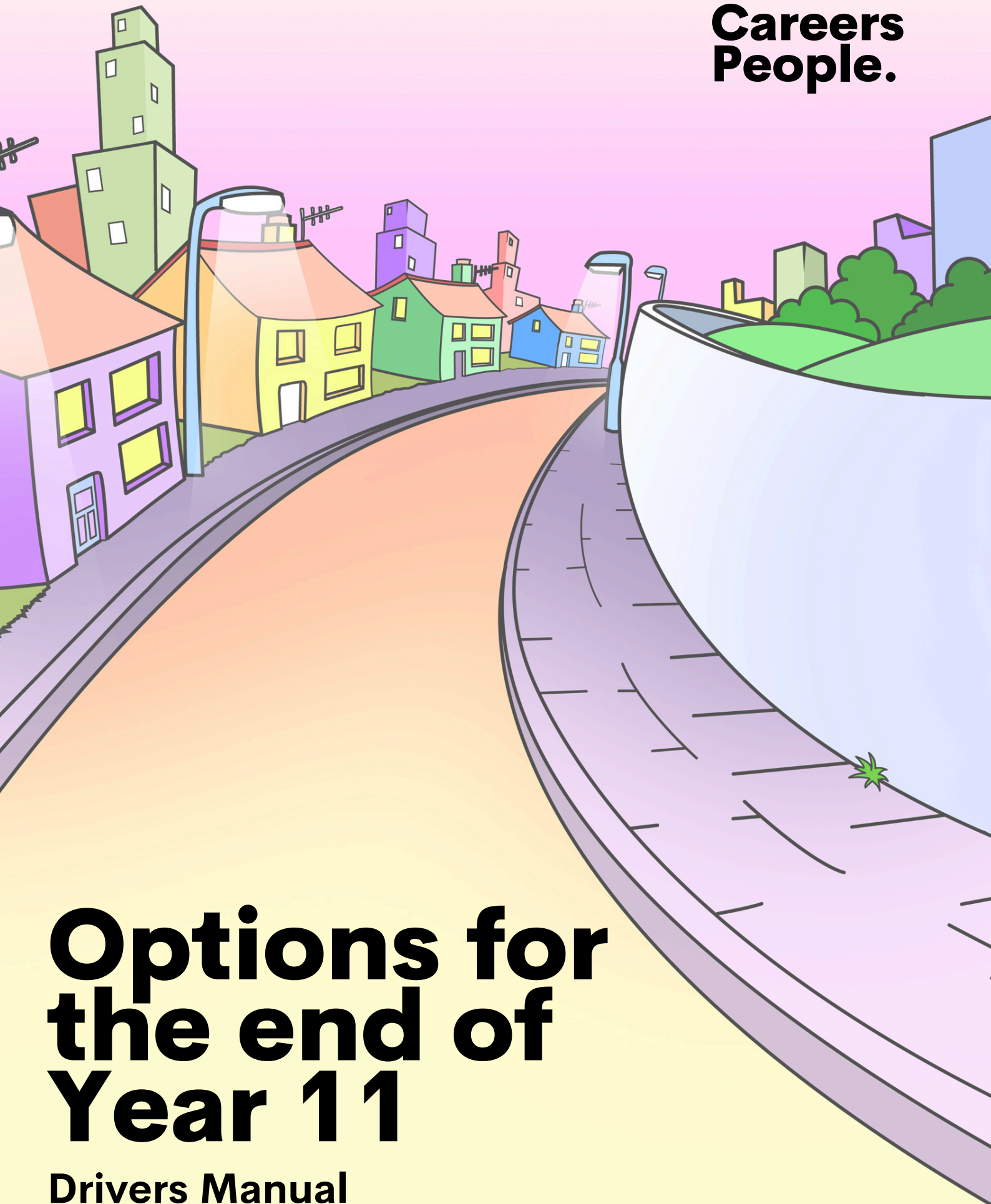


Written & created by

**The  
Careers  
People.**



# **Options for the end of Year 11**

**Drivers Manual**

# You've made it to the end of your 5 year secondary education. Congrats!

So... Umm...

## What now? 🤔

This booklet aims to provide you with an overview of your course options at the end of Year 11 which include:

- A Levels
- T Levels
- BTecs
- Apprenticeships
- Traineeships
- Employment

Once you have decided your course options, you will then need to look at local provisions to see where offers the courses you want to study. This may be a local Sixth Form, College or Independent Training Provider.



# Knowing your destination

You wouldn't get into a car without knowing where you're heading, right?

We aren't suggesting that you need your whole life planned out but knowing where you're trying to go in terms of your career aspirations will help you to navigate your next steps at the end of Year 11.

*For example, if someone knows that they want to study **Architecture** in the future, they can work backwards from that destination to ensure they are **taking the right subjects** (such as **Art, Physics and Engineering**) at the end of Year 11 and know **what grades they need to achieve** in order to get onto an Architecture university course or apprenticeship programme.*



# Knowing your destination



**Here are some questions you can ask yourself to consider your destination:**

Do I want to go to university? If yes, do I know what qualifications I need to access this course in the future?

What job industries am I interested in considering at the moment?

Have I explored where my skills could fit within these industries?

What have I already taken part in to help me explore these industries?

What else could I take part in to help me explore these industries?

