

SUPPORTING

# future

CHOICES

A GUIDE for parents and carers

HOW TO BE SUPPORTIVE  
EASY WAYS TO PLAN AHEAD  
YOUR GUIDE TO KEY MILESTONES  
QUALIFICATIONS - HOW THEY DIFFER  
ADVICE FROM A LOCAL CAREERS ADVISOR  
LOCAL OPTIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

**GROWS**

encouraging higher aspirations

# HIGHER EDUCATION = HIGHER EMPLOYABILITY

## OUR WORLD IS CHANGING AND AS A PARENT OR GUARDIAN IT CAN BE REALLY HARD TO KEEP UP

Research tells us that parents can have a lot of influence over how well their children do in the future but where do you start? This booklet is aimed at anyone guiding and supporting a young person in their education and career choices. We're giving you lots of information to help you and your child make choices that should pay off in their future.

So, how can you ensure your child is in the best position to get a well paid job they enjoy? By helping them to identify areas of work that match their interests and strengths and get the qualifications and skills that employers are seeking.

We've got lots of ideas and advice for helping your son or daughter to prepare for the future. You can discover different pathways towards employment, get plenty of advice and learn handy tips so you can help your child make informed choices as they work towards their goals.

## PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

None of us can predict what the world will look like in 10 or 20 years' time but we can use what we know to help young people work towards their ambitions.

## FACT 1

**ALL YOUNG PEOPLE ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE IN EDUCATION OR TRAINING UNTIL THEY ARE 18.**

After Year 11 your child will have to choose one of the following paths:

- + Stay in full time study in a school sixth form, a further education college or with a training provider
- + Start an apprenticeship or employer-training scheme
- + Do volunteering, or work, combined with part-time education or training

By starting to plan now, you can help your child prepare for the future.

## FACT 2

**THERE WILL BE MORE PROFESSIONAL JOBS IN THE FUTURE.**

As technology changes our lives, some jobs that exist now will disappear. Other job roles will remain but the skills needed for those jobs will change. It's really important that your child is able to adapt to these changes.

## FUTURE WATCH



**THREE JOBS THAT MIGHT EXIST IN THE FUTURE...**

- 1 DRONE MANAGER
- 2 3D-PRINTED HOUSE DESIGNER
- 3 DATA DETECTIVE

## FACT 3

### THERE ARE GREAT JOB OPPORTUNITIES ON YOUR DOORSTEP.

There are lots of dynamic organisations in Gloucestershire, from global fashion label Superdry to code-cracking GCHQ. With the right skills, your child can have a great career with a world-leading company right here.

## FACT 4

### EMPLOYERS WANT PEOPLE WITH LIFE SKILLS.

It's important to get good grades but it's also important to demonstrate life skills, also known as 'soft skills'. Young people can build these skills through hobbies, work experience, volunteering and by going to university.

### WHICH SOFT SKILLS ARE EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR?

**COMMUNICATION** - conveying ideas and interacting well with others

**TEAM WORK** - getting the best out of group situations

**PROBLEM SOLVING** - being able to overcome challenges

**ORGANISATION** - prioritising tasks and preparing well

**WORK UNDER PRESSURE** - thinking straight under stress

**PERSEVERANCE** - not giving up

**LEADERSHIP** - bringing the best out in others

**NEGOTIATION** - getting a win-win outcome

**COMMERCIAL AWARENESS** - understanding business goals

**CONFIDENCE** - showing that you value yourself

Source: GFirst LEP



**TURN TO PAGE 13 & 14 FOR IDEAS ON HOW TO DEVELOP SOFT SKILLS**

## FACT 5

### GCSEs ARE THE FIRST IMPORTANT STEP.

Whichever path your child takes in the future, it all starts with GCSEs.

### WHY DO GCSEs MATTER?

+ Having good GCSE grades means your child can keep their options open

+ Some options require higher grades, for example to study A levels you usually need at least 5 GCSEs at grade 5 and usually a 6 or higher in the subject you want to study or a related subject

+ Achieving grades 9-4 in GCSE English and maths is really important

+ Employers, colleges and universities always look at GCSE grades - they can be influential throughout your career

The hard work your child does now to get good GCSE grades will help them make great choices over the next few years and in the future.



**TURN TO PAGE 11 & 12 FOR ADVICE ON SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD THROUGH THEIR STUDY**



**THESTUDENTROOM.CO.UK/REVISION FOR REVISION ADVICE**



## BY 2027

+ Over half of all jobs in the UK will require level 4 qualifications (beyond A Levels)

+ Only one in 12 jobs in the county will be available to those with GCSE level qualifications or lower

+ Many Gloucestershire jobs will require skills in science, technology, engineering and maths - known as STEM subjects

**“THINGS HAVE CHANGED A LOT IN EDUCATION AND I THINK IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO BE AWARE OF ALL THE OPPORTUNITIES OUT THERE. YOUNG PEOPLE DON'T HAVE TO GO DOWN THE SAME ROUTES WE DID; THEY CAN FOLLOW THEIR DREAMS.”**

PARENT OF CHILD WHO WAS THE FIRST IN THEIR FAMILY TO GO TO UNIVERSITY



# YOUR GUIDE TO KEY QUALIFICATIONS

**A QUALIFICATION SHOWS COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND EMPLOYERS WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT AND WHAT YOU CAN DO AS A RESULT OF THAT LEARNING**

**There is a large variety of qualifications available so they are grouped together into levels to show how they compare and what other qualifications they can lead to.**

In the UK, most qualifications taken through work, school, college or university fit into one of eight levels. The higher the level, the harder the qualification. The levels are based on the standards of knowledge, skill and competence needed for each qualification. Qualifications at the same level can be very different in terms of content and the length of time they take to complete.



