



Year 11 Applications Parent/Carer Quick Guide

This guide is designed to help make sense of the application process and next steps.



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Contents

We have put together this booklet to answers some of the common questions about year 11 applications and their next steps. In this booklet you will find answers to the following questions and more:

When will they complete their application?

What will they need to do?

How will they make their application?

Where do they need to apply to?

Who will help them?

If you cannot find an answer please contact our careers team (contact information can be found at the back of this booklet).

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The Application Journey & Next Steps

The application process can seem complex and often a confusing jumble of different terms, courses, and levels. At Sheffield Springs Academy we provide support that starts as early as year 10. Below you will find a map of the key steps.

Year 10

- All year 10 students are offered one-to-one careers interviews to discuss career aspirations.
- Careers activity to explore a range of post-16 providers.

**September
October**

- All year 11 students are offered one-to-one careers interviews to discuss options and plan next steps.
- Letters sent home with Open Day and other key information.

**October
November**

- Further meetings offered to students if needed.
- Targeted meetings for those students interested in apprenticeships and work-based learning.
- Sheffield Progress introduction and preparation sessions.

**December
January**

- Year 11 Futures Day: students will complete their applications for Colleges and Sixth-Forms, and at same time complete a CV, cover letter, etc.
- One-to-one support for struggling students.

**February
March
April**

- Year 11 Futures Day: follow up supporting students that were absent or unable to complete application.
- Supporting student preparation for interviews.
- Providers begin to offer interviews and places.
- One-to-one support for struggling students.

**May
June
July
August**

- Apprenticeships vacancies begin to be advertised.
- Providers offer interviews and places.
- GCSE Exams and study interventions.
- Results day and after Springs support.

Different Progression Options Available

Sixth-Form

Sixth-Form: A sixth-form is a post-16 provision attached to a school, offering a range of different courses that are typically more academic.

Offered Courses: A-Levels, BTECs, Cambridge Technicals, T-Level, Extended Projects.

Learning Environment: As sixth-forms are attached to schools, the support available is similar to what you receive now, and you will be based in the school. Teachers are also more involved and easily contactable.

Sixth-Form College

Sixth-Form College: A sixth-form college is a post-16 institution that is not attached to an 11–16 school. These colleges can offer a specialised education or a wider range of courses, depending on their particular goals.

Offered Courses: A-Levels, BTECs, Cambridge Technicals, T-Levels, Extended Projects

Learning Environment: Sixth-form colleges offer a college-like environment, but because they are usually smaller, it can feel more like a school.

Further Education College

What is a FE College: A Further Education (FE) college provides education for anyone aged 16 and older. They often offer both academic and vocational courses and can vary in size.

Offered Courses: A-Levels, BTECs, T-Levels, NVQs, Technical/Vocational Certificates

Learning Environment: Due to the wide age range and varied experience of learners, you need to be independent, able to manage your own time, and seek help if needed.

Different Progression Options Available

Training Provider

What is a Training Provider: A training provider is perhaps the most varied type of provider, as they focus on delivering specific training or supporting particular businesses.

Offered Courses: NVQs, BTECs, Extended Projects, Technical/Vocational Certificate, GCSE equivalents

Learning Environment: The learning environment can vary greatly, from classroom-based learning to practical lessons. This includes differences in class sizes and where you will study. Make sure to check with the provider to find out how they deliver their courses.

Apprenticeships

What is a Apprenticeship: An apprenticeship is available to anyone over the age of 16 and combines working and earning a salary with studying at a local provider or college.

Offered Courses: Bricklaying, Engineering, Nursing, and a constantly growing number of other courses. Available from Level 2 to Degree Apprenticeships.

Learning Environment: Because you balance working and learning, you could be studying in a college environment or learning at home in your own time.

Job Based Training

What is on the job learning: Some career paths do not offer apprenticeships or have specific college or sixth-form courses. In these cases, you can work and learn part-time to achieve the necessary qualifications.

Qualifications include: Forklift Driver License, NVQs, CSCS card, etc.

Learning Environment: Often, you will need to learn on your own in your own time. This means you need to be focused and have good time management skills.

Educational Levels and Language in the UK

The UK defines education by levels, but these are also referred to by other names in schools, which can be confusing. Here are some descriptions to help clarify!