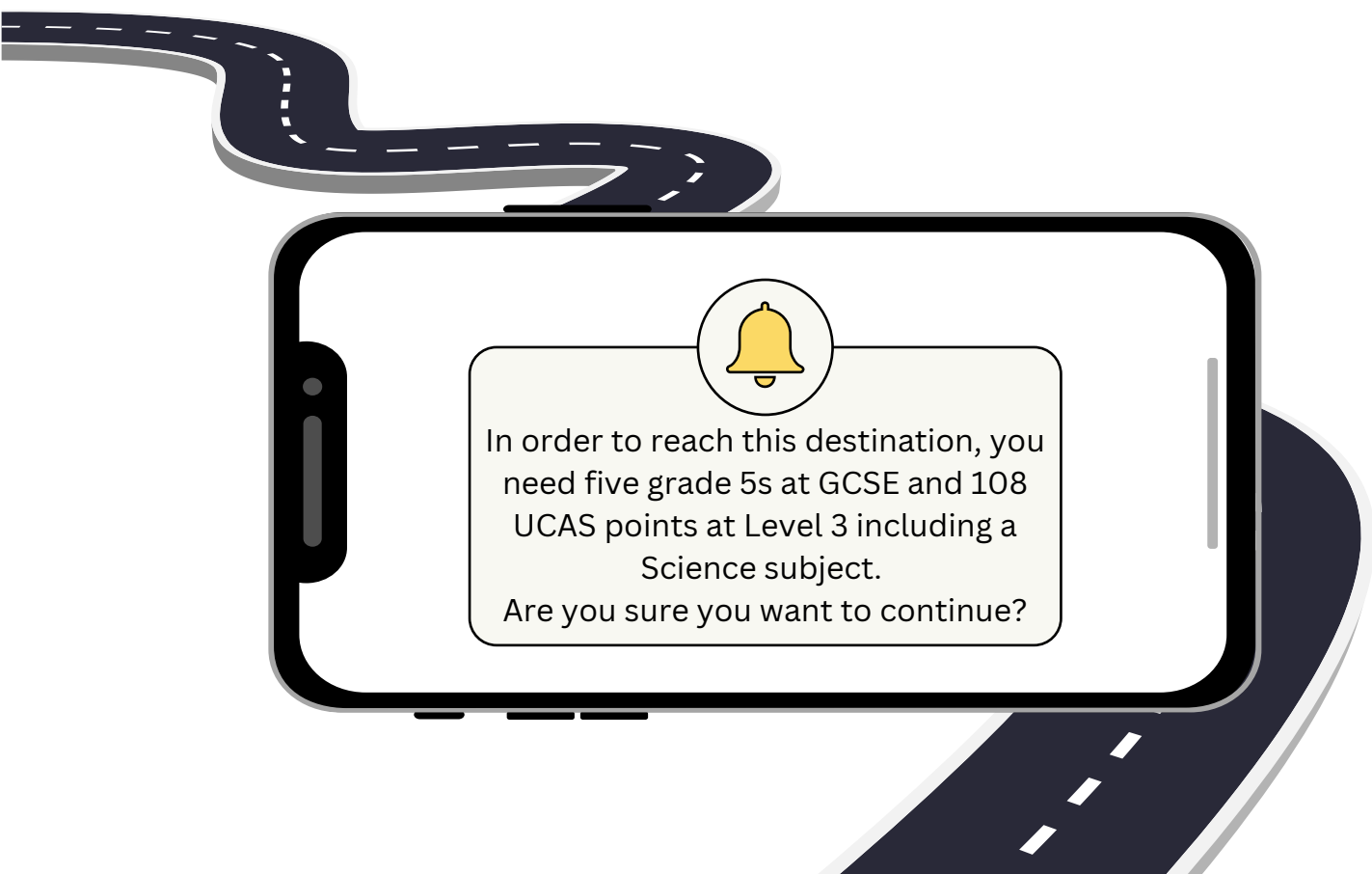
# Ready to input your sat nav location?

Once you have an idea of your destination, its time to think about how you're going to get there.

With every career pathway and industry you consider, there will be a range of different pathways you can take.

Back in the day, careers used to be linear. This meant they went in a straight line. So, you left school, picked a career and stayed in your lane. No moving, no changing. You might even find that your Grandparents worked for the same employer for over 30 years - crazy, right?!

Nowadays, careers are far more fluid and we have the option to move around, change industries and find different routes to get into the job industries and roles we're interested in.



# Setting your sat nav



Here are some questions you can ask yourself to consider your pathway for the end of year 11:

What are the entry requirements for the course? Are they realistic in line with my predicted grades?

Does the course content cover the topics I enjoy and want to study?

How will I be assessed on this course? (i.e. exam, coursework, observation)

Where is this course offered locally to me? Do I want to study there?

How would I get to the college or sixth form?

# Levels of Education

In order to understand what Level 3 options are available to you, it is important to see the bigger picture and know the different levels of education we have here in the UK.

