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Sheffield Futures Options Guide 2024

Your future
Your choice
Your guide



Welcome to Options 2024

Welcome to Options 2024, your guide to choices at 16 and beyond.

This is an exciting time, it is often your first chance to have a real say about your future. You need to be adaptable and always ready to learn. However, everyone learns in different ways. Now that you're in Year 11, you have a choice of pathways which are all outlined in this guide. Sixth Form, College, Apprenticeships, A levels, T Levels. There is lots to research and lots of decisions to make, but our careers advisers are here to help you weigh up which pathway suits you best.

Are you a parent or carer?

This guide is for you too. Your support makes a huge difference to your teenager, and you can help them by:

- Starting early. The deadline for many applications is the end of January 2024.
- Encouraging them to explore all their options.
- Visiting open events together.
- Using www.sheffieldprogress.co.uk to search for opportunities.
- Encouraging them to work towards the highest grades possible.

About Sheffield Futures

Sheffield Futures is a local charity working with young people to help them achieve a brighter future.

Please visit our website at: www.sheffieldfutures.org.uk to find out more about the work we do alongside careers guidance.

Keeping up to date

We do our best to make sure this guide is correct. However, for any up-to-date information changes, we recommend our own website:

www.sheffieldfutures.org.uk and the contacts on page 45.

Good luck with your choices!



Contents

Welcome to Options 2024	1
College and Sixth Form Open Events	3
Pathways at 16+	6
A Guide to Qualifications at 16+	10
Types of qualification	
Qualification Levels	
Qualifications at a Glance	
Higher Education	14
Special Options	17
Job hunting and Interviews	21
World of Work	25
Money Matters	28
Sheffield Progress	32
How to Make Applications	33
Applying for an Apprenticeship	38
Sixth Form and College Contact Details	41
Training Provider Contact Details	43
Useful Contacts	45
Notes	46
Contact Us	Back cover

Apprenticeship and work-based learning pathway**Apprenticeships**

Apprenticeships are paid jobs with training available at different levels.

‘Where would I learn?’

You would be in a real workplace with about one day a week in training.

‘What grades would I need?’

This will depend on the employer and the apprenticeship level.

Apprenticeship level	Entry requirement
Intermediate apprenticeship The training is equivalent to GCSE Grades 9-4 (Level 2).	This varies, but you will usually need some GCSE Grades 3 or equivalent, especially English and Maths.
Advanced apprenticeship The training is equivalent to A Level (Level 3).	You will usually need some GCSE Grades 9-4 or equivalent, especially English and Maths.
Higher / degree apprenticeship The training is at higher education or post graduate level (Levels 4-7).	You will usually need Level 3 qualifications, such as A Levels or equivalent.

Tip!

Apprenticeships are real jobs, so you will need to find a workplace that's a good fit for you. If you're not successful at first, look for ways to gain new skills and experience and then try again. You can start an apprenticeship at any age.

Work-based learning

Work-based learning can help you gain the skills and experience you need for an apprenticeship.

The main types are:**16-19 study programmes**

A 16-19 study programme is the general name for any funded full-time learning for young people. It should involve study for a qualification, English and Maths (unless you have GCSE Grades 9-4), and activities to help you move on to work, further study, or higher education. Some programmes include work experience. These study programmes are run by schools, colleges, and training providers.

Traineeships

A traineeship is a type of study programme that prepares you for an apprenticeship. The main part is a work placement. Traineeships are for 16-24-year-olds, or up to 25 if you have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Supported internships

Supported internships are a specialist study programme. They involve a work placement and are for young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). See page 17.

Money

Work-based learning programmes are classed as full-time learning so don't pay a wage, but they can attract other help. Check out Money Matters on pages 28-29.

Which Pathway?

If you're trying to decide on a pathway, ask yourself?

- How do you learn best, e.g. by study or through practical tasks?
- Where you want to learn e.g. in a sixth form, college or workplace?
- Do you know what job you want, or would you rather keep options open?
- What are your predicted grades?
- Which assessment methods suit you best? (e.g. coursework versus exams)



A Guide to Qualifications at 16+

There are eight levels of qualification, plus Entry Level. The level tells you how difficult the study is and what entry requirements you should expect. If you do well, you can often move up to the next level.

Levels 7-8

Postgraduate e.g. Masters Degree, NVQ7, PGCE.

Levels 4-6 (Higher education)

Examples: Degree, Foundation Degree, HNC, Higher / Degree Apprenticeship, NVQ 4, 5, 6.

Entry requirements for Levels 4-6 are normally qualifications at Level 3.