Higher Education	Level 8	Doctorate, NVQ, Postgraduate Diploma/Certificate
	Level 7	Masters Degree, Degree Apprenticeship, NVQ, Postgraduate Diploma/Certificate
	Level 6	Bachelors Degree, Degree Apprenticeship, NVQ, Graduate Certificate
	Level 5	HND, Diploma of HE, Foundation Degree, NVQ, Higher Apprenticeship
	Level 4	HNC, Certificate of HE, NVQ, Higher Apprenticeships, Foundation Certificate
Further Education	Level 3	A-Levels, Advanced Apprenticeships, BTEC Level 3, Vocational Diploma/Certificate, NVQ, Access HE Diploma, Music Grades 6
	Level 2	GCSEs (Grades 9,8,7,6,5,4), Intermediate Apprenticeships, BTEC , NVQ, Music Grades 4 and 5, Technical Qualification, etc
Foundation Education	Level 1	Vocational Diploma, BTEC , Traineeship, NVQ, ESOL, Functional Skill, GCSEs (Grades 3,2,1), Music Grades 1,2 and 3, etc
	Entry Level 3	
	Entry Level 2	Skills For Life, Functional Skills, Essential Skills, ESOL, etc
	Entry Level 1	

Alongside levels you will also come across the term Vocational Further Education and Higher Education which can be confusing below you can find explanations to help you when researching potential courses:

Vocational Education: Any education that provides skills and training for a specific job or trade, often blending theoretical knowledge with hands-on, practical experience. Including placements and managed work experience.

Further Education: Any education for those under 18 is compulsory and usually involves studying at Level 2 or Level 3. After age 18, education becomes voluntary and typically includes any further study or training at Level 3 or above. This is normally undertaken at a college or sixth-form.

Higher Education: Higher education includes any voluntary study at Level 4 or above. This is not just about going to university and spending three or four years getting a degree. Many colleges and other institutions offer higher education options, which can include HNCs, NVQs, Diplomas, Apprenticeships, or Technical Certificates.

Different Courses Available

When students leave the academy, they can choose from a wide range of courses and qualifications. The table below provides an overview of some of the most common options and the study levels available.

Please note that post-16 qualifications are currently undergoing significant changes. Some Level 3 BTEC qualifications are being phased out, while new qualifications, including T Levels and other technical pathways, are being introduced. We strongly recommend checking the most up-to-date course information with your chosen provider and attending open days wherever possible. Our Careers Team is available to offer advice and support throughout the decision-making process.

Type of Qualification	Entry Level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
A-Levels				
V-Levels				
T-Levels				
BTEC Nationals				
Cambridge Nationals/Technicals				
Apprenticeships				
T-Level Foundation Qualification				
Foundation Certificate				
Occupational Certificate				
Function Skills				
Music/Dance Grades				
National Vocational Qualification				
ESOL				

An Insight Into Applying for College/ Sixth-Form...

How do I make my application?

Here at Sheffield Springs the primary way that you will apply for post-16 courses is using Sheffield Progress which is run and supported by Sheffield City Council. For applying outside the Sheffield City Region or to providers that are not on the platform you will need to complete the providers own application form.

'But school will help me right?' Yes, we can help you but the responsibility to apply is yours!

How do I pick my options?

There are many different routes and providers that you can choose from for post-16 and they each have a different environment, way of learning or type of course/subjects.

You may have a particular course in sixth-form in mind, but you need to consider all your options!

What are my options?

- Sixth-Forms: Sheffield South East, All Saints, King Edward...
- Further Education Colleges: Sheffield College...
- Sixth-Form Colleges: UTC, Longley Park...
- Training Providers: NACRO, SUFC, SWFCCP, CTS, Source Academy...

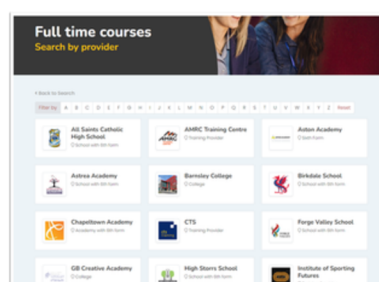
How can I find out more?