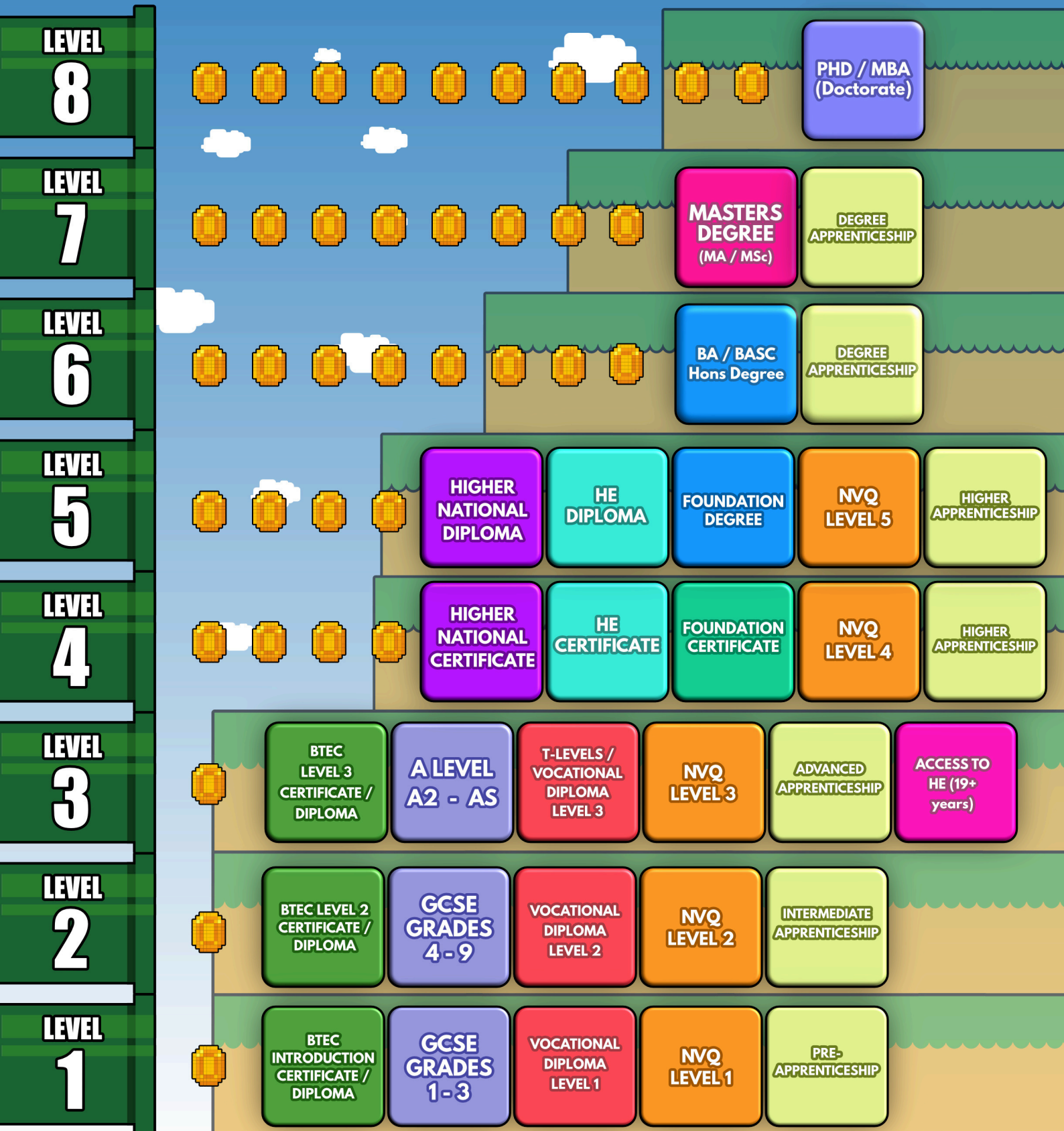
The image on the next two pages shows what different qualifications fall within each level. Please note that the information on the diagrams are the same, there are just two different layouts.

*These images have been kindly donated to us by [Resourceful Careers](#).*

## Did you know...

On average, someone with a Level 6 qualification earns £12,000 more than someone educated to Level 3.

# LEVEL UP



**ENTRY LEVEL**

 **EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS** **FUNCTIONAL SKILLS** **ESSENTIAL SKILLS & SKILLS FOR LIFE** 



# VOCATIONAL LADDER



## ACADEMIC CAREER LADDER

## APPRENTICESHIP CAREER LADDER



We're going to start with the three types of courses you can study at local colleges and sixth forms.

**A Levels**



**T Levels**



**BTecs**



## Did you know...

A Levels are known as academic courses whereas T Levels and BTecs are known as vocational courses.

# A Levels



A Levels are the most popular qualification to study in the UK. There are currently 85 different subject areas.

A Levels follow a similar format of learning to GCSEs. Course content is taught in a classroom setting for two years and sitting exams at the end of Year 13.

Results are expressed in grades with A\* as the highest and E as the lowest.

The idea of A Levels is that they are preparing you for further academic study via university or a degree apprenticeship.

There are around 80 different subjects available to study at A-level. However, the options available to you will depend on what your school or college offers.

Here are a selection of popular subjects:

- Art and Design
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Dance
- Drama
- Economics
- English Literature
- English Literature & Language
- English Language
- Further Maths
- French
- Geography
- German
- History
- Journalism
- Law
- Maths
- Music
- Physical Education
- Physics
- Politics
- Psychology
- Religious Studies
- Sociology
- Spanish

You can pick A Levels based on your future plans, what you have enjoyed at GCSE and new subjects that sound interesting.  
Don't pick subjects because someone else has told you to or because your friend is taking it!

## Options for the end of Year 11 | Drivers Manual

T Levels are new technical qualifications that are equivalent to three A Levels. T Levels were introduced in September 2020 and currently offer 20 different courses, they are hoping to add more each year.

As part of a T Level qualification, students study in the classroom approximately 80% of the time and spend the remaining 20% on an industry placement, allowing them to gain insight into a career they may be interested in. Students are assessed using a variety of different methods.

T Levels are graded in four tiers: Distinction\*, Distinction, Merit and Pass. 134 universities accept T Levels for entry as of 1 February 2023.

The large majority of UK Universities accept T Levels, but some do not so make sure you have done your research to ensure they will lead you where you want to go in the future.

The idea of T Levels is that they are preparing you for the workplace.



Scan to read more  
about T Levels



Scan to see a list of T  
Level Subjects



## Options for the end of Year 11 | Drivers Manual

BTECs (British Technology and Education Council) are work-related qualifications which include classroom-based learning and are completed over the course of two years.

Currently, there are over 2,000 different BTEC course options that span 16 sectors.

There are three levels of a BTEC qualification: a BTEC Extended Diploma, equivalent to three A-Levels; a BTEC Diploma, equivalent to two A Levels; and a BTEC Subsidiary Diploma, equivalent to one A level.

You could choose to do just a BTEC extended diploma instead of A Levels or a combination of one A Level and a BTEC diploma or two A Levels and a BTEC subsidiary diploma.

