

TELL ME ABOUT Choices at 16+

Decision making

Qualifications

Courses linked to jobs

Going to work

This download is available as a printed publication from your nearest Connexions office. See list of offices on next page.



Contents

Decision making	Page 1 - 2
AS and A Levels, BTEC National Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, International Baccalaureate and NVQs	Page 2 - 3
Courses linked to jobs	Page 4
Going to work	Page 5 - 6

For more information

Personal Advisers from Connexions Coventry & Warwickshire will give you individual help and advice. We have a network of offices throughout the city and the county. There are Connexions rooms in most schools and further education colleges. If you are not sure who to get in touch with, ring the office that's nearest to where you live:

Atherstone	01827 712482
Bedworth	024 7631 2846
Coleshill	01675 462245
Coventry	024 7660 7900
Leamington Spa	01926 468950
Nuneaton	024 7632 4620
Rugby	01788 577154
Stratford upon Avon	01789 296362

www.iyss.org.uk

Connexions Direct

This is a national helpline where you can reach a Personal Adviser even when local offices are closed. Ring 080 800 13 2 19 or log on to:

www.connexions-direct.com

Decision Making

Introduction

It's time to decide what you want to do at the end of Year 11. There's more than one way to get into most kinds of work. You can:

- **Continue in education at school**
- **Continue in education at college**
- **Choose learning through a job or training**

Help from your Personal Adviser

To help you make up your mind, there's loads of information about each option. As well as this booklet you can speak to your Connexions Personal Adviser (PA).

Connexions works with schools, colleges, training providers, the Learning and Skills Council and other agencies. Together we have a good picture of training and education and how it will help you make the most of your life. Talk to your PA who can help you make the best choice for you. They can also support you if you have problems that might be stopping you from getting on with your life - things like housing, relationships, exams, family. Talk to your PA to see what help is on offer. Visit our website at: www.iyss.org.uk

Other help

Parents/carers, teachers and friends also know you well, so they can help you work out if your choice is going to suit you. Schools, colleges and training providers all come to Connexions events, so you and your parents/carers can come along and talk to them about what they offer. Your teachers can help you find out if the course/training you're thinking about is the right level for you.

Use the Connexions room in your school or call in to your nearest Connexions One Stop Shop to use leaflets, books, software packages and internet access to research your ideas.

Carry on Learning

Whatever you do, learning through education or training will give you qualifications or experience that will set you up for life...

- **Be prepared for new jobs that are coming along in the future**
- **Get good pay and a better lifestyle**
- **Have more chance of achieving your ambitions**

www.route14-19.co.uk

This website lists every course, every training opportunity and every qualification in every school, college and training organisation in every part of Coventry and Warwickshire. You just pick what you want to find out about and it tells you all the choices you have. If it all sounds a bit scary, don't worry, your Personal Adviser is there to help you sort out the plan that suits you best.

School, college, job, training? The Pros & Cons

Full-time education in a sixth form

Pros

- You'll be a senior member of the school
- You may know the environment and the teachers
- Most people who complete their programme are likely to get good jobs or go on to higher education
- You'll be working towards recognised qualifications
- You'll probably get work experience with an employer
- You may qualify for an Education Maintenance Allowance
- You may get help with travel expenses
- Your family will continue to get Child Benefit

Cons

- You may not have the chance to try a new environment
- You may have to change schools
- You may need to pay for trips and some books or materials as part of your course

Full-time education at college

Pros

- It's an adult environment
- There's a wide range of courses
- You'll mix with all age groups and meet new people
- You'll be working towards recognised qualifications
- Most people who complete their programme are likely to get good jobs or go on to higher education
- You'll probably get work experience with an employer
- You may qualify for an Education Maintenance Allowance
- You may get help with travel expenses
- Your family will continue to get Child Benefit

Cons

- You'll have to get used to a different working environment
- You may need to pay for trips and some books or materials as part of your course