- Sheffield Progress can let you view many options.
- School and college websites can let you view their offer.
- Attending open days and evenings lets you speak to staff and see facilities.
- Speaking to the careers team.

Sheffield Progress a quick look!

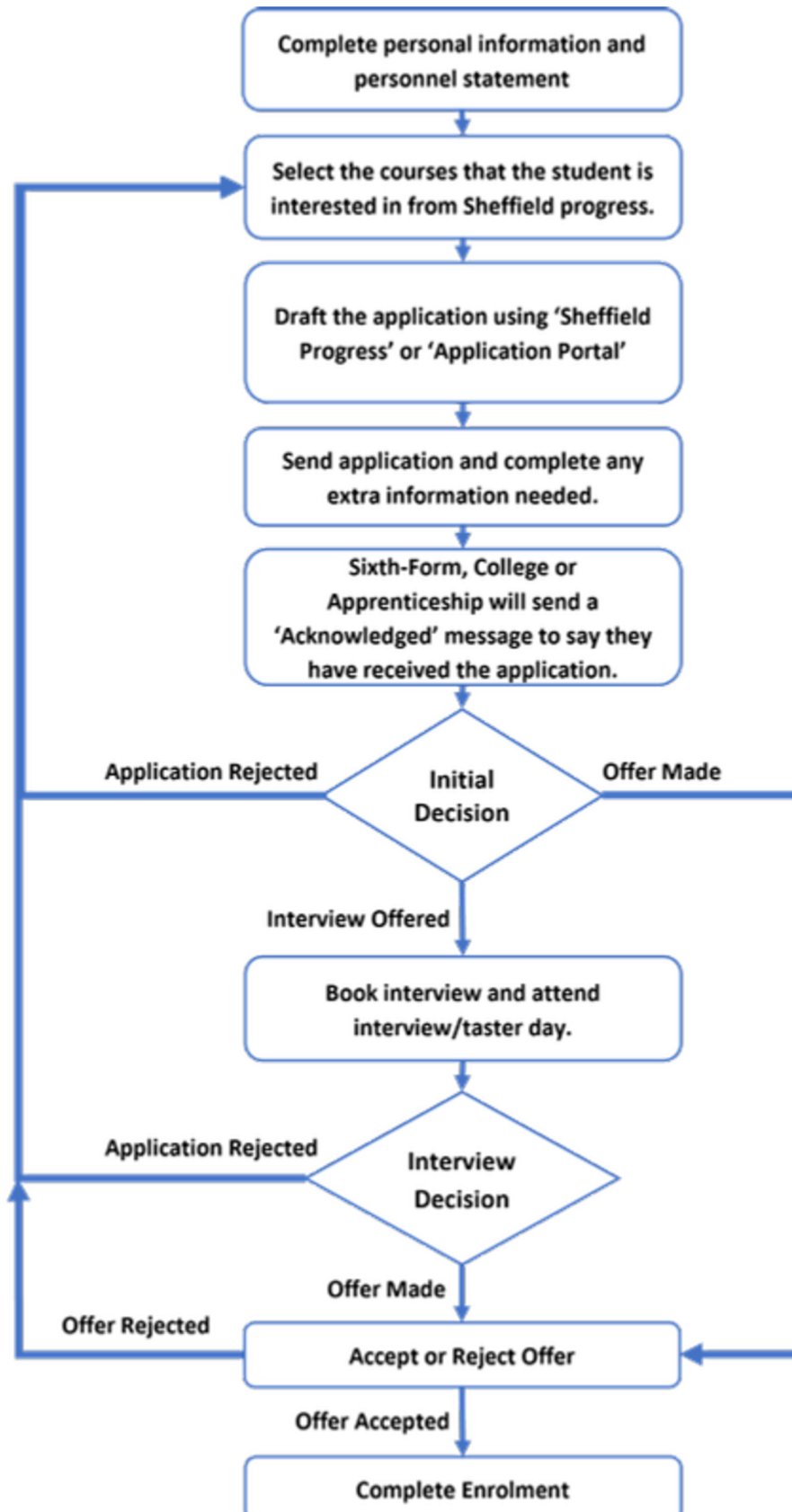
Most students will use Sheffield Progress, an application system that is managed by Sheffield Council. You will receive your own login information and can access through your phone, computer, or in school. Through the portal you can search for courses, view where you can apply to, look for open days and evenings and finally make and monitor your applications!

www.sheffieldprogress.co.uk



An Insight Into Applying for College/ Sixth-Form...