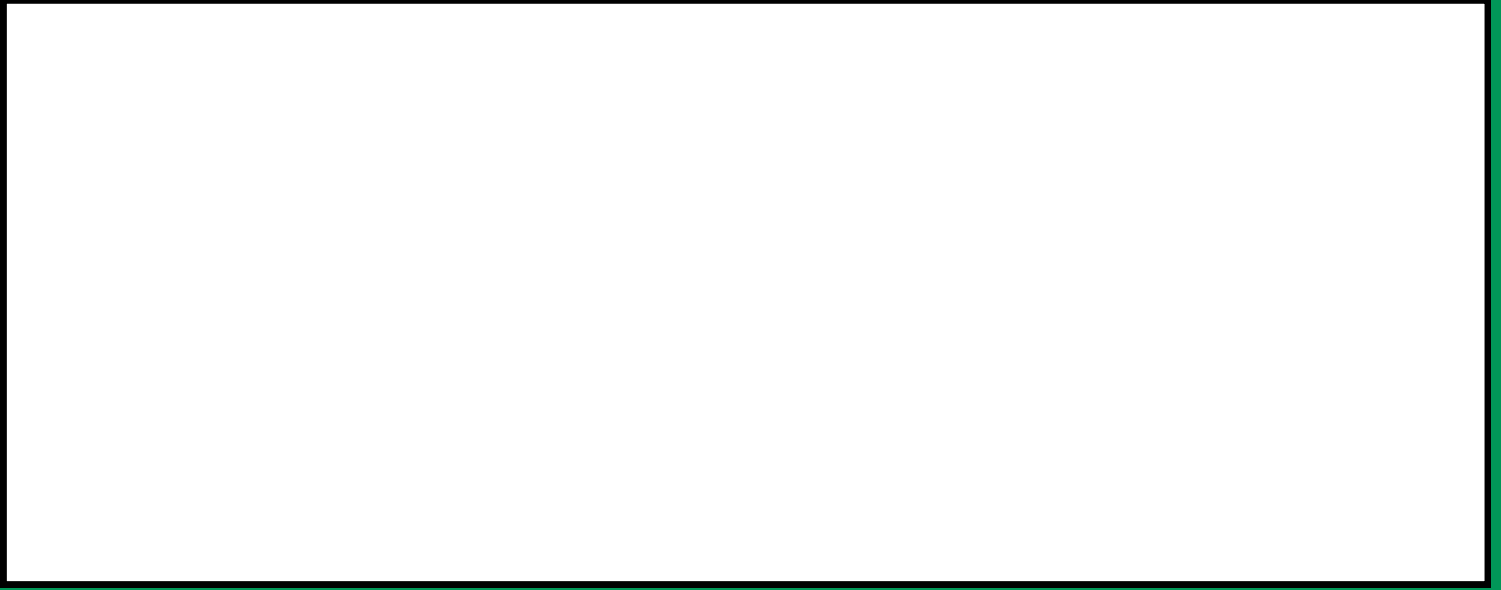
BTECs are graded on a scale from Distinction\* to Pass.

The idea of BTECS is that they are preparing you the workplace or an apprenticeship programme, although they are widely accepted by universities.

Scan to read more  
about BTECs



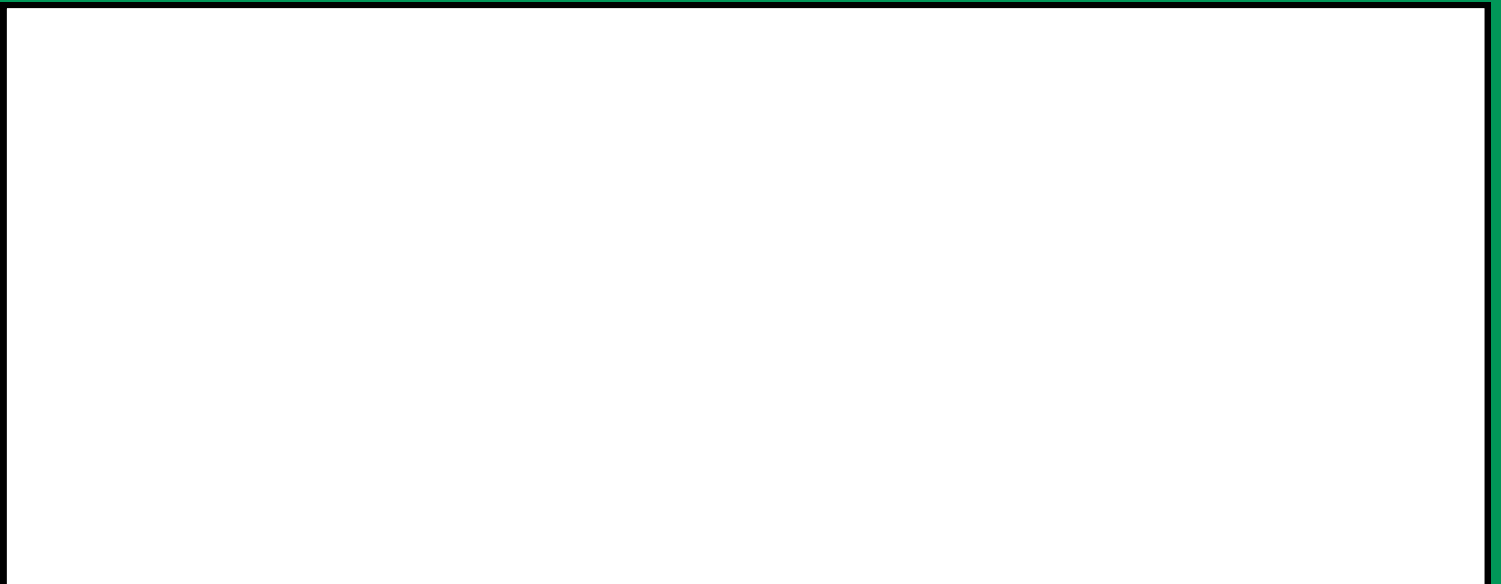
## Questions I have about A Levels:



## Questions I have about T Levels:



## Questions I have about BTECs:





In addition to getting a part time job to support yourself financially through college and sixth form, you may be eligible for 16-19 bursary.

A bursary is money that you, or your education or training provider, can use to pay for things like clothing, books and other equipment for your course or transport and lunch on days you study or train. 16-19 bursary is available to students who meet a certain criteria, which is similar to the criteria for Free School Meals.