## TYPES

**QUALIFICATIONS ARE GROUPED TOGETHER IN TWO DIFFERENT WAYS...**

1. BY STYLE
2. BY LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

### *Qualifications by* **STYLE**

Qualifications are divided into two main types, depending on the level of academic study versus practical and or work based learning needed to gain the qualification.

### *Qualifications by* **LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY**

Comparing qualifications by levels will help you see how your young person can build their skills as they move through education. The highest level is 8 but we'll go as far as Level 6 in this guide.

## ACADEMIC

Sometimes referred to as traditional qualifications, this type of qualification is subject based and involve in-depth study of subjects and the topics within that subject. The skills gained when studying are known as transferable skills as they relate to wider skills rather than specific skills for a specific job role. A levels are the most traditional example of academic qualifications.

## VOCATIONAL & TECHNICAL

There are a range of alternative qualifications to the more commonly known A-levels. These qualifications are sometimes referred to as vocational, applied, or work-based and have practical elements to them.

Vocational qualifications tend to involve a mix of academic and industry-focused study. They offer practical learning programmes that relate to specific job roles or job sectors. Examples include BTECs and NVQs. Technical qualifications combine classroom learning with practical skills development alongside industry placements in areas directly linked to a job area. Examples include T Levels.

Apprenticeships allow for a qualification to be gained whilst working, learning on the job whilst building up knowledge and skills. Apprenticeships are available in a range of qualification levels.

**REFER TO PAGE 5 AND 6 FOR QUALIFICATION ROUTES BY LEVEL AND STYLE.**

# YOUR GUIDE TO KEY QUALIFICATIONS

## GCSEs

**ALL GCSEs IN ENGLAND ARE GRADED USING NUMBERS. THE SCALE RUNS FROM 9 (THE TOP GRADE) TO 1 INSTEAD OF THE OLD SYSTEM OF A\* TO G.**

**If your child doesn't get a minimum of a grade 4 in English and maths, they must continue to study these subjects as part of their post-16 education.**

Gaining grades 9-4 in English and maths is crucial for taking the next step – it keeps all your child's options open and means they can apply to university in the future.

### CURRENT GRADING STRUCTURE

9  
8  
7  
6  
5  
4  
3  
2  
1  
U

## QUALIFICATION REFORM

**The government is gradually introducing new qualifications to enhance the availability of technical and vocational qualifications.** As these newer qualifications are being phased in and others phased out it can be hard to know what is available and where. We have provided some information about the new qualifications on offer in this guide but please always check with each institution for the most up to date information. The government has introduced a new level 3 pathway (after GCSEs), called T Levels, they are equivalent to 3 A levels. These 2-year courses have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for work.



[WWW.TLEVELS.GOV.UK](http://WWW.TLEVELS.GOV.UK)



[WWW.GOV.UK/GUIDANCE/HTQS](http://WWW.GOV.UK/GUIDANCE/HTQS)

It is important to note that over time T Levels are intended to replace many BTECs, which will begin to be phased out from 2023. Where a subject appears as a T Level, it will disappear as a BTEC. The full range of T Levels will be available from 2023. In addition there are new Higher Technical Qualifications being launched after 2022, the number of subjects on offer will expand, over a four year period. The first courses will be in Digital with Construction and Health and Science after that. The HTQ's are Level 4 and 5 qualifications that have been approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education as meeting occupational standards relevant for the sector of employment.

**The table on the following page gives an overview of the main qualifications that can lead to university-level study.** Please be aware that this is not meant as a full guide to all qualifications. This chart shows which qualifications can be studied at what level and the route your child can take to progress into higher education. While progression to higher education is possible through most of these routes it is important that you and your child check the entry requirements for every course and institution they are interested in as not every course will accept every type or level of qualification, or they may ask for specific grades.