Making your post-16 application can seem daunting and confusing with all the options available. Below is a flowchart that outlines the application steps and key points/decisions you will need to make!



An Insight Into Applying for Apprenticeships

How to you apply for an apprenticeship?

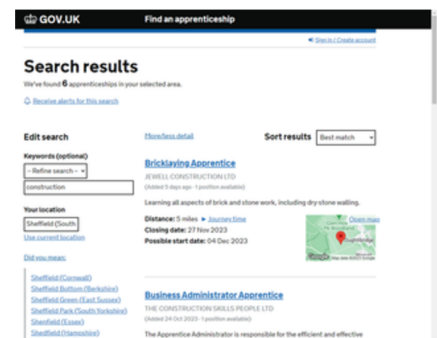
Apprenticeships are jobs, so when you apply, you are making an application for a job. This means you will need to complete the application independently after you have found the apprenticeship you want.

‘But school will help me right?’ Yes, we can help you but the responsibility to apply is yours!

Searching for an apprenticeship!

Where to start looking for jobs and apprenticeships can be a challenge. There are many different tools and websites that can be used. Here’s some advice to make your search a little easier or more focused.

- **Be specific if you can!**
- Searching by companies and industry are useful tools as they may post apprenticeships they have available.
- **Know what you want from a job.**
- Remember to check the small print.
- **It can take time to find an apprenticeship that is right for you.**
- Make sure you know how far you can travel.
- Find an Apprenticeship or the South Yorkshire Apprenticeship Hub and companies/businesses websites.



When can you start an apprenticeship?

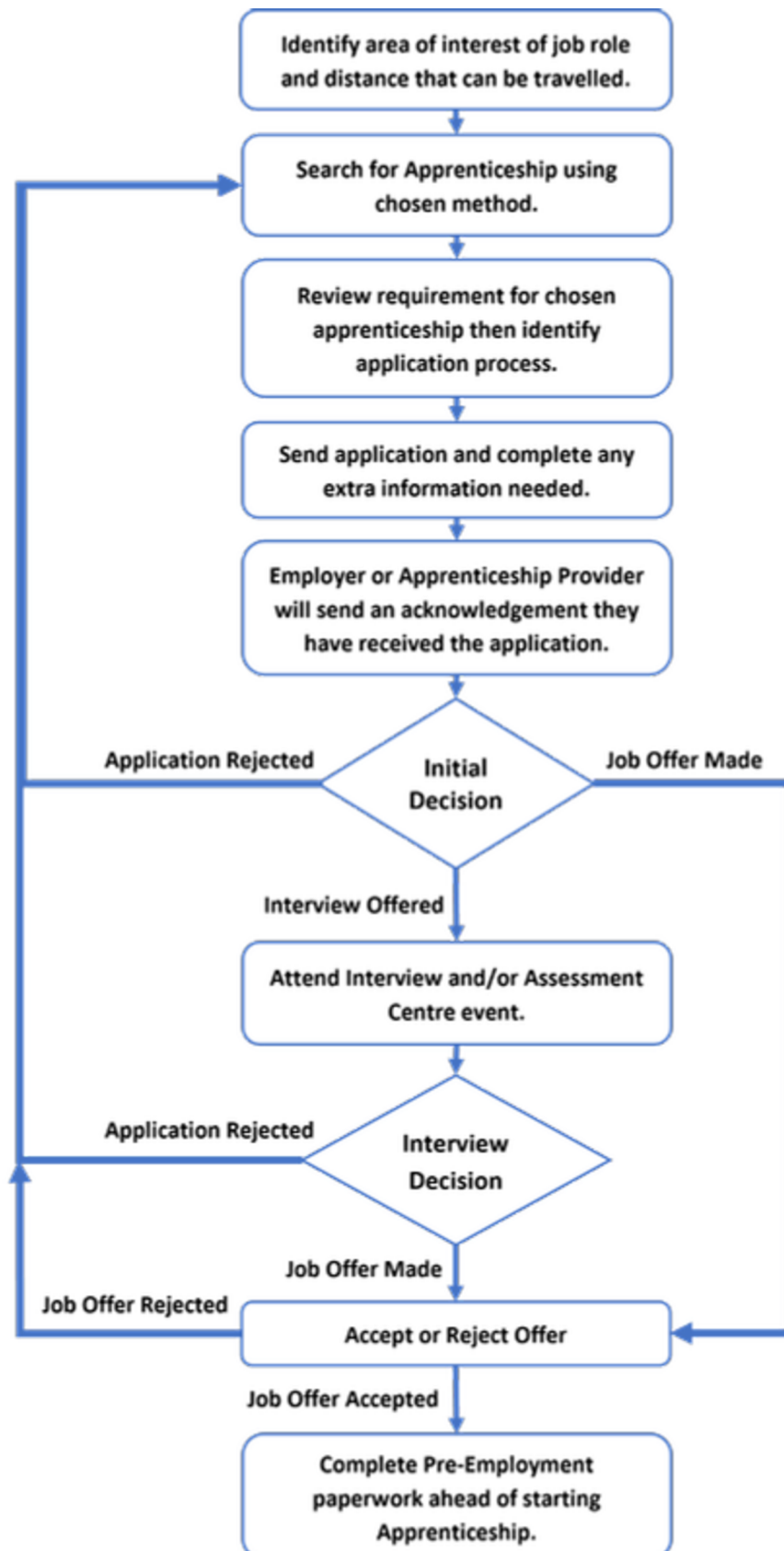
- You need to be **16 or over** when an apprenticeship is **due to start**.
- You need to have **finished year 11**, this does not necessarily mean results day, but you must have completed your last exam.
- You cannot undertake full-time education alongside an apprenticeship (for example, you can not do a college course and an apprenticeship at the same time).
- You need to live in **England** with a valid UK address when your apprenticeship is due to start.