Scan to read more about 16-19 bursary



**A bit like a game,  
the more UCAS  
points you have,  
the more  
universities will  
accept you onto  
their courses.**

# **What are UCAS points?**

UCAS Tariff points translate your qualifications and grades into a numerical value. Many qualifications (but not all) have a UCAS Tariff value, which will vary dependent on the qualification size, and the grade you achieved.

This numerical value is used by the university to assess whether you meet their entry requirements for a particular course.



Scan to read more  
about UCAS points

# Deciding where to study

**Remember;** You can apply to more than one college, sixth form or employer.

You don't have to make your final decision about your next steps until results day in August.



You will have a range of locations locally that offer A Levels, BTecs and T Level courses. This could be your school's sixth form, a larger college, a sixth form at another school or a specialist training provider.

They will all have open evenings which are the best way for you to go and view their facilities, meet students/teachers and get answers to any questions you have.

The more open evenings you go to, the more able you are to make an informed choice. You can find open evening dates on their website.

## Options for the end of Year 11 | Drivers Manual

Going to college or sixth form and studying in a classroom based environment isn't the only option you have at the end of Year 11.

You may also choose to enter the workplace. Here are your workplace options...

Apprenticeships →

Traineeships ↑

Employment ↗

**Did you know...**  
From September 2024, Apprenticeships now gain UCAS points! This means you can do an apprenticeship at the end of Year 11 then go to university to complete your degree level education.

## Options for the end of Year 11 | Drivers Manual

An apprenticeship is a paid job where the employee learns and gains valuable experiences.

Alongside on-the-job training, apprentices spend at least 20% of their working hours completing classroom-based learning with a college, university or training provider which leads to a nationally recognised qualification.

An apprenticeship includes:

- paid employment with holiday leave
- hands-on-experience in a sector/role of interest
- at least 20% off-the-job training
- formal assessment which leads to a nationally recognised qualification

You have to be 16 to do an apprenticeship and there is no upper age limit. There are over 600 different types of apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships are harder to find and apply for than college or sixth form. You have to attend interviews and assessments with the employers you apply for before they offer you an apprenticeship.

There are different levels to apprenticeships, check the "level up" page and look at levels 2-6 to see the names of different apprenticeship levels.

The national minimum wage for an apprentice changes every April. Use the internet to search "national minimum wage apprenticeships" to find out what it is right now!

Scan to read more about  
Apprenticeships



Scan to read  
Apprenticeship FAQs



## Options for the end of Year 11 | Drivers Manual

Traineeships are a great option for young people aged between 16 and 24 (or 25 for individuals with an education and health care plan), who don't have the skills or experience to take on a job or apprenticeship.

Traineeships act as a skills development programme, where you complete an unpaid work placement alongside a training course.

They can last from 6 weeks up to 1 year (although most last up to 6 months) and are designed to help prepare you for work or an apprenticeship.

Traineeships are unpaid because they are a work experience placement, not a job.

Employers are encouraged to support trainees with their expenses, such as transport and meals.

People usually do traineeships whilst retaking their Maths and English GCSEs if they haven't passed them. Once passed, they can then access and move onto an Apprenticeship.

Traineeships are seen as a stepping stone between education and the workplace.



Scan to read more about  
Traineeships



## Options for the end of Year 11 | Drivers Manual

This is when you leave the education system entirely and decide to go into employment. There is no formal training programme, however you may have the opportunity to take part in work based training offered by the employer.

These are usually certificates such as Health & Safety at Work, Customer Service or industry specific certifications.

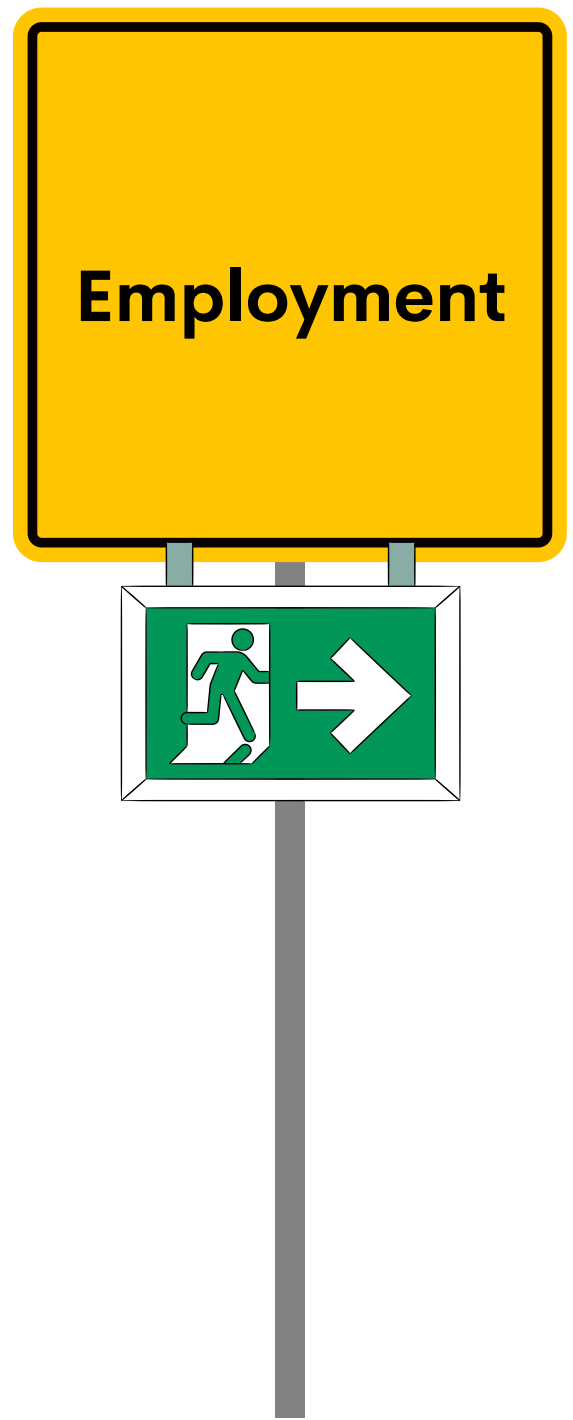
This is the least common option for people to choose at the end of Year 11 as most want to continue to train within an industry by going onto further study via college, sixth form or an apprenticeship.