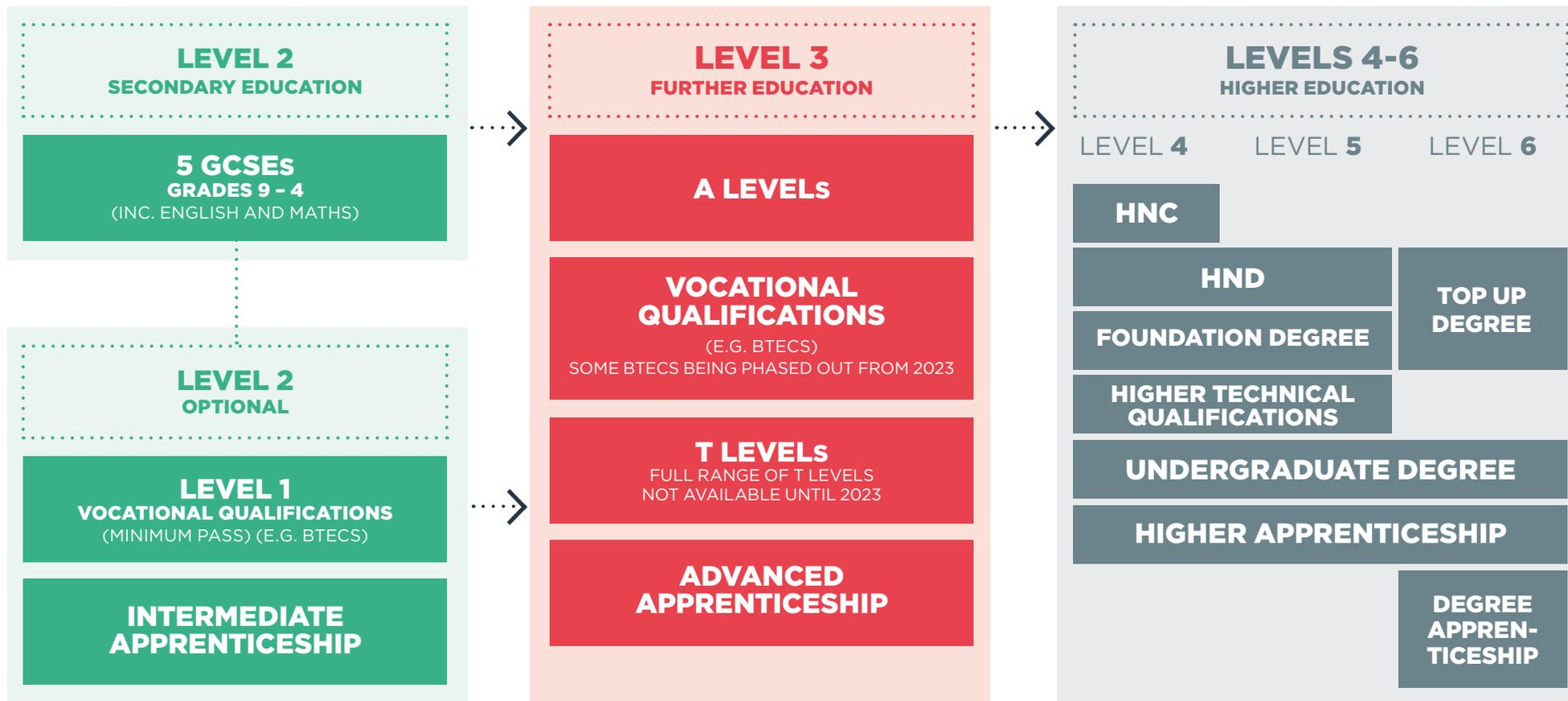
**FUTURE WATCH**

**Although there are many pathways through education, they all start with good GCSE grades**

# OPTIONS AFTER GCSEs



TO SEE A FULL LIST GO TO  
[CAREERPILOT.ORG.UK/  
QUALIFICATIONS](https://www.careerpiilot.org.uk/qualifications)





## A LEVELS...

They are widely recognised by universities and employers and focus on academic subjects. Students study three or four subjects over two years and are assessed mainly through written exams at the end of this.

They are the most common qualification studied to get into higher education, and are widely offered in sixth form and colleges. Some courses require certain grades in the subjects pupils want to study e.g. if they want to study History they may be asked to have a grade 6 in History at GCSE.



## L3 VOCATIONAL...

Specialist work related qualifications, generally offered by further education colleges, and some sixth form colleges. They combine practical learning with subject and theory content and are designed for young people interested in a particular sector or industry but are not sure what job they want to do yet. Mainly assessed by coursework and practical projects throughout the year.

BTEC level 3 extended diplomas are popular as an alternative to A-levels with most universities accepting these as entry requirements for their courses. T Levels are also available in lots of subject areas.



## UNDERGRADUATE BACHELORS DEGREE...

An academic step up from A-levels (or their equivalents) usually studied at a university or further education college. They take three years to complete.

The most common and widely available HE qualification with thousands of courses and subjects. Provide an in-depth understanding of one or more subjects. Assessment is mainly through written exams, practical assignments and essays (this can vary depending on the subject).



## T LEVELS...

T Levels will offer students a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days). They will provide the knowledge and experience needed to open the door into skilled employment, further study or a higher apprenticeship.

T Levels are taught in colleges and each will have a different selection of subjects on offer. More than 20 T Level courses will be available, most are available now with just a few not starting until September 2023.



## HIGHER TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS...

HTQs are technical qualifications that may include some work based learning, they take between one and two years and are equivalent to the second year of a degree. Some HTQ's are available from September 2022 but will be gradually rolled out over four years.



## FOUNDATION DEGREE...

Offers a combination of workplace learning and academic study.

They are ideal for people who are unsure if they want to do a full degree or want to study while they work. They take two years to complete and usually require less L3 qualifications to gain a place. They are generally taught in universities and colleges.



## TOP UP DEGREE...

Some universities and colleges offer specific 'top up' degrees which allow students with a level 5 qualification to top this up to a level 6 qualification in a year (or slightly more) of study.

Entry on to these is often dependent on the number of credits they have gained at level 5 and the subject they have / are studying.



## APPRENTICESHIPS...

An apprenticeship is a job based route to achieving a qualification which is studied alongside being employed. Apprenticeships are available to anyone over the age of 16. Vacancies are advertised on [www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](http://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship). Entry requirements and qualification gained for the role should be clearly advertised. Each level of an apprenticeship qualification typically takes between 1-2 years and the degree apprenticeship typically 3-4 years.

