this involves paid work for an employer while 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. You can apply for an apprenticeship directly via <https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch> or via college websites.

**Traineeships** – this is 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 but they are not paid employment.

**Part-Time Study with Employment or Volunteering** – this could be working in a full-time job (classed as any work that takes place over more than two months and is over 20 hours per week) or volunteering (again, over 20 hours per week) while studying part-time at a college or training provider (totalling 280 hours of learning per year).

## T-Levels- From 2020

T-levels will be introduced as an alternative to vocational courses and a technical version of A Levels. They will be worth the same as A Levels and will be accepted by universities. T-Levels involve extended technical industry work placements as well as a chance to develop industry specific skills in a chosen area of expertise.

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

Education and training in the UK are 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 - [www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund](http://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund)

Many organisations also have their own financial support for students, so check first!

**Useful Links:** <http://www.parentalguidance.org.uk/help-information/raising-the-participation-age-rpa>  
<https://www.gov.uk/know-when-you-can-leave-school>

# Where shall I go?

## **Sixth Form College**

Sixth form colleges typically focus on A-Level (Advanced Level) qualifications – two-year courses that end in an overall examination and a grade from A\*-E, with a similar structure to GCSEs but looking at the subject in a lot more depth. Students can study:

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

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

**Entry Requirements** – Most sixth form colleges usually ask students to have 5 GCSEs at Grade 4/C or above but make sure that you do your research, as some courses, such as A-Level Maths, Physics, Biology and Chemistry, require students to achieve a Grade 6 at GCSE in order to demonstrate their deeper understanding of the subject.

## **Some Local Options-**

Gryphon- <https://www.gryphon.dorset.sch.uk/sixth-form>

Huish Episcopi- <http://www.huishepiscopi.net/huish-sixth>

Wadham- <https://www.wadhamschool.co.uk/sixth-form.html>

## **College**

Colleges and training providers usually offer a mixture of A Levels and BTECs or other vocational qualifications that focus on a specific area of study in a practical way, which can include:

**Hair and Beauty, Childcare, Construction Skills, Business Management, Games Design, Digital Media, Health and Social Care, Music, Automotive Engineering, Food Technology, Fashion Design, Sports, Animal Care, Uniformed Public Services, Performing Arts and Photography**

### **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/D or above

**Level 3** – Usually requires 5 GCSEs at Grade 4/C or above

### **Some Local Options-**

Yeovil College- <https://yeovil.ac.uk/>

Strode College- <https://www.strode-college.ac.uk/>

Bridgwater and Taunton College- <https://www.btc.ac.uk/>

Kingston Maurward- <https://www.kmc.ac.uk/college/>

Exeter College- <https://www.exe-coll.ac.uk/>

Richard Huish College- <https://www.huish.ac.uk/>

Bath College- <https://www.bathcollege.ac.uk/>

## **Apprenticeships**

Involve working for an employer in a specific role while being trained to do the job by experienced staff, in a combination of on-the-job and off-the-job training at a college or training provider (this must be at least 20% of the apprenticeship).

Apprenticeships must be at least one year long and all apprentices must be paid a minimum of £3.70 per hour (although many companies pay more!) Apprenticeships can now be undertaken in a huge variety of industries, including **Engineering, Graphic Design, Software Development, Hair and Beauty, Healthcare** and **Catering** (and can be started as soon as an individual turns 16 and has left full-time education, although you can apply beforehand).

Apprenticeships come in four different 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+

**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**

Designed for students aged 16-24 who do not have the qualifications, experience or skills to start an apprenticeship but are interested in progressing on to one in the future. They involve up to six months of study, including a work placement, qualifications in Maths and English 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.

# How do I Apply?

Students will begin applying for their post-16 options in the Autumn as soon as the term begins and the application process for sixth form, college and apprenticeships takes place throughout the course of the academic year.

This is a **typical** timeline for Sixth Form or College application:

**October** – Sixth form and college courses for visible on UCAS Progress and on college websites.

**January** – Probable closing date for sixth form applications

**NOTE:** Colleges do not have the same deadlines but early applications are still advised to secure the courses you want!

**November-April** – Students begin to receive interviews and offers from sixth forms and colleges.

**September** – Courses begin and new applications close in readiness for the next academic year.

This is a **typical** timeline for Apprenticeship applications:

**October**- students research prospective employers, send out CVs and register on [www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk)

**December**- deadline for some apprenticeships such as Leonardo Helicopters.

**January-July**- Applications received and potential candidates notified for all vacancies via college websites and [www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk)

**July- September**- apprenticeships begin.

## Key Points to Remember

- 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 don't exactly match the old grades, colleges will mostly view them as follows:  
**9- 7 = A\*- A      6 = B      4-5 = C      3-1 = D and below**
- Vocational qualifications like **BTEC** and **VCERT** match up with GCSEs as follows:  
**L1 = GCSE grades 1-3 (Pass - Distinction)**  
**L2 = GCSE grades 4-9 (Pass – Distinction)**
- If you aren't sure about something, speak to the Careers Advisor (Mrs Howe) or to the college/sixth form where you are applying.
- Early research is key! Don't leave anything to the last minute and attend as many open events as you can.