Joining the workplace without having a formal training programme often means the job role you do is lower paid with less opportunity for development.

If you're considering going straight into employment at the end of Year 11, you will need to prepare a CV, know how to apply for job roles and be ready to attend interviews.

You can speak to your careers team at school about this or contact the National Careers Service for support.

Scan to read more about the  
National Career Service



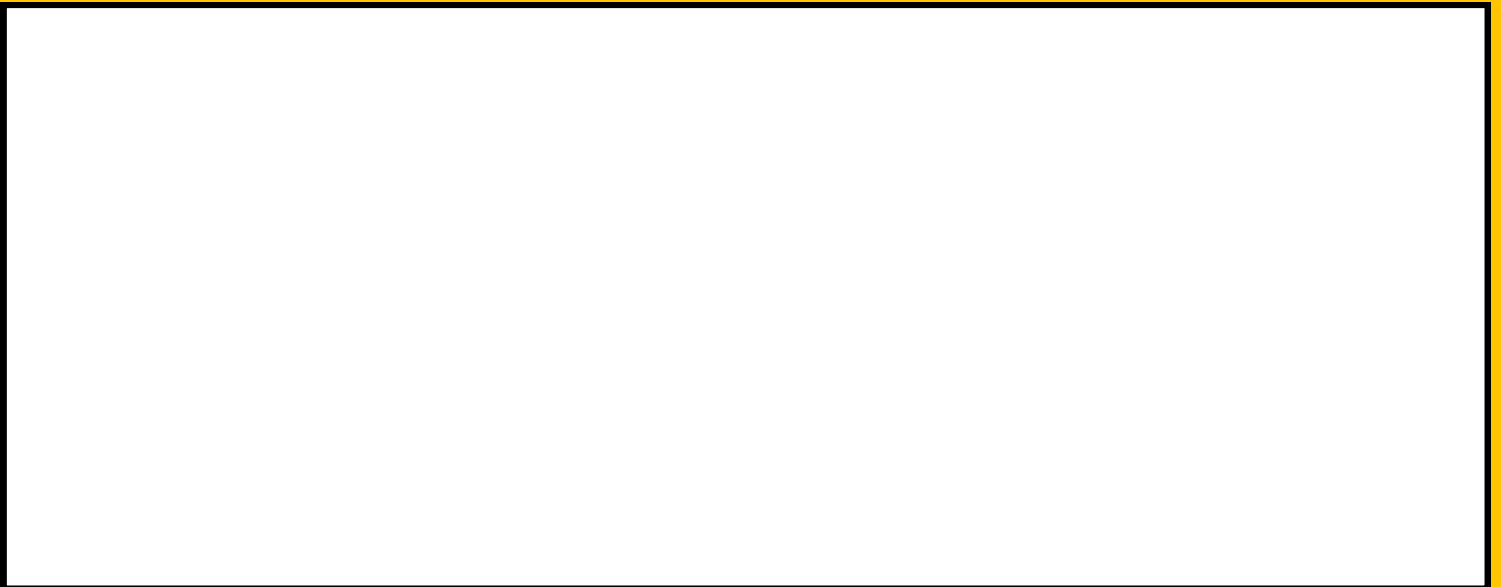
## Questions I have about Apprenticeships:



## Questions I have about Traineeships:



## Questions I have about employment:



# What else do you need to consider?

Once you know where you're going and how you can get there, the last thing to consider is what else you need to take along for the journey.

We would recommend packing your car with:

- Toolkit - Skills
- Sunglasses - Experiences
- Phone - Guidance
- Watering can - Attitude
- Hat - Mindset
- Spare tyre - Plan B

*Please note that these things are metaphorical, you don't actually need to buy these items!*



## Toolkit - Skills

Employers will be looking for two types of skills:

1. Soft skills are the things you need to do any job, like organisation, communication and teamwork.
2. Hard skills are things that are relevant to the specific job role, like a software engineer needing to know how to code.

You can develop your skills by taking part in new things, going outside your comfort zone and taking part in online courses.



## Sunglasses - Experiences

The more you see, the more you learn! That's why it's so important to say "yes" and take part in new things that are offered to you, even if they seem scary or daunting at first.

This could be leading an assembly on something that's important to you, taking part in a new after school club, signing up to a new hobby outside of school, learning a new language, taking part in work experience or other careers related events your school runs.

## Phone - Guidance

Your school should offer you the opportunity to meet on a one to one basis with a Careers Advisor who will be able to help you understand your options and guide you on which might be suitable for you.

They can't tell you exactly what to do but will help you to make the best decision for you and your future. If you aren't sure how to book an appointment, speak to your careers team at your school. If you don't know how to contact them, ask your tutor.



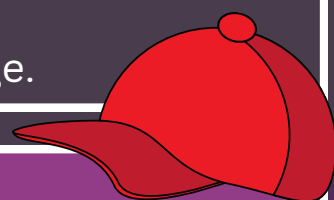


## Watering Can - Attitude

There is a saying by John Mitchell, “Your attitude towards life determines life’s attitude towards you”. Basically, what he is saying is the more positive you are, the more positive things will happen to you.

As well as being positive, you can focus on becoming a life long learner which means you take every opportunity you can to learn something new and are open to criticism to aid your development.

You can also practice being resilient and adaptable to change.



## Hat - Mindset

Having a growth mindset means that you believe that your success depends on time and effort. People with a growth mindset feel their skills and intelligence can be improved with effort and persistence. If you are constantly thinking and saying “I can’t do this” or “I’m not good enough”, you are displaying a fixed mindset which means you don’t think you can improve or get better.

Use the internet to search growth mindset techniques to learn how to develop this - you will see a huge shift in your mindset and your mood towards life and learning!