# THINKING ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION

## UNIVERSITY-LEVEL STUDY IS AN OPTION...

### ... AS LONG AS YOU HAVE THE RIGHT QUALIFICATIONS

There are a number of pathways to get there so it's good for your child to keep their options open. Making the decision to study at university-level, also known as higher education (HE) or higher level study can feel a big step – the cost alone can be a worry, but there are plenty of good reasons to consider this option.

### INCREASE EARNING POTENTIAL

We already know that in the future there will be a greater need for people with higher level qualifications, both in Gloucestershire and nationally (see pages 2-3).

Having an undergraduate degree proves to employers your child has the skills needed in the real world and in their working life, graduates earn on average £9,500\* a year more than non-graduates. Many large employers offer fast-track schemes for graduates to help them progress quickly up the career ladder.

\*gov.uk 2020

### GAIN KNOWLEDGE AND OTHER ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Studying at a higher level is exciting and challenging; it will help your child build confidence while gaining knowledge and skills.

There is a huge range of courses to suit everyone, covering all areas of work and all sorts of exciting subjects and job roles.

Marketing, social work and sports science are just some of the degree courses available in addition to traditional subjects such as maths, biology and engineering. Many professions, such as nursing and policing increasingly require a degree.

### BECOME INDEPENDENT AND GROW AS AN INDIVIDUAL

Gaining independence and building confidence is an important part of the experience. Students can build their skills outside of the classroom through opportunities such as volunteering and working part-time.

Taking up new hobbies and making new friends is important too and all universities have a wide range of clubs and societies to suit all personalities.

These experiences can help your child go from being a student to the kind of skilled graduate that employers look for.

**FUTURE WATCH**



**UK Higher Education  
qualifications are  
recognised worldwide**

## WHAT TYPES OF COURSES ARE ON OFFER?

There are around 50,000 different degrees to choose from so there really is something for everyone! While studying your child will come into contact with people already working in exciting jobs, from visiting speakers to lecturers, which helps them make connections for when they leave higher education. They could have the chance to do work experience and might even spend a full year in industry – anywhere in the world. Going to uni is a fun experience but it can also put your child in a great position for when it's time to get a job.

## IS HIGHER EDUCATION REALLY FOR EVERYONE?

Yes, young people from all walks of life go on to thrive in HE. There are teams on hand to support all students, including those with additional learning needs or disabilities.

## WHERE CAN MY CHILD STUDY?

University-level courses are studied in a wide range of places, from traditional universities such as the University of Gloucestershire to specialists such as the Royal Agricultural University. Further education colleges also offer opportunities to study qualifications at Levels 4-6, including Cirencester College, Gloucestershire College, Hartpury University and South Gloucestershire and Stroud College. With over 130 Higher Education institutions in the UK – including large and small, country or city, based on a campus or spread across a city – students can choose to live at home or move away. There really is something for everyone.



SEE LINKS TO LOCAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ON **PAGE 17** AND GO ONLINE TO SEE THE RANGE OF COURSES AVAILABLE OR VISIT **WWW.UCAS.COM**



**GRADUATES IN THE UK HAVE A GREATER SENSE OF PERSONAL WELLBEING AND LIFE SATISFACTION THAN THOSE WITHOUT A HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATION**

(HEFCE)



**AROUND 95% OF UNIVERSITIES CURRENTLY ACCEPT BTECs AS PART OF THEIR ENTRY REQUIREMENTS, FOR OVER 70% OF DEGREE SUBJECTS**

(SOURCE: UCAS)



**IN 2020**

**THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF GRADUATES WAS HALF THAT OF NON-GRADUATES**

(14% VS 29%)

**“THE PERCEPTION OF APPLYING FOR UNIVERSITY IS MORE SCARY THAN THE REALITY. THERE IS SO MUCH HELP OUT THERE, YOU DON'T NEED TO FEEL DAUNTED BY THE PROCESS. IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT TO ASK QUESTIONS – EVERYONE HAS QUESTIONS. WE FOUND THAT EVEN ORGANISING THE FUNDING WAS SIMPLE.”**

PARENT QUOTE



# THINKING ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION

THE LOW-DOWN ON FINANCE



## WHAT ABOUT THE COST?

Concerned about how you will fund your child's higher level study? You're not alone. Don't worry – it's quite straightforward once you get your head around it. We've broken it down for you.

### THERE ARE TWO COSTS YOU NEED TO BE AWARE OF

- + **TUITION FEES**  
your child can take out a loan that covers these
- + **LIVING COSTS**  
to pay for the things your child needs from week to week including as books, food and rent
- **A maintenance loan can help pay towards living costs**

While it might seem like they are taking on a lot, **these loans do not have to be repaid until your child has finished their degree and is earning at least £25,000 a year after.** As a parent it's pretty simple to organise student finance. Once your child has applied online with the Students Loans Company you'll be asked to confirm your income and guided through a simple process.

We've outlined just some of the benefits of university-level study. There are many more reasons why it's a great pathway and the cost of doing a degree shouldn't put you or your child off exploring this option. Every HE institution has a finance team which is used to answering the kinds of questions you're probably already asking yourself. Many universities also offer bursaries which do not need to be paid back and are awarded to students who meet specific criteria. When you start exploring different universities, make sure you visit their online finance pages to get more details.