### Where can this option take me in the future?

If you are thinking about a destination after post-16, such as university or higher/degree apprenticeships, it is important to know whether the qualifications you are taking from 16-18 can help you to progress on to these pathways. Use websites like <https://university.which.co.uk/> or <https://successatschool.org/> to find out whether the course you want to do after Year 11 will allow you to progress on to what you want to do afterwards or speak with staff at the sixth form, college or apprenticeship you are applying to in order to get further details.

For example:

- If you want to study Dentistry at university, you usually need to take A-Levels in Chemistry and Biology/Maths/Physics.
- Some universities do not accept BTEC L3 Extended Diplomas (although 95% do)
- Apprenticeships have varying entry requirements – some ask for 5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above while others ask for 2-3 A-Levels

### Useful Websites-

[www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk)

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

[www.careerpilot.org.uk/](http://www.careerpilot.org.uk/)

[www.thestudentroom.co.uk/gcse/exams/new-gcse-grades-explained](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/gcse/exams/new-gcse-grades-explained)

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

[www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk)

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

### Any Questions?

Come and see Mrs. Howe the Careers and Work Experience Coordinator in the Careers Office:

Monday-Thursday 01935 424454

rhowe@bucklersmeadacademy.com

@CareersBMA on Twitter



# BMA Timeline for Applications

## Years 7-10

Research various careers and post-16 options through the BMA curriculum, trips/visits, college open days, encounters with employers, Work Experience and visiting speakers.

## September/ October Year 11

Attend as many College Open Days as possible and make sure CVs are up to date. Send/email CVs to prospective apprenticeship employers and register on [www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk)

## October/November Year 11

Apply for college courses, ensuring you have a first and second choice of course and college.

## December Year 11

Some apprenticeship deadlines for a September start (e.g. Leonardo's) Aim to have college applications completed before the end of the autumn term, even if you plan to apply for an apprenticeship. College Interviews start.

## February-April Year 11

Apply for apprenticeships with a June-September start date. College Interviews continue.