Work based learning with an employer or training provider

Pros

- You may get a wage or you may qualify for an Education Maintenance Allowance
- You'll be in an adult environment
- You'll be working towards recognised qualifications
- Most people who complete their programme are likely to get good jobs or go on to higher education
- Equipment may be provided free
- You may get help with travel expenses

A job without training

Pros

- You'll get paid
- You'll be in an adult environment
- You may pick up some skills

Cons

- Working and studying at the same time can be hard
- If you are paid a wage your family will lose Child Benefit
- Wages may be low to begin with

Cons

- You are unlikely to get any qualifications
- You are unlikely to be able to show proof of your experience
- Your chances of progression are pretty slim
- Your family will lose Child Benefit
- You will get no help with travel or other expenses

Be who you want to be

Remember the decision about your future is your own choice. Take advice, but don't let anyone push you into something you don't want to do. Some people think of jobs as being "girl's work" or "boy's work" - this is wrong. All jobs are open equally to men and women so don't narrow your choice.

AS and A Levels, BTEC National Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, International Baccalaureate and NVQs

Introduction

Whether you choose a school sixth form or a college, you will be taking steps to prepare yourself to move into higher education or into the workplace after a one or two year course. You will need to carefully consider the type of course you want; some are vocational so that they link into a specific career area. If you are aiming for higher education, you may need to take a specific subject to get onto the course you want. Ask your Personal Adviser for the booklet in this series called 'Tell me about A level links to university degrees'.

This section describes AS and A levels, BTEC National Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, International Baccalaureate and NVQs. You may also want to look at vocational training through work based learning or full-time education - this can also lead to higher education as well as employment, look at the section 'Going to work' on page 5.

When you are deciding which course is right for you, you'll need to think about:

- **Course content and style of study**
- **Does it lead to higher education or the job that you want?**
- **Will you get the grades at GCSE to get on the course?**
- **Is it offered at a school or college that you can travel to easily?**
- **Are the qualifications offered at the right level?**

What can sixth form offer?

- **Study for academic and/or vocational qualifications**
- **Extra activities e.g. Young Enterprise, sports, work experience**
- **One, two or three years more to consider which career to aim for**
- **Progression to Higher Education or an Apprenticeship**
- **Careers guidance and help from a Personal Adviser throughout the course**

What can a college offer?

- **A wide variety of courses at different levels**
- **Study for academic and/or vocational qualifications**
- **Access to a variety of sport and social activities**
- **Progression to Higher Education or an Apprenticeship**
- **Careers guidance and help from a Personal Adviser throughout the course**

Where to study

There is a wide range of AS and A level subjects, BTEC National Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas and the International Baccalaureate to choose from. Not all of them are offered at every school or college. You don't have to stay at the school where you have studied up to the age of 16 so you may want to consider moving to another school or college to find the right combination of subjects for you. Most schools and colleges work together with others in their area in groups, sometimes called consortiums or federations; quite often you can study different subjects at more than one school or college.

Explanation of courses

AS and A Levels

You can choose to take 'applied' (work-related subjects) at AS and A Level. A levels are made up of the AS Level and the A2. Each part makes up 50% of the overall A Level grade. The AS Level can be a qualification on its own, or as the first half of the full A Level. At the end of the AS year, normally Year 12 you have the option to continue onto the second year to gain the full A Level. In year two you take the A2, a more detailed look at what you have studied in the first year. The A2 is not a separate qualification.

Advanced & Progression Diplomas

Diplomas are new qualifications for 14-19 year olds, They have been developed by schools, colleges, universities and employers working together and are based around a particular employment sector. They involve 4 parts; principal learning units and a project; generic learning; additional & specialist learning and finally personal learning and thinking skills. There will also be a minimum of 10 days work experience. Advanced Diplomas Level 3 are equivalent to 3.5 A Levels and Progression Diplomas Level 3 are equivalent to 2 A Levels and designed for students who do not wish to complete the whole Advanced Diploma. Be aware these Diplomas are a different qualification to BTEC National Diplomas.