## REPAYING A STUDENT LOAN

Yes, students do complete their higher level qualifications with debt but what's really important is how much they have to repay. It might be helpful to think of the repayments as a tax on getting a degree as graduates earn more than non-graduates on average.

**CURRENTLY, STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENTS ARE MADE ON A SALARY OF MORE THAN £25,000\* A YEAR – AT 9%**

**Let's imagine that after graduation your child gets a job as a marketing manager and earns a salary of £27,000. They are now earning above the £25,000 ceiling which means they must pay back 9% on the excess. That's £15 a month – probably less than your mobile phone bill. If their income drops to less than £25,000, the repayments stop, and they will not start again until they earn over £25,000 again.**

**AFTER 40 YEARS ANY OUTSTANDING DEBT IS WRITTEN OFF AND CANNOT BE PASSED ON TO A FAMILY MEMBERS.**

*\*Refer to [www.slc.co.uk](http://www.slc.co.uk) for current thresholds and repayments*

## HERE'S HOW IT WORKS OUT

Annual Salary	Weekly Repayment	Annual Repayment
£26,000	£1.73	£90
£30,000	£8.65	£450
£32,000	£12.11	£630

THE MONTHLY REPAYMENT IS **£15** WHICH IS THE EQUIVALENT OF...



A TICKET TO THE CINEMA

## GRADUATES EARN AN ESTIMATED £9,500 A YEAR MORE THAN NON-GRADUATES\*

Studying at HE is definitely an investment – in terms of both time and money – which is why it pays to make wise choices. We're giving you plenty of information now to help you and your child make informed decisions over the next few years.

Earning more isn't the only reason to consider this route. Studying at HE level is a fun, challenging and exciting time. If your child goes to university, it won't be just you that wants them to succeed. HE institutions help their students to develop in all sorts of ways so your child will be well supported while they are there. On graduation day your child will have not just a highly recognised qualification but a long list of experiences and personal skills that employers are looking for.

By choosing the right course, your child will make the most of their decision to go to university. There is a huge range of degree courses available which means there's something out there to suit your child, no matter what they are interested in.

## EXPLORING HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES – WHAT DO I NEED TO THINK ABOUT?

- + What types of subject does my child enjoy most, and why?
- + Does my child need to do a particular type of course for the job they are interested in?
- + How likely is my child to get a job in this area after graduating?
- + Does this course focus on lectures, practical learning or work-based study?



GET TIPS ON HELPING YOUR CHILD DISCOVER THEIR INTERESTS AND STRENGTHS ON **PAGE 11** AND GO TO **[WWW.DISCOVERUNI.GOV.UK](http://WWW.DISCOVERUNI.GOV.UK)** TO FIND INDEPENDENT INFORMATION ON COURSES

TIP



## APPLYING...

APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY CAN SEEM LIKE A BIG STEP BUT THERE IS PLENTY OF HELP AND ADVICE OUT THERE TO HELP YOU AND YOUR CHILD THROUGH THE PROCESS.



## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER HIGHER EDUCATION?

UNIVERSITY CAREERS TEAMS HELP STUDENTS FIND JOBS AND MANY STUDENTS SECURE JOB OFFERS BEFORE THEY GRADUATE.

A POPULAR OPTION IS A GRADUATE TRAINING SCHEME, OFTEN AVAILABLE IN LARGER FIRMS, WHICH ALLOWS GRADUATES TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS WHILE WORKING.

# HOW TO BE SUPPORTIVE

## HELPING YOUR CHILD

**SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD AS THEY PLAN THEIR FUTURE WILL MAKE THE WORLD OF DIFFERENCE BUT HOW ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO KNOW WHAT TO SAY AND WHEN TO SAY IT? USE OUR TIPS AND RESOURCES TO HELP YOU**

Don't worry if your child doesn't know what they want to do in the future just yet. It's okay if they don't have a plan right now – the important thing is start exploring the options. Here's how to do it.



### ASK AN EXPERT...



**WE ASKED A LOCAL CAREERS ADVISOR SOME KEY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT HELPING YOUR CHILD PLAN FOR THE FUTURE**



**Q. HOW DO I START A CONVERSATION WITH MY CHILD ABOUT THEIR FUTURE GOALS?**

**A.** Most of us aren't very good at singing our own praises. When your child does well, for example through hobbies or in school projects, use it as starting point to ask them more about their skills and what they enjoy doing.



**Q. WHAT IF MY CHILD ALREADY KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANT TO DO?**

**A.** It's great if your son or daughter has a good idea about what they want to do in the future but don't rule out other options just yet. Understanding all the choices available at this stage means you can take advantage of new opportunities as they come along.



**Q. HOW CAN WE START GETTING IDEAS FOR FUTURE CAREERS?**

**A.** There are lots of free activities and events that can inspire your child about their future. Go along to 'Find Your Future' days, careers events at school or at local colleges and school-based options evenings – you'll come away with loads of ideas and information. Attending taster events and courses shows your child is keen and looks great on application forms.



**Q. I'M NOT SURE HOW TO HELP MY CHILD BUILD TRANSFERABLE SKILLS; CAN YOU GIVE ME SOME IDEAS?**

**A.** We know that employers love applicants with skills such as problem solving and working well in a team. It's never too early for your child to get these skills under their belt, for example, through hobbies, community groups or clubs. Getting a Saturday job or volunteering will also build confidence and essential skills.