What do employers need you to have ready?

- You need to have a **bank account** so you can get paid and taxed.
- You will **need** to have a **valid National Insurance Number**.
- A **valid ID** this is normally a **passport** etc.
- A **carer, parent or guardian who is over 18**, to act in your support and be an emergency contact.

An Insight Into Applying for Apprenticeships

Applications for apprenticeships and employment differ slightly from college or sixth-form. The difference is around the information needed to apply and the potential interviews. The flowchart below gives an overview:



What can we do to prepare and get ready?

There are several things that you can start to do to help your child to prepare for their applications. The first is discuss their ideas and options. However, you can also support them by helping them the information they need to have to make their applications some useful guidance can be found below.

What's in a Personal Statement?

Your personal statement is your chance to sell yourself and stand out from all the other applicants. Good idea to include:

- **Introduction** - describe who you are.
- **Subjects you do/are interested in** - ensure you highlight why and skills it has given you.
- **Your aspirations and achievements** - ensure that you provide explanation of why.
- **Hobbies and interests** - highlight the skills or experience this provide.
- **Conclusion** - should be short and repeat the most important message.

Talking about Works Experience

Work experience statement is your chance to talk about what you learnt and the skills you learnt or used during you work experience!

Work Experience Includes:

- **Volunteering**
- **Part-Time Jobs**
- **Work Placements**
- **Babysitting**
- **Team Sports**
- **Ambassadors**
- **Student Council**

For each example include:

- **When** (as accurately as you can).
- **Where it was** (name, location if feel you should include).
- **What you did there** (brief description).
- **What you learnt** (focus on skills and role specific information).
- **How this has helped you.**

What is a Cover Letter?

Your cover letter is your chance to sell yourself and expand or add to the information in your CV, helping you stand out. It's a good idea to include:

- **Introduction** (thank them for considering your application).
- **Examples from your previous jobs** (include specifics).
- **How you have shown your skills** (provide explanation of how they were showed and why they were used).
- **An achievement you are proud of** (showcase your success).
- **Your future goals** (highlight both your short and long-term goals).
- **Conclusion** (keep it short and repeat the most important message).

What can we do to prepare and get ready?