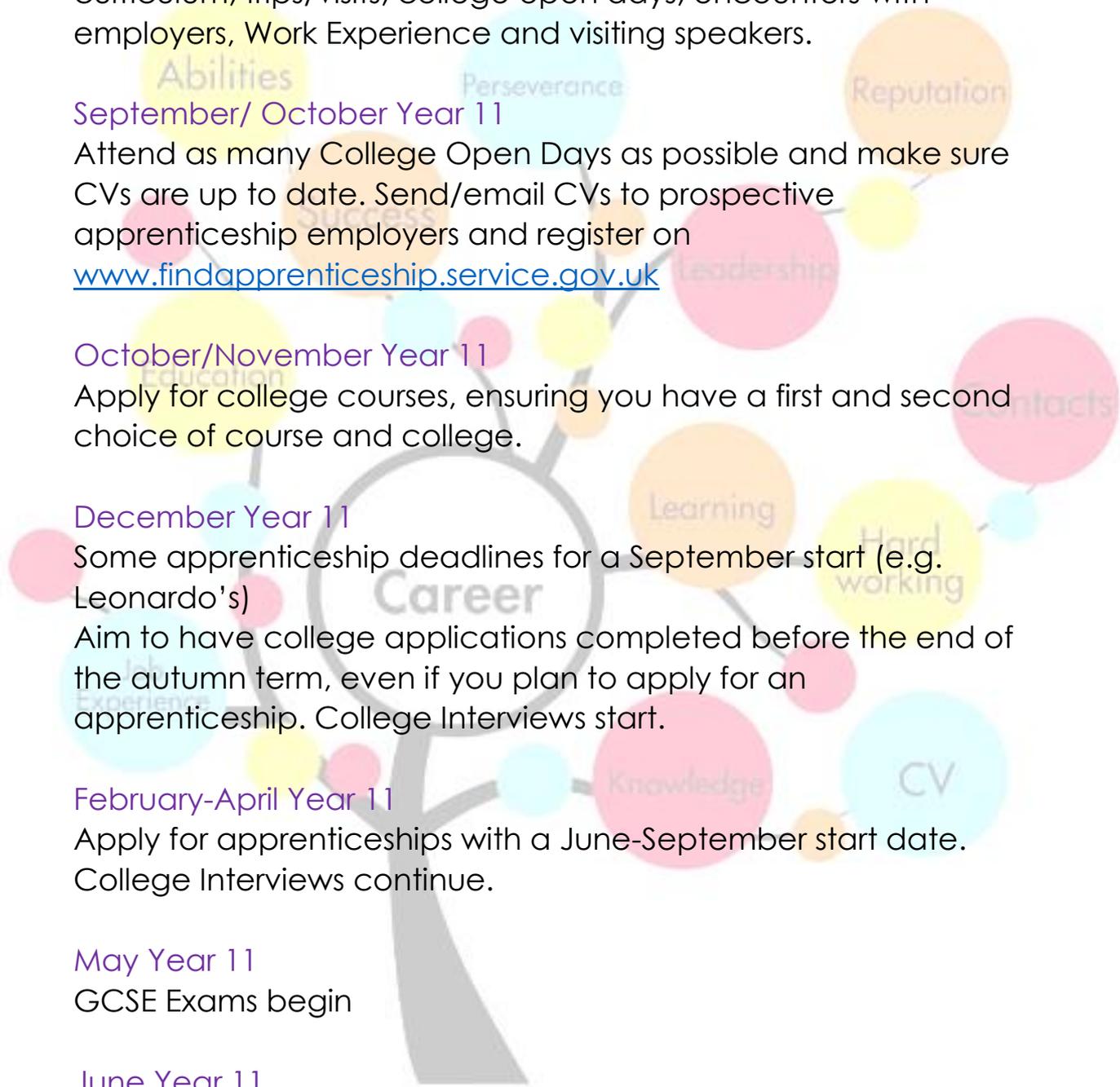
## May Year 11

GCSE Exams begin

## June Year 11

GCSE Exams finish. Some apprenticeships begin.

**By September, all students should be in education, training or employment.**



## Qualification Levels Guide – GCSE to Degree Level

|                             |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>L6</b>                   | <p><b>University Degree</b><br/>(BA/BSc/BEng)</p>  | <p><b>University Degree</b><br/>(BA/BSc/BEng)</p>  | <p><b>Degree Apprenticeship</b><br/>(NVQ L5 + L6)</p>  |
| <b>Grades Needed:</b>       | Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4/5 and 2-3 A-Levels/BTEC L3 Extended Diploma (check first!) | Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4/5 and 2-3 A-Levels/BTEC L3 Extended Diploma (check first!) | Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4/5 and 2-3 A-Levels/BTEC L3 Extended Diploma (check first!) |
| <b>L5</b>                   | <p>Foundation Degree<br/>(FdA, FSc)</p> <p>HND (Higher National Diploma – L5)</p>                | <p>Foundation Degree<br/>(FdA, FSc)</p> <p>HND (Higher National Diploma – L5)</p>                | <p><b>Higher/Degree Apprenticeship</b><br/>(NVQ L4 + L5)</p>                                     |
| <b>L4</b>                   | <p>HNC (Higher National Certificate – L4)</p>  | <p>HNC (Higher National Certificate – L4)</p>  |  |
| <b>Grades Needed:</b>       | Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4 and 1-2 A-Levels/ L3 Diploma/Extended Diploma              | Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4 and 1-2 A-Levels/ L3 Diploma/Extended Diploma              | Usually GCSE Maths/English at grade 4 and 1-2 A-Levels/ L3 Diploma/Extended Diploma              |
| <b>L3</b>                   | <p><b>A-Levels</b></p>   | <p>L3 Diploma / Extended Diploma (BTEC or other) / Access to HE courses</p>                      | <p><b>Advanced Apprenticeship (NVQ L3)</b></p>   |
| <b>Entry Grades Needed:</b> | Usually 5 GCSEs at grade 5 or higher, including Maths and English                                | 5 GCSEs at grade 4 or higher (usually including Maths and English)                               | Usually at least 3-5 GCSEs (but sometimes no formal qualifications)                              |
| <b>L2</b>                   | <p><b>GCSEs (grades 9-4)</b></p>   | <p>L2 National / BTEC Diploma / Functional Skills</p>  | <p><b>Intermediate Apprenticeship (NVQ L2)</b></p>   |
| <b>Entry Grades Needed:</b> | None   | 3-4 GCSEs at grade 3 or higher (usually including Maths and English)                             | Usually none, although sometimes GCSE Maths and English and a skills test                        |
| <b>L1</b>                   | <p><b>GCSEs (grades 3-1)</b></p>   | <p>L1 Diploma / Functional Skills</p>  | <p><b>Traineeship</b><br/>(preparation for apprenticeship)</p>                                   |
| <b>Entry Grades Needed:</b> | None   | None (sometimes basic Maths and English)   | None   |
| <b>Entry Level 3</b>        | <p><b>Key Stage 3</b></p>  | <p><b>E3 Diploma (Foundation)</b></p>  | –  |
| <b>Entry Grades Needed:</b> | None   | None   | –  |
|                             | School / 6 <sup>th</sup> Form  | College / Further Education  | Apprenticeships  |