CHECK OUT [WWW.GROWS.AC.UK](http://WWW.GROWS.AC.UK)  
[WWW.CAREERPILOT.ORG.UK](http://WWW.CAREERPILOT.ORG.UK)  
[WWW.ICOULD.COM](http://WWW.ICOULD.COM)  
[WWW.SACU-STUDENT.COM](http://WWW.SACU-STUDENT.COM)

# TOP TIPS FOR PARENTS



## LOOK AHEAD

Keep a lookout for college and university open days as well as apprenticeship events. You'll get a great idea of what types of courses and subjects are on offer, which is really helpful in narrowing down the options. Write open days and other important dates in your calendar and don't miss those all-important deadlines for course applications.



VISIT [WWW.OPENDAYS.COM](http://WWW.OPENDAYS.COM) AND USE OUR GUIDE ON **PAGE 13-14** TO PLAN AHEAD.



## SET SPECIFIC GOALS

It can feel like there's a lot to do, so break it down into simple tasks and pick one at a time. Plan in some time once a week to sit with your child and research a course, check out a local college or find out more about a career pathway.



MAKE A TO-DO LIST, CROSS TASKS OFF AS YOU GO AND GIVE YOURSELVES REWARDS FOR YOUR HARD WORK!



## PLAN FOR SUCCESS

It's easy to get distracted when studying so help your child create a revision planner that keeps them on track. This can be as simple as writing out a weekly timetable on a sheet of paper or find a free online planner.



SEE [WWW.THESTUDENTROOM.CO.UK/G/PLANNER](http://WWW.THESTUDENTROOM.CO.UK/G/PLANNER)



## GET ONLINE

You probably try and encourage your child to spend less time online but there are lots of handy websites to help young people and parents. We've included loads of links through this guide on everything from careers to student finance where you'll find help and advice.



SEE OUR LIST OF ONLINE RESOURCES ON **PAGE 17**



## CHECK YOUR EMAIL

**CAREERS EVENTS AND OTHER SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES WILL GIVE YOU USEFUL INFORMATION AND HELP YOU ADVISE YOUR CHILD.**

KEEP A LOOKOUT FOR NEWS ABOUT THESE ACTIVITIES IN YOUR EMAIL SO YOU DON'T MISS OUT ON THE NEXT EVENT.



## KEEP IN TOUCH

**THIS GUIDE IS JUST ONE OF THE WAYS WE HELP PARENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE WORK TOWARDS AN AMBITIOUS, FULFILLING FUTURE.**

WE ALSO RUN EVENTS, SEND NEWSLETTERS AND SHARE INFORMATION ON EVERYTHING FROM CAREERS TO APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY - KEEP IN TOUCH SO YOU NEVER MISS A THING!



SIGN UP FOR NEWSLETTERS AND FIND MORE INFORMATION AT [WWW.GROWS.AC.UK/PARENT](http://WWW.GROWS.AC.UK/PARENT)

# YOUR ACTION PLAN



## TAKE ACTION...

**NEED A PLAN TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD THROUGH THE NEXT FEW YEARS OF EDUCATION?**

OUR GUIDE CONTAINS THINGS TO CONSIDER AND USEFUL LINKS AT EVERY STAGE...

STAGE	AT THIS STAGE, YOUR CHILD WILL BE CONSIDERING...	HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT THEM?	ACTION PLAN	USEFUL LINKS
<b>YEAR 8/9</b> AGES 12-14	<p>...which GCSE subjects they will study and how those choices might affect their future aims.</p> <p>...what types of jobs they might want to do in the future.</p>	<p>Talk to them about which subjects they enjoy and what job roles appeal to them so they can choose the right GCSEs to help them work towards their goals.</p> <p>Attend school sessions on GCSE options and choices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check that their GCSE choices are compatible with their plans to progress.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take an online career quiz.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Organise some volunteering to help them get a taste of working in an area of interest.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://WWW.CAREERPILOT.ORG.UK">WWW.CAREERPILOT.ORG.UK</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.SACU-STUDENT.COM">WWW.SACU-STUDENT.COM</a> (GO TO THE CAREERS QUIZ)</p> <p><a href="http://WWW.CAREERCLOUD.COM">WWW.CAREERCLOUD.COM</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.ICOULD.COM">WWW.ICOULD.COM</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.DO-IT.ORG">WWW.DO-IT.ORG</a></p>
<b>YEAR 10/11</b> AGES 14-16	<p>...which route they will follow after Year 11. Options include academic, applied and vocational learning (see pages 4-5 for details).</p>	<p>Together look at which areas and industries will have job opportunities in the future (see pages 2-3).</p> <p>Go through the different types of qualifications and decide which ones best suit your child's learning style. Discuss the possibility of them studying a university-level qualification - this could influence the type of course they choose next.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ask for an appointment with the school's careers advisor or access free advice from the National Careers Service (over the phone, on-line chat or email).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Find out the types of courses that universities offer as an option for building skills and experience.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Start building a CV - use an online tool to help.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Find out the deadlines for applications for colleges and submit in plenty of time. Colleges often have a March deadline for entry in September of the same year, sixth forms are often earlier.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://WWW.CAREERPILOT.ORG.UK">WWW.CAREERPILOT.ORG.UK</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.NATIONALCAREERSERVICE.DIRECT.GOV.UK">WWW.NATIONALCAREERSERVICE.DIRECT.GOV.UK</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.PARENTALGUIDANCE.ORG.UK">WWW.PARENTALGUIDANCE.ORG.UK</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.UCAS.COM/FURTHER-EDUCATION">WWW.UCAS.COM/FURTHER-EDUCATION</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.GROWS.AC.UK/RESOURCES/GROWSRESOURCES-1">WWW.GROWS.AC.UK/RESOURCES/GROWSRESOURCES-1</a></p>