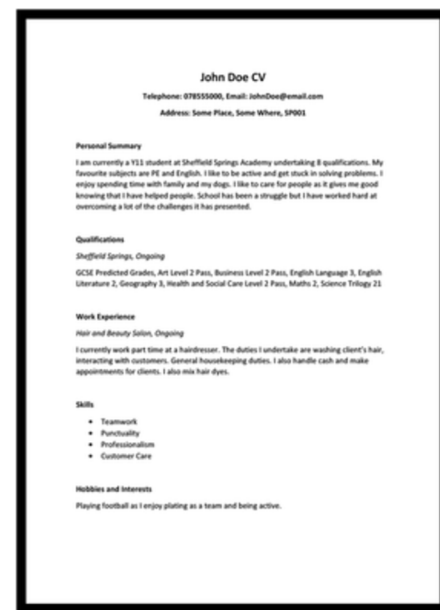
Getting CV Ready

Preparation is really important when applying for apprenticeships as they can be advertised at different times and only for a short number of days, so being ready is crucial. A CV is a document that contains all your key information.

What's on a CV?

CVs need to contain the following, but remember KEEP IT relevant:

- **Personal Details** - Name, address, email and telephone number.
- **Personal Summary** - A short description of what makes you stand out.
- **Qualifications** What subjects you are doing (actual grades or predicted), this can include Coaching, Dancing or First Aid qualification for example.
- **Work Experience** - List any work experience or jobs you have had with a short description.
- **Skills** - List some of your key skills (e.g. time-management)
- **Hobbies** - Do any of your past-times support your skills or job suitability, if so, include them.



Preparing for an Interview

An interview is your chance to sell yourself, but also your chance to ask questions and see the provider in person.

- **Do your research** - Make sure you look into where you are applying, this will help you answer and ask questions.
- **Know what you are walking into** - Is it a one-to-one or group interview, is it an assessment centre. If you are unsure ASK!
- **Be on time** - First impressions are important it's better to be early than late.
- **Consider your appearance** - Dress appropriately. People make judgement on people within the first few seconds.
- **Try to answer all questions** - Even if you do not know the answer, discuss what you think the answer could be.
- **Ask questions** - Asking questions shows interest and helps you stand out.



Understanding GCSE Grades

GCSE grades and Vocational grades can be confusing on this page we aim to help you understanding how the new grades structure relates to the old grade structure and also how the vocational subjects.

Old Grade Structure	New Grade Structure	Vocational Grade Structure
A* A	9	Level 2 Distinction*
	8	
	7	Level 2 Distinction
B C	6	Level 2 Merit
	5	
	4	Level 2 Pass
D E F G	3	Level 1 Distinction Level 1 Merit Level 1 Pass
	2	
	1	
U	U	Fail

All courses have entry requirements which will be defined in the courses description and will not always be the same for the same course with different provider for example please see below:

Sheffield South East Sixth-Form
Course: A-Level Psychology
Entry Requirements
5 GCSEs at grade 5 or above. Must have grade 6 or above in English and Maths

Meadowhead
Course: A-Level Psychology
Entry Requirements
Grade 5 or above in either GCSE English Language or GCSE English Literature and a Grade 5 in GCSE Maths.

Your GCSEs Subjects & Current Predicted Grades

Write in your predicted grade for reference	
English Language	
English Literature	
Maths	
Combined Science	
History	
Geography	
Art & Design - 3D Design	
Art & Design - Fine Art	
Art & Design - Textiles	
Business	
Citizenship	
Food Preparation and Nutrition	
French	
Health and Social Care	
ICT	
Music	
Performing Arts	
Religious Studies	
Sport	
Triple Science - Biology	
Triple Science - Chemistry	
Triple Science - Physics	

Your Next Steps

What routes are you interested in?

Sixth-Form	
Sixth-Form College	
Further Education College	
Training Provider	
Apprenticeship	
Job Based Training	

Do you have a specific place you want to apply for?

--

Do you know the subjects you are wanting to do?

--

Your Next Steps

What types of courses are you interested in?

A-Levels	
BTEC Nationals	
Cambridge Technicals	
T-Levels	
V-Levels	
Occupational Certificate	
Foundation Certificate	
NVQs	
Apprenticeship	
Traineeships	

What would you want from our provider?

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Have you discussed your ideas with your parents/carers?

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Your Notes

Your Notes



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Have a question or need help?

If you further questions or would like to a speak to the careers team so can contact information below:



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