BTEC National Diplomas

Diplomas are vocational qualifications and give you the chance to study in a particular job area. They allow you to relate your learning to real life situations. They may include work experience. Each one is made up of a number of units and you will need to provide evidence of your competency in each unit. They are graded Pass, Merit, Distinction, and involve course work rather than exams. There are different entry requirements depending on the level of qualification. A National Diploma is equivalent to three A Levels.

International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate is designed for highly motivated students. It is a detailed, academic form of study available in a wide range of studies, such as languages, arts, maths, science, history and geography. The compulsory course contains 3 elements; theory of knowledge, creativity, action & service and extended essay. In addition to this students also select one other optional subject from six other areas, 1st language, 2nd language, experimental science, maths and computer science, the arts, individuals and society. Most of the assessment is done through exams.

NVQs

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are work based qualifications. They look at the skills and knowledge needed to do a job effectively and show that a candidate is competent in a particular area of work.

NVQs are based on national standards. These are statements that describe what competent people in a particular job are expected to be able to do. They look at the skills you need to do the job, how you can learn from the "best practice" of other people in the industry, how you can adapt to change in the future and if you have the knowledge and understanding to help you perform well.

Within reason, NVQs do not have to be completed in a specified amount of time. They can be taken by full-time employees or by school and college students with a work placement or part-time job that enables them to develop the appropriate skills. There are no age limits and no special entry requirements.

Choosing your subjects

To find out what is available and where it is offered you need to use the website: www.route14-19.co.uk

This lists every course, in every subject, offered by every school, college or training provider in Coventry and Warwickshire.

Searching the Route14-19 website



There are different ways in which you can search.

If you want to search for a school, sixth form, college or work-based training provider

- **Click on Find a Provider**

To find all the opportunities in a particular subject area:

- **Click on 16+ courses**
- **Go to "Keyword Search" and type the subject you are interested in**

This will now display all A levels, vocational courses, work-based learning and Apprenticeships so that you can compare what's on offer. If you can't find what you are looking for you may be offered alternative words to search on.

To narrow your search, you can filter by provider, if you know where you would like to study, or you can filter by level if you know the level of the course you are looking for.

Courses Linked to Jobs

The government is in the process of putting all course opportunities into the following learning pathways. Please see below. For more information on jobs and local opportunities within these pathways go to www.cwworldofwork.org.uk and click on job types.

Business Administration & Finance

Examples of jobs in this area:

Administrative Assistant
Auditor
Business Analyst
Economist
Financial Adviser
Insurance Surveyor
Payroll Clerk

Construction & the Built Environment

Examples of jobs in this area:

Architect
Bricklayer
Carpenter
Civil Engineer
Crane Operator
Electrician
Town Planner

Creative & Media

Examples of jobs in this area:

Advertising Executive
Designer
Filmmaker
Games Developer
Press Officer
Production Assistant
Theatre & Radio Producers

Engineering

Examples of jobs in this area:

Aerospace Engineer
CAD Draughtsperson
Craftsperson
Electrical Engineer
Engineering Assemblers
Materials Scientist
Motor Vehicle Technician

Hair & Beauty

Examples of jobs in this area:

Barber
Beauty Therapist
Body Piercer
Electrologist
Hair Stylist
Lecturer
Massage Therapist

Hospitality & Catering

Examples of jobs in this area:

Bar Manager
Chef
Conference Assistant
Events Manager
Hotel Manager
Hotel Porter
Housekeeper

Humanities

Examples of jobs in this area:

Archivist
Arts Administrator
Editorial Assistant
Journalist
Librarian
Museum Curator
Programme Researcher

Information Technology

Examples of jobs in this area:

Help Desk Operator
IT Technician
IT Salesperson
IT Trainer
Multimedia Designer
Systems Analyst
Web Designer

Land Based and Environmental

Examples of jobs in this area:

Agricultural Scientist
Arboricultural Worker
Conservation Officer
Countryside Ranger
Farm Manager
Landscape Architect
Parks Officer

Languages

Examples of jobs in this area:

Interpreter
Translator
Language Teacher
Language Service Professional
Speech and Language Therapist
Industries requiring employees with a second language include:
Banking
Engineering
Hospitality
Telecommunications
Travel & Tourism

Manufacturing & Design

Examples of jobs in this area:

Assembler
Baker
Food Processing Worker
Machine Operator
Pattern Cutter
Product Designer
Textile Technologist

Public Services

Examples of jobs in this area:

Army Officer
Environmental Health Officer
Firefighter
Housing Officer
Police Officer
Teacher
Youth Worker

Retail

Examples of jobs in this area:

Area Manager
Buyer
Chief Executive
Distribution Manager
Human Resources Officer
Sales Assistant
Store Manager

Science

Examples of jobs in this area:

Biochemist
Biologist
Ecologist
Forensic Scientist
Laboratory Assistant
Metallurgist
Microbiologist

Society, Health & Development

Examples of jobs in this area:

Dentist
Doctor
Care Worker
Health Visitor
Radiographer
Social Worker
Teaching Assistant

Sport & Leisure

Examples of jobs in this area:

Croupier
Fitness Instructor
Holiday Centre Manager
Leisure Centre Manager
Lifeguard
Sports Development Officer
Swimming Teacher

Travel & Tourism

Examples of jobs in this area:

Air Cabin Crew
Coach Driver
Flight Operations Controller
Foreign Exchange Cashier
Holiday Representative
Passenger Check - In Officer
Tour Guide

Going to work

Introduction

If you've decided you are ready to leave full-time education and enter the world of work, you can look at:

- **Apprenticeships**
- **e2e**
- **Jobs with Training**

These are all called work-based learning. There is a guaranteed place on work-based learning for every young person under 18 years of age who is not in full-time education or employment.

Apprenticeships

The government is hoping to increase the number of Apprenticeships available to young people. There is a new vacancy matching website where young people can view vacancies nationally and make applications on-line. Go to www.apprenticeships.org.uk

There are Apprenticeships in hundreds of different kinds of work. Apprentices are employed by a company and study for recognised qualifications either with the employer, a college or a training provider.

Apprenticeships are offered at two levels -

Apprentices work towards a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2, Key Skills and, in most cases, a technical certificate.

Advanced Apprentices work towards NVQ level 3, Key Skills and a technical certificate.

You will get:

- **A training plan that shows what you will be doing**
- **An agreement between The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), your employer and yourself**
- **Training agreed with your employer to give you the skills to do the job**
- **Key Skills training in communication, numeracy and information technology**
- **In some cases, day release or block release to college**
- **Training towards an NVQ**
- **A Technical Certificate. This shows you have an understanding not only of skills, but how they can be applied across a wide range of tasks**

Employers and Sector Skills Councils design Apprenticeships. You can find out more from www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Jobs with training

Some employers run their own training programmes. These may not be called Apprenticeships but should offer the same level of training leading to nationally recognised qualifications. You will be employed by the company and be paid a wage for the work you do. Jobs with training may be offered by companies with long-standing reputations for good quality training, often supporting trainees through further education, including degrees.

Take care though; some firms claim to offer training but it may not lead to qualifications and may not help you make progress in your chosen career. Ask the company to let you have details of their training programme and talk to your Personal Adviser before accepting the job.

e2e

If you want to go to work but you don't feel ready for an Apprenticeship or job with training, e2e could be the answer. It will help build up your confidence, introduce you to different types of jobs and help you with basic skills. Ask your Personal Adviser for more details.

e2e could be for you ...

- **If you are worried that you might leave school without any qualifications**
- **If you've missed a lot of school because you've been excluded, or just haven't been going very often**
- **If you've missed a lot of school because you've been ill or you've had to care for someone in your family**

On e2e it doesn't matter how tough life's been for you - it's a chance to start again.