STAGE	AT THIS STAGE, YOUR CHILD WILL BE CONSIDERING...	HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT THEM?	ACTION PLAN	USEFUL LINKS
<b>YEAR 12</b> AGES 16-17	<p>...whether they will apply to university. Alternatively they may investigate a different route, such as a higher apprenticeship or other work-based alternative</p>	<p>Talk to your child about how they enjoy gaining new skills and what kinds of careers they are interested in.</p> <p>Together research options for getting the skills and experience needed for their next step.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Get some work experience or do some volunteering</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Attend university open days</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Research employment and training opportunities with local companies</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Research higher apprenticeships</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Develop soft skills through leadership roles, positions of responsibility, teamworking etc</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Start drafting a personal statement for UCAS application</b></li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://WWW.APPRENTICESHIPS.GOV.UK">WWW.APPRENTICESHIPS.GOV.UK</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.UCAS.COM">WWW.UCAS.COM</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.OPENDAYS.COM">WWW.OPENDAYS.COM</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.DISCOVERUNI.GOV.UK">WWW.DISCOVERUNI.GOV.UK</a></p>
<b>YEAR 13</b> AGES 17-18	<p>...their application to university or to another higher education pathway. Alternatively they may be job-hunting.</p>	<p>Prepare your child for greater independence; involve them in household tasks like doing the laundry and cooking dinner.</p> <p>Encourage them to continue building soft skills/look for work experience opportunities that will benefit them in their future choices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Attend university open days</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Complete a UCAS application for university</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Check company websites for jobs and school leavers programmes and apprenticeships</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Use school holidays to gain extra work experience.</b></li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://WWW.OPENDAYS.COM">WWW.OPENDAYS.COM</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.UCAS.COM">WWW.UCAS.COM</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.SLC.CO.UK">WWW.SLC.CO.UK</a></p> <p><a href="http://WWW.AMAZINGAPPRENTICESHIPS.COM">WWW.AMAZINGAPPRENTICESHIPS.COM</a></p>

# HOW TO BE SUPPORTIVE

## TIPS FOR ORGANISING WORK EXPERIENCE

**DOING WORK EXPERIENCE IS A CHANCE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 14 OR OVER TO GAIN IMPORTANT SOFT SKILLS AND FIND OUT WHAT THE WORLD OF WORK IS REALLY LIKE**



### DO THE PAPERWORK

Your child should prepare a CV and covering letter and ask someone to proof-read it before they send it.

For advice on creating a CV go to [www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk) and search for CV tips

**TIP**



### GET IN THE HOT SEAT

Many companies now interview young people for work experience. Do a mini interview with your child so they can practice explaining why they want the experience.

**TIP**



### BE QUICK OFF THE MARK

Some companies only offer work experience at certain times of the year so make sure your child has left themselves plenty of time.

**TIP**



### ASK WHAT'S INVOLVED

Encourage your child to find out what skills they will be learning. It's fair enough if they are expected to make the tea now and then but a well organised placement should be a worthwhile experience for both the employer and your child.

**TIP**



## TIPS...

### NEED SOME HELP ORGANISING A PLACEMENT?

READ OUR TIPS. SOME COURSES, FOR EXAMPLE TEACHING AND NURSING, EXPECT YOU TO HAVE RELEVANT EXPERIENCE WHEN APPLYING SO IT'S DEFINITELY WORTH PLANNING AHEAD.



### NARROW IT DOWN

Encourage your child to think about three industries they'd like to explore and look online for local employers in those areas.

**TIP**



### USE YOUR NETWORKS

Find out if family members, friends or neighbours can help organise a short placement at their workplace.

**TIP**



### THINK OF ALL THE OPTIONS

If your child has a Saturday job, would their boss be willing to offer a short-term placement? Is there an employer linked to their favourite hobby they could approach?

**TIP**



### PICK UP THE PHONE

It's tempting to email but it's much better to pick up the phone. Encourage your child to write out what they are going to say in advance so they don't get tongue tied.