## Spare Tyre - Plan B

Don’t be so fixated on one plan that if it doesn’t materialise, you give up or become disheartened. A solution to overcome feeling this way is to always have a plan B that leads you to the same end goal.



For example, your plan A could be going to Sixth Form to study A Levels. Your plan B, if you don’t get the GCSE grades you need, could be to take a combination of BTECs and A Level courses at College that will still allow you to access the same industry in the future.

Don't be one of those drivers whose too embarrassed to stop and ask for help. There are so many people around you willing and ready to support you. Every single person who works at your school wants you to go on to have a successful, happy future.

You could speak with any of the following about your future:

- Teachers
- Careers Advisors
- Tutors
- Family
- Family Friends
- Admissions teams at colleges and sixth forms
- Employers early careers recruitment team

**Who can  
help you?**

# Tasks to

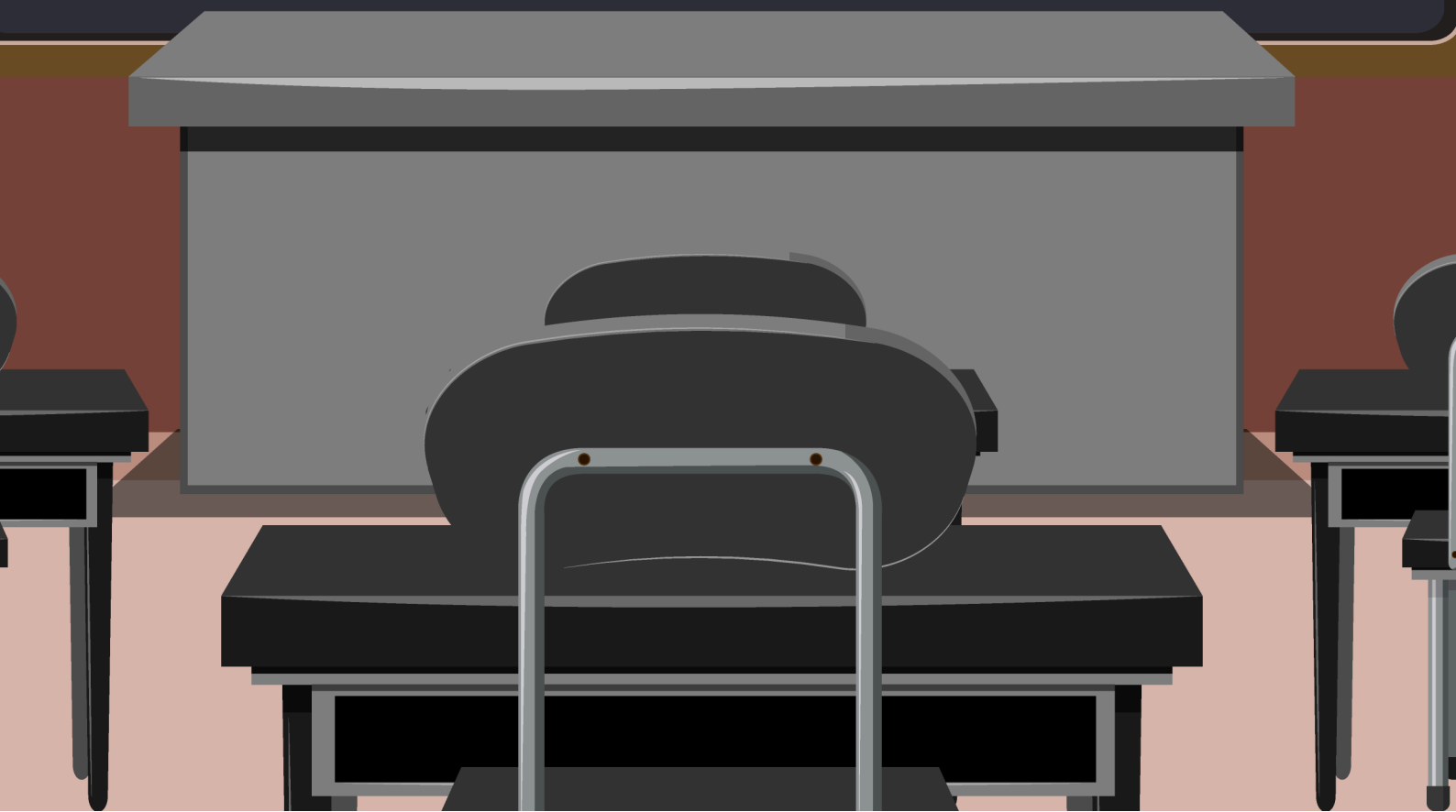


# help you

On the next few pages, you will see a range of worksheets that can help you to research and make decisions about your future.

Here is a list of the worksheets included and an example of when you could use them:

- Pros and cons list - If you are deciding between two things, maybe two different subjects or two different places of study, the pros and cons lists will help you to manage your thoughts. You may find one option has far more pros than the other, which should help you to make your choice.
- Course research sheet - When you are reviewing information on a college or sixth form's website, you can use this sheet to extract the key information.
- Open evening prep - Before attending a college or sixth form open evening, use this worksheet to prepare yourself so you get the most out of the event.
- Fishbone - If you know where you are now and where you want to be in the future, this worksheet can help you think about what barriers could arise and what solutions could help you to overcome those barriers. For example, a barrier to doing an apprenticeship with a certain employer could be that you need a driving licence to get to their location. A solution to this could be getting a part time job now to save the money you need for driving lessons.



# Pros & Cons List

Decision you're trying to make:

Option 1		Option 2	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons

Conclusion:

Action you need to take:

# Course Research

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People.**

Name of the course:

Places I could study this course:

Modules that interest me:

Where I hope this course would take me in the future:

Questions I have about this course:

Concerns I have about this course:

How I can get answers about my questions and concerns:

# Open Evening Prep

Date of the open evening:

Name of the college, sixth form or employer:

Courses I want to find out more about:

Questions I want to ask:

Use this space to make notes whilst at the event:

Do I want to apply here?