- **It's for those aged 16-18 who are not involved in employment, education or training**
- **e2e would suit you if you need some formal learning as well as personal development and work experience to help you find a career**
- **You will get practical training linked to job skills, plus the opportunity to gain qualifications**
- **The idea is to give you the skills and confidence to help you find a job, enter an Apprenticeship or go on to other learning**
- **e2e is flexible and can be changed to meet your needs**
- **It's paid for by the Learning & Skills Council but your Personal Adviser will know all about it and can get you on e2e**
- **e2e has been around for several years - and it has helped lots of young people**
- **you will receive £30 a week Education Maintenance Allowance**

If you need even more help before you feel ready for e2e, ask your Personal Adviser what else there is to help you improve your confidence and get you ready to look at e2e, an Apprenticeship or a job.

Your right to time-off for training

All young people aged 16 - 19 have the right to time-off for study or training if they have not achieved qualifications to level 2 (that's the same as 4 - 5 GCSEs grade A* - C). This means you can take time-off to work for approved qualifications e.g. NVQ 2. This time is usually a few hours a week to go to college - but there might be other arrangements. Your employer must give you this time off during your normal working hours. You must get your normal pay for this time. NVQs are on offer in lots of subjects and they are designed to improve your job prospects. If your employer does not know about "Right to Time off for Study or Training" ask your Personal Adviser to get in touch and tell them about it.

What is a Training Provider?

Everyone on work-based learning is supported by a training provider. They are experts with many years' experience and work alongside employers to deliver your training. They are organisations approved by the LSC because of the quality of the training they provide. You will have an individual plan that could include:

- attending the training provider's premises
- practical experience with an employer
- assessments at your workplace of the skills you are learning
- confidential help if you are having any problems

Your rights at work

From your first day at work you are entitled to:

- a statement that shows how much you earn and any deductions that will be made from your pay, when you will be paid and the method of payment. Deductions will include National Insurance and Income Tax. Income Tax pays for public services, such as education, welfare benefits and health service. Your employer will ask you to fill in a P46 to help work out the right amount of tax you should be paying
- a pay slip. Keep your pay slips as they provide you with a record of important information that you may need in the future
- working time rights, including holiday pay entitlement
- equal pay with members of the opposite sex doing the same job as you
- not be discriminated against because of race, age, sex or disability
- work in a place that is safe
- a break when the working day is more than 6 hours
- a rest period of 11 hours every working day
- a rest period of 24 hours once every 7 days
- a maximum average working week of 48 hours
- 4.8 weeks paid holiday, which may include Bank Holidays (if you work full-time)

Warning

- if you are offered a job without training, think carefully about where it will lead.
- can you gain promotion with your company or elsewhere with no recognised training?
- earning a high salary now may seem attractive but in the future there will be fewer jobs for unqualified people.
- if you are offered a job and you are unsure of the training, talk to your Personal Adviser before accepting it.

National Minimum Wage

All workers in the UK aged 16 and over are legally entitled to be paid a minimum amount per hour. The rate is reviewed annually, with increases taking place in October. There are different levels of National Minimum Wage, depending on the age of the worker. The current rates are as follows (October 2009).

- Young people older than school leaving age and younger than 18, other than Apprentices (who are exempted) receive £3.57 an hour.
- Workers aged 18 - 21 inclusive receive £4.83 an hour
- Workers aged 22 and over receive £5.80 an hour

If you think you are being underpaid, call the Pay and Rights helpline on 0800 917 2368.

National Insurance

National Insurance is something most people have to pay. It counts towards benefits you may be able to claim in the future, such as Incapacity Benefit, and State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (SERPS). Normally you are sent a National Insurance Number at 16. This number is yours for life and it is important to keep a written record of it.

Produced by Connexions Coventry & Warwickshire

1st Floor, Tower Court, Foleshill Enterprise Park, Courtaulds Way, Coventry CV6 5QT

Tel: 024 7670 7400