**TIP**

# HOW TO BE SUPPORTIVE

## DEALING WITH STRESS

PLANNING WELL FOR THE FUTURE WHILE TRYING TO STUDY FOR GCSEs CAN BE A CHALLENGE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS TO KEEP STRESS LEVELS TO A MINIMUM; HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR STAYING ON TOP OF THINGS

### ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO...

- + **TAKE REGULAR STUDY BREAKS**  
A short walk outdoors refreshes the brain and eyes
- + **PLAY A SPORT OR DO A HOBBY**  
It's a great way to relax away from the desk
- + **PLAN REVISION TIME**  
It's the best way to stay on top of it and map progress
- + **TALK TO YOU IF THEY ARE WORRIED**  
Sharing a problem really helps
- + **AVOID COMPARING THEMSELVES TO OTHERS**  
Everyone has their own way of doing things
- + **GET PLENTY OF SLEEP AND EAT WELL**  
Feeling healthy makes a difference

### TIPS...

FOR MORE SUPPORT VISIT [YOUNGMINDS.ORG.UK](http://YOUNGMINDS.ORG.UK) AND [ONYOURMINDGLOS.NHS.UK](http://ONYOURMINDGLOS.NHS.UK)



**AND DON'T FORGET...**

**EXAMS ARE IMPORTANT BUT SO IS GOOD MENTAL HEALTH**

USE OUR GUIDE TO TAKE THE STRESS OUT OF PLANNING AND STAY ON TOP OF THINGS

**YOUR SUPPORT**

**There are lots of simple things you can do to support and encourage your child that will make a big difference**

# USEFUL INFORMATION

## GROWS

A resource hub for you and your child to explore career opportunities and study options. You'll find information, events and resources for parents and students including our Key Stage 4 guide Exploring Future Choices. Visit [www.grows.ac.uk](http://www.grows.ac.uk) for the main site and [www.grows.ac.uk/resources/growsresources-1](http://www.grows.ac.uk/resources/growsresources-1) for all our GROWS guides!

Also visit our virtual taster site [findyourfuture.grows.ac.uk](http://findyourfuture.grows.ac.uk) where you can hear expert talks on educational pathways, get careers tips for each year of study, and try activities in subjects that can be studied at college and university.

## QUALIFICATIONS

**Information on NVQs**  
[www.nvqcourse.co.uk](http://www.nvqcourse.co.uk)

**UCAS progress**  
[www.ucas.com/further-education](http://www.ucas.com/further-education)

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

## CAREERS ADVICE

**National Careers Service**  
[www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk)

**Resources for parents**  
[www.parentalguidance.org.uk](http://www.parentalguidance.org.uk)  
[www.successatschool.org/advice/parents](http://www.successatschool.org/advice/parents)

**Online quizzes for careers/study support**  
[www.sacu-student.com](http://www.sacu-student.com)  
[www.careerpilot.org.uk](http://www.careerpilot.org.uk)  
[www.icould.com/buzz](http://www.icould.com/buzz)

**Science and maths careers**  
[www.stem.org.uk/stem-careers](http://www.stem.org.uk/stem-careers)

**Building a CV**  
[www.princes-trust.org.uk](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk)  
[www.careercloud.com](http://www.careercloud.com)

## VOCATIONAL ROUTES

**Apprenticeship**  
[www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)  
[www.get-trained.org](http://www.get-trained.org)

**School leavers**  
[www.allaboutschoolleavers.co.uk](http://www.allaboutschoolleavers.co.uk)

## GOING TO UNIVERSITY

**Applying**  
[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)  
[www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com)  
[www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk)  
[www.thestudentroom.co.uk](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk)  
[www.discoveruni.gov.uk](http://www.discoveruni.gov.uk)

**Student finance**  
[www.gov.uk/student-finance](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance)  
[www.moneysavingexpert.com/students](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/students)

**Graduate employment**  
[www.milkround.com](http://www.milkround.com)  
[www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

## STUDY AND EXAM RESOURCES

**Dealing with exam stress**  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
[www.youngmindglos.nhs.uk](http://www.youngmindglos.nhs.uk)  
[www.onyourmindglos.nhs.uk](http://www.onyourmindglos.nhs.uk)

**Revision planning**  
[www.getrevising.co.uk](http://www.getrevising.co.uk)  
[www.thestudentroom.co.uk](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk)

## DEVELOPING SOFT SKILLS

**Find GROWS events**  
[www.grows.ac.uk](http://www.grows.ac.uk)

**Duke of Edinburgh Award**  
[www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org)

**Volunteering**  
[www.do-it.org](http://www.do-it.org)

# POST-16 EDUCATION PROVIDERS IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

	A LEVEL	T LEVEL	BTEC	NVQ	HNC	HND	FOUNDATION DEGREE	DEGREE	HIGHER APPRENTICESHIPS	DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS
	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 2-4	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 4-5	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6	LEVEL 7	LEVEL 7
<b>CIRENCESTER COLLEGE</b> www.cirencester.ac.uk	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	
<b>GLOUCESTERSHIRE COLLEGE</b> www.gloscol.ac.uk		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>HARTPURY COLLEGE &amp; HARTPURY UNIVERSITY</b> www.hartpury.ac.uk	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		
<b>ROYAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY</b> www.rau.ac.uk							✓	✓		
<b>SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AND STROUD COLLEGE</b> www.sgscol.ac.uk	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<b>UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE</b> www.glos.ac.uk							✓	✓	✓	✓

## ABOUT GROWS

GROWS is a network of six Gloucestershire universities and colleges that aims to encourage young people to explore the world of higher education and make informed decisions about their future.

We work with schools to help young people reach their potential, giving them access to information and fun activities that shed light on higher education.

 [WWW.GROWS.AC.UK](http://WWW.GROWS.AC.UK)

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 @GROWSNETWORK

 @GROWSNETWORK



Sign up for our newsletter for parents  
at [www.grows.ac.uk/parent](http://www.grows.ac.uk/parent) to stay up  
to date with relevant information



**GROWS** Gloucestershire network



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