Level 3

Examples: A Level, AS Level, BTEC National, T levels, Advanced Apprenticeship, NVQ 3, Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), Level 3 Cambridge Technicals.

Entry requirements for Level 3 are normally at least 4-6 GCSE Grades 9-4, including English and often Maths (or equivalent).

Level 2

Examples: GCSE Grades 9-4, BTEC First, T level Transition programme, NVQ 2, CACHE Level 2, Intermediate Apprenticeship. Entry requirements for Level 2 are normally GCSE grades 3 (or equivalent).

Level 1

Examples: GCSE Grades 3-1, BTEC Level 1, NVQ 1. Entry requirements for Level 1 are normally GCSE grades 2-1 (or equivalent).

Entry Level

Entry Level is split into Entry Level 1, 2 and 3. Level 3 is the hardest. Examples: Entry Level Award, Entry Level Certificate / Diploma, Entry Level Functional Skills. There are no set entry requirements.

Qualifications at a glance

Name	Academic	Vocational/ Technical	Level	Notes
A Level / AS Level	X		3	Develop knowledge and thinking skills.
BTEC		X	Entry level. 1, 2, 3 and higher	Study of a work sector.
T-Level		X	3 - look out for a new Level 2 transition programme	80% of time in class and 20% in industry.
NVQ		X	1, 2, 3 and higher	Show that you can do a job/task
Cambridge Technicals		X	2 and 3	Study of a work sector
Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)	X	X	3	Normally taken alongside other qualifications

Job hunting and Interviews

Where to look for vacancies:

www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

www.syrehealthandsocialcarecareers.co.uk

www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/job-vacancies

www.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate

www.gov.uk/find-traineeship

www.sheffield-jobs.co.uk

www.meadowhall.co.uk/jobs

www.crystalpeakscentre.com/jobs

www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk

www.gov.uk/find-a-job

www.amazingapprenticeships.com

www.foxvalleysheffield.co.uk/jobs

www.vas.org.uk (Volunteering)



Application tips

- Read the job description and highlight all the requirements, including skills.
- Explain how you meet the job requirements.
- Use an easy-to-read font, e.g. Arial or Calibri.
- Check spelling and grammar before you submit.

CV tips

A CV describes your qualifications, skills, and experience. The aim is to make a good impression so that you're invited to an interview.

It should include:

- Your name, address, phone number, email (not a joke one!), school or college.
- Your subjects, qualifications and grades (or predicted grades).
- Your skills. Every time you make an application, adapt the CV to fit the job description.
- Any work experience you have done e.g. contacts with employers when at school or college.
- A bit about what you enjoy doing out of school, any volunteering.
- Details of two people who will give a reference. You may not be asked until after the interview but check beforehand that it's ok to use them.

Social media

Employers might check your social media profiles, so use privacy settings when posting photos and comments on-line. Remember that once something is online, it's there forever.



Job hunting and Interviews

The secret to a good interview is preparation.

Before the interview

- Find out what to expect, e.g. Face to face interview, tests, or a short activity.
- Research the employer e.g. Check out the company on their website and social media.
- Work out how to get to the interview i.e. transport and journey times, allow for delays.
- Go over your application and the job information.
- Choose clothes that are clean and reasonably smart.

At the interview

- Turn off your phone.
- Look at the interviewer, be polite and remember to smile!
- Think before you answer.
- Keep some notes with you in case your mind goes blank.
- Have one or two questions ready to show you are interested.
- Thank the interviewer at the end.

Common mistakes

- Not looking at the interviewer and avoiding eye contact.
- Not researching the company.
- Not smiling.
- Unsuitable clothing.

Telephone and online interviews

Some employers will conduct interviews either by telephone or online. Follow the general advice above and in addition:

- Find somewhere quiet to have the interview.
- Make sure the camera/video and sound functions are switched on.
- Listen carefully and speak slowly and clearly.
- Look into the camera

Got the job? Congratulations!

You will need to give your employer your National Insurance Number. You should receive this just before your 16th

Birthday; if not, call:

0300 200 3500 or text: 0300 200 3519.



Not successful?

Bad luck but use the experience and ask for feedback to help you next time.



Support if you leave full time learning



Child Benefit Extension

If you don't stay in full-time learning, Child Benefit ends on 31st August (or sooner if you start work before then). If you're not in work at that point, Child Benefit Extension can be claimed for up to 20 weeks from the date you left school. You might also be able to claim it if you leave training or a course before the age of 18. Use: www.gov.uk/child-benefit-16-19 for details.

