



Howden School

Post-16 Information for Parents/Carers and Students

Preparing for Post-16 courses can be an overwhelming and stressful experience for both students and parents. There are a lot of terms and qualifications types that you may have not come across before and that can be confusing.

Hopefully, the following guide will help to answer some of those questions. If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Issatt, Mrs Breeden, Mrs Taylor or Miss Scott, who will be able to answer your questions.

Qualification Levels

You will see information regarding different Level qualifications when you apply for Post-16 courses. The aim is for students to apply for Level 3 qualifications because that is the next step follow GCSEs.

Level 1 Qualifications are equivalent to GCSE Grades 1-3.

Level 2 Qualifications are equivalent to GCSE Grades 4-9.

Level 3 Qualifications are post-16 qualifications, A Levels, T Levels and Level 3 BTECs

Level 4 Qualifications are Post-18 Degree Level qualifications

Note – students who do not achieve Grade 4 in English or Maths will have to continue to study these subjects Post-16 in addition to their other courses. The Post-16 Providers will discuss with students whether GCSE or Functional Skills qualifications are most suitable.

'A' Levels – Level 3 Qualifications

'A' Level qualifications are more academic in nature and focus on traditional study skills. They usually take two years to complete.

Entry requirements vary according to which Post-16 Provider students wish to apply for and which subjects they wish to study. Typically, students will be

expected to have achieved 5 GCSEs, Grade 4/5 and above, including English and Maths. Many courses will ask students to have achieved a Grade 6 or above in the subject they wish to study.

Some Post-16 providers will ask students to select 3 A Level subjects. Some will ask students to select 4 A Level subjects.

Upon successful completion of a Level 3 qualification, students will be in a position to go into the workplace or apply for University (Level 4) courses.

Vocational Courses

Vocational qualifications offer a more practical approach to learning that relates to specific jobs or industries e.g. childcare, business, sport.

Unlike A Levels, there are different “Levels” of vocational qualifications. Many of these courses are BTECs, which will a familiar course title to many of you.

T Levels – Technical Levels

T Levels are new courses being introduced for the first time in September 2020, which will be 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.

T Levels will offer students a mixture of classroom learning and ‘on-the-job’ experience during an industry placement of at least 45 days. They will provide the knowledge and experience needed to open the door into skilled employment, further study or a higher apprenticeship. The range of T Levels will be very limited at first and not all Post-16 Providers will offer them at first.

Entry Level – Up to 1 Year

There are often no formal entry requirements for these courses, which are designed to provide students with **essential life and study skills**.

Entry Level programmes can help prepare students to begin Level 1 Courses.

Level 1 – 1 Year

Level 1 qualifications are equivalent to GCSE 1-3 grades. Students will usually need to have gained grades 1 and 2 in their GCSEs to study a Level 1 programme.

Successful completion of Level 1 courses can allow students to progress to Level 2 courses.

Level 2 – 1 Year

Level 2 qualifications are equivalent to GCSE 9-4 grades. Students will usually be expected to have achieved at least four GCSEs at grade 3 or above to enroll on one of these programmes, although requirements can vary according to which Post-16 Provider students wish to attend.

Successful completion of Level 2 courses can allow students to progress to Level 3 courses.

Level 3 – 2 Years

Level 3 vocational qualifications are equivalent to three 'A' Levels so students will usually need to have achieved at least five GCSE passes at grade 4 or above to enroll on these programmes. However, requirements can vary according to which Post-16 Provider students wish to attend.

Upon successful completion of a Level 3 qualification students will be in a position to go into the workplace or apply for university courses, which are Level 4 and above.

Functional Skills:

These courses cover Maths, English and ICT (computer skills). Students are often instructed by colleges to complete Functional Skills (or GCSE courses) in addition to their chosen courses if they haven't gained the relevant GCSE pass grades (9-4).

Apprenticeships – Level 2, 3 or 4 Qualifications

Apprenticeships allow students to earn while they learn. They combine on-the-job experience with college based study. Apprenticeships are Government-funded programmes.

However, students need to approach work places to arrange apprenticeships because many apprenticeships are not advertised until June / July. Students also need to ensure that the employer has, or is willing to establish, a formal relationship with a college for the college based study element of the Apprenticeship. Apprenticeships can be Level 2, 3 or 4. The entry requirements vary considerably depending of the Level of the qualification.

Internships

An internship is a period of work experience. They are typically undertaken by students and graduates looking to gain relevant skills and experience in a particular field.

Employers frequently use these placements to assess a student's or graduate's capability and often recruit employees from their interns rather than advertising their vacancies externally. You should therefore apply for an internship which you have a real interest in.

Internships can last from a few weeks to a year. However, they generally do not lead to a formal qualification.

Supported Internships

Supported internships are for young people aged 16 – 24 with learning difficulties or learning disabilities, who want to get a job and need extra support to do this. To be eligible you need a Statement of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), a Learning Difficulty Assessment, or an Education Health and Care Plan.

A study programme put together to give each student exactly the training, support and work skills they need to help them get a job. Most of the learning is done in the workplace. Your employer gives you work experience, trains you to do a job role and learn the skills needed for work.

You also have the chance to study for qualifications and other training or learning as part of a personalised study programme that helps you to be ready to take up a job.

Internships are unpaid and last for at least six months.