Yes

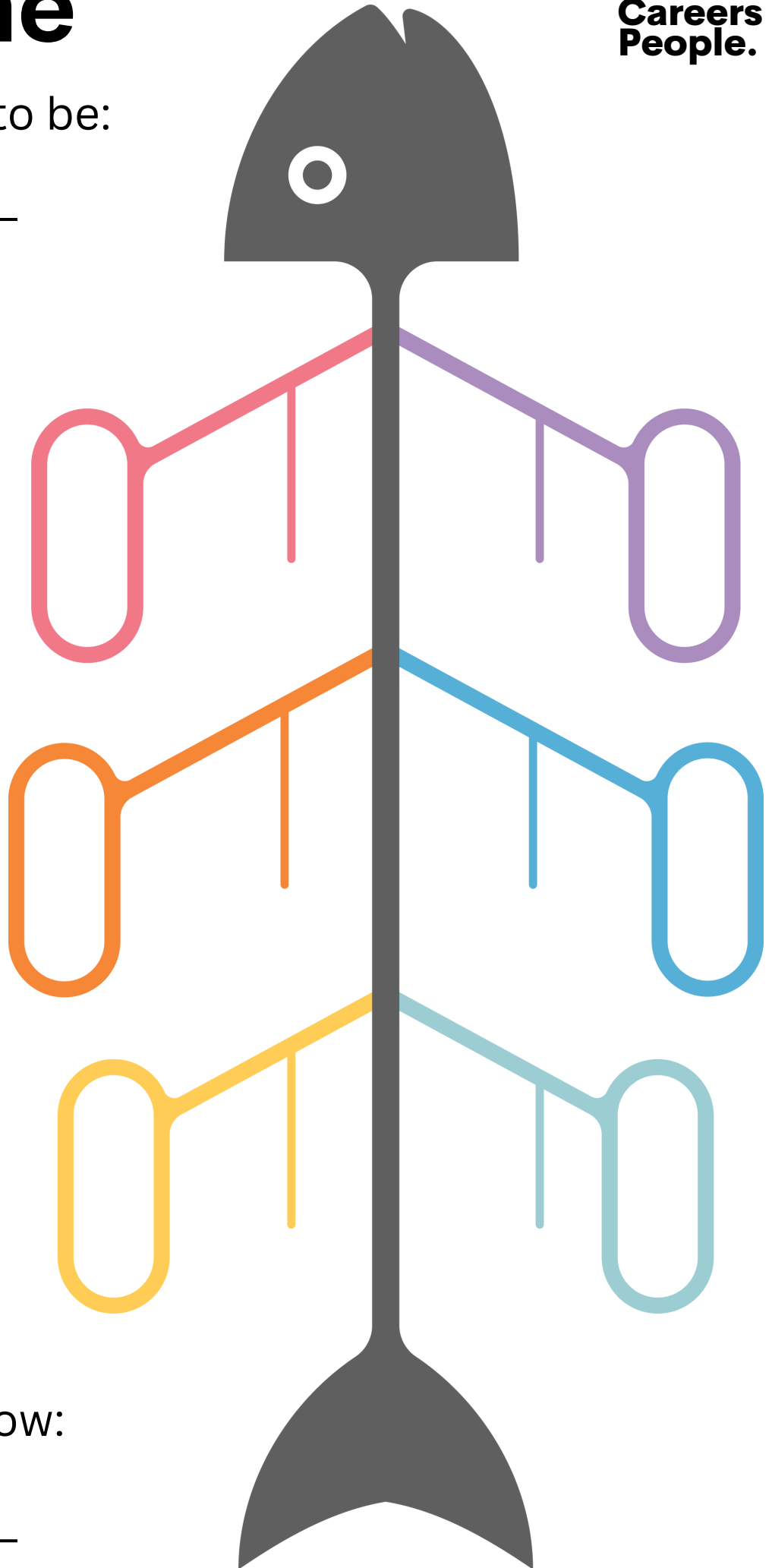
No

Date to apply by:

# Fishbone

Where you want to be:

---



**Instructions:**

Put the barrier that could stop you from getting to where you want to be in the boxes then the solutions to each barrier on the lines under the box.

Where you are now:

---

# Websites to help

## **Advice & Guidance**

[www.nationalcareers.service.org.uk](http://www.nationalcareers.service.org.uk)

Speak to a qualified careers advisor.

[www.unitasterdays.com/university-jargon-buster](http://www.unitasterdays.com/university-jargon-buster)

Seen a word about higher education that you don't understand? Search it here to learn what it means.

[www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles)

View over 400 different job profiles, including how much you could earn!

[www.youtube.com/@mypathcareersuk](http://www.youtube.com/@mypathcareersuk)

Watch videos about different job roles and what they do.

[www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables](http://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables)

Find a list of schools and colleges near you.

## **University**

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

Search thousands of courses from hundreds of universities across the UK.

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

See online and in person university events all in one place.

## **Apprenticeships**

[www.notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk) / [www.getmyfirstjob.com](http://www.getmyfirstjob.com) /

[www.UCAS.com/apprenticeships](http://www.UCAS.com/apprenticeships) / [www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](http://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)

Browse current apprenticeship job roles.

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

Resources on applying for, interviewing for and completing assessments for apprenticeships.

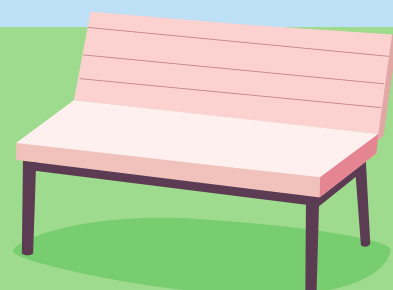
**Your school may also have access to a careers platform with more information, advice and guidance. Speak to your careers team to check!**

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We wish you the best of luck on your journey.

If you need any support or advice,  
contact your careers team in school.