Wages

Most jobs must pay the National Minimum Wage or, from the age of 23, the National Living Wage. The current (2023) minimum rate for 16-17-year-olds and for apprentices* is £5.28 an hour. (* for apprentices under 19 or first-year apprentices aged 19 or over). Use: www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates for more details. Traineeships don't pay a wage but may attract Child Benefit and a 16-19 Bursary.

Universal Credit

You must normally be at least 18 before you can claim Universal Credit, except in special cases such as:

- Your relationship with your parents or carers has completely broken down.
- You are responsible for a child.
- You are pregnant and expecting your baby in the next 11 weeks.
- You cannot work due to health or disability. (This will be assessed).
- You are a carer for a severely disabled person.

Visit: www.gov.uk/universal-credit for details.

Support for all young people

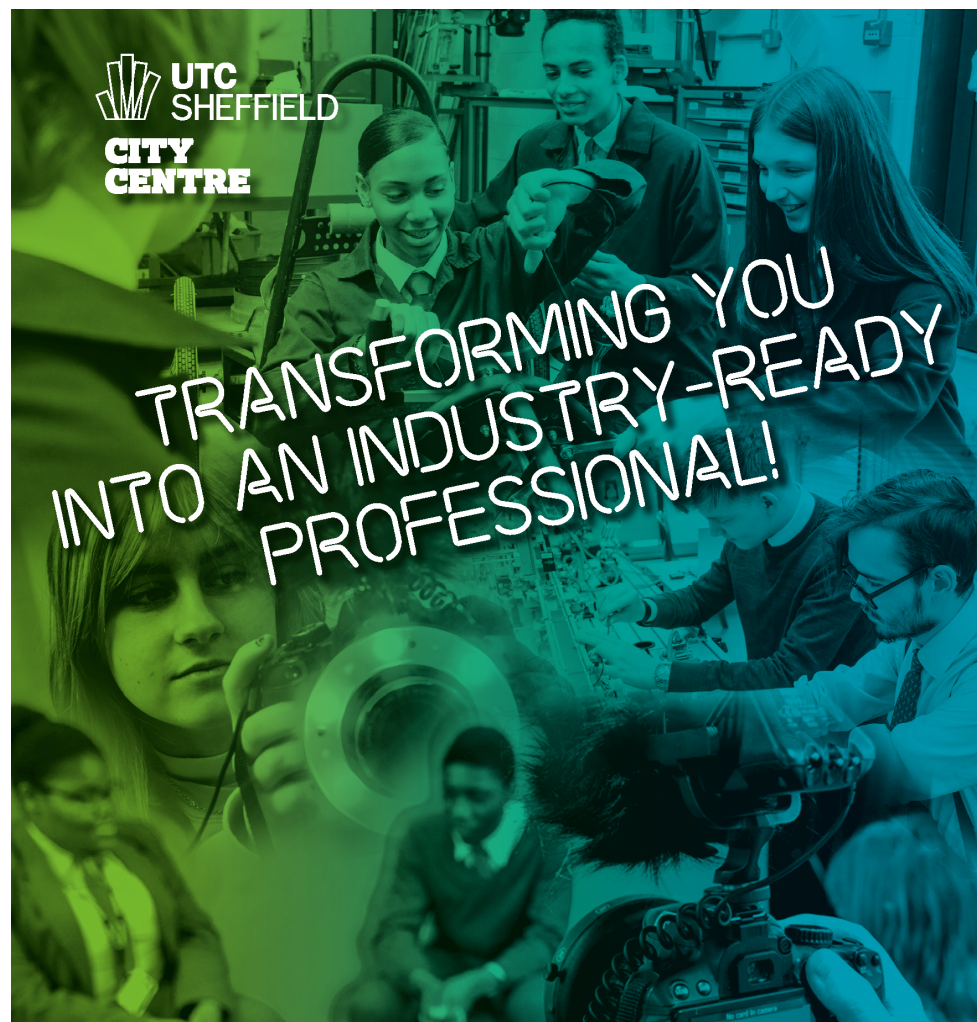
Zoom 16-18 Travel Pass

If you're age 16-18 and live in South Yorkshire, you can get a free Zoom Travel Pass which lasts for two years and lets you travel for 80p on local buses and trams, and half fare on Northern Trains.

Use: www.travelsouthyorkshire.com or call: 01709 515151.



This information can change so check for updates at www.gov.uk



SPECIALISING IN ENGINEERING AND CREATIVE & DIGITAL MEDIA

Our unique employer-led offer gives students like you the opportunity to combine academic and technical subjects. Every year we secure top destinations for our students including university, degree apprenticeships and employment. Many of our students leave our sixth form to go on to work for our employer partners who come to us with roles exclusively to be filled by our students.

Find out about joining us in Year 12: www.utcsheffield.